

### **(#3) The God of Grace**

By Bob Young

#### **REVIEW**

The God of Action—Creating (Genesis →)

“The Creating God Who Calls to Re-creation”

1. He made us, image of God, living being
2. He calls us, unique to Christianity, he calls us, he calls us back in Christ
3. He unites us, making possible re-creation in our transformation, re-establishing vertical relationship which makes possible horizontal relationship.

Problems: Sin/legal problem, relationship/practical/living problem.

The God of Being—Revealing Himself as Transcendent/Immanent (Exodus →)

The Loving God Who Promises/Covenants/Commits Himself to Bless Us

1. The person of God, his nature, how we are like him
2. The promises of God, his covenant commitment to us, Gen. 12, Ex. 34
3. The purpose of God, he desires to bless us, he claims us so that he can bless us

Problems: faith problem, self problem

The God of Grace—Giving

“The Extravagant God Who Gives Himself to Deliver/Save Us”

#### **Introduction**

This is a season of giving. James 1:17

What is the best gift you ever gave? What is the best gift you ever received?

We delight in giving—birthdays, anniversaries, special occasions, Christmas....

Why? Perhaps it is unknown/unseen: nothing other than holiness makes us more like God than generosity.

Gifts are bountiful expressions of our love.

#### **1. The Extravagant God, prodigal, showing our cost, the price he had to pay to redeem us, and the value he places on us.**

Extravagance shows up several places in the NT: Luke 7, John 12, Luke 15.

But nowhere is it more obvious than in the story of Jesus’ birth. Maybe it is the lavishness of that gift that morning, the extravagance of love that came in the form of a helpless newborn. But the gift is really what Jesus did.

Swapping a spotless castle for a grimy stable.

Exchanging the worship of angels for the company of traitors and killers.

He humbled himself, went from commanding angels to being homeless, without a place to lay his head.

From holding stars to clutching his mother’s finger.

Hands that created the universe willingly accepted the nail of the soldier.

Why?

Because that is what extravagant love does. It puts the one loved before self. That is why we say today our God is an extravagant God.

Have you ever been extravagant? Knowing no bounds, no limits, no end? This kind of extravagant love is to be a hallmark of God's people—John 13:34-35.

Why do we have so much trouble extending grace—is it because we have never appreciated the grace received?

Regardless of the reason, our giving God has given us a love worth giving to others. But how can we give something we have never received?

## **2. The Sacrificing God, giving himself, giving his life.**

1 John 4:19, we know how to love as a result of receiving his love.

True love sacrifices.

Luke 7: 747 principle, A person who is forgiven little shows only little love.

To understand the spirit of sacrifice which undergirds genuine love, we have to let this story touch us today.

Two people—

Looked up to, looked down on

Church leader, street walker

Lives to promote standards, lives by breaking them

Hosting the party, crashing the party

Who would you pick? Easy? Theologian, man of the cloth, but Jesus picked the woman. Why?

Consider Simon's attitude. Angry, disappointed, frustrated at the riffraff. Don't think thoughts you don't want Jesus to hear—Jesus heard Simon's thinking. He gently corrects by telling a story—vs. 40-47.

Simon sacrifices nothing when Jesus comes to his house; the woman sacrifices all, even her esteem/pride.

Why is it so hard for us to show love—even to God? Why are we harsh, distant? Why are we critical?

Why are we so unwilling to sacrifice? It would seem that this woman would want to avoid Jesus, but she seeks him. Maybe when people do not come among us, it is not because they are avoiding Jesus but because they are avoiding us and our version of Jesus.

Regardless, this woman comes sacrificially expressing her love—extravagant and risky.

What's the difference? What one treasure does she have that Simon doesn't? The love of God. She is willing recipient of God's love. She came thirsting. And Jesus handed her his grace—and she drinks, gulps, swallowing like a parched pilgrim.

Simon doesn't even know he is in need, that he is thirsty. He doesn't need grace—his job is only to analyze it. He doesn't request mercy—he debates it and prorates it. It isn't that Simon can't be forgiven—he just never asked.

When we know the value of what we have received, the extent of the sacrifice, we love deeply. She drinks, he puffs up. A person forgiven little shows only a little love.

This kind of love is first in the heart of the lover, but we can never develop it naturally, it comes too our heart only by receiving it. Love is not clenched-teeth, I'll love him anyway. We are missing a vital step if that is our version of love—duty, responsibility, grit your teeth.

The secret to sacrificing ourselves is to receive God's sacrifice.

Long to love better—accept God’s love, Eph. 5:1-2.

What to forgive—consider your own forgiveness, Eph. 4:32.

Having trouble with others—think about being like Jesus, Phil. 2:5.

### **3. The Saving God, who rescues, delivers**

This extravagant, sacrificing God loves us personally, powerfully, passionately, even when others promise and fail, with an unfailing love, faithful love.

Rom. 5:8.

What is the most extravagant gift you have ever received? Airport in middle of night? Sitting in hospital, coming when it was unexpected, providing....

God wants you to respond to his extravagant, sacrificial love. He will hear your plea and provide. 1 Pet. 3:18. In love, Christ brought us to God.

Can you accept that forgiveness? 1 Th. 1:9-10.

Psalm 103:4, he loads me up with love and mercy.

### **Conclusion**

Listen to heaven’s answer to life, to knowing who we are, our value/worth, and to knowing what awaits us beyond this life.

Problems abound: self-esteem problem, life, relationships, death problem