



Hebrews 4:12 (KJV)

For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper  
than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing  
asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow,  
and is a discernor of the thoughts of the intentions  
of the heart.

# JUSTIFYING GRACE

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## Saying Yes to God

Teaching Conference Notes

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Scripture references are included throughout for teaching and study. Readers and teachers are encouraged to read the cited passages directly from their preferred Bible translation.

This material is designed as a teaching resource. The speaker may expand, shorten, or adapt illustrations and discussion time according to the audience and ministry setting.

## Teaching Purpose

To explain the grace by which we receive through faith the relationship God offers in Christ and to call participants toward trust, reconciliation, and discipleship.

## Teaching Sections

- God's Invitation: A Relationship of Love and Grace
- Saying Yes: Justifying Grace
- The Cross: The Center of Grace
- God's Work and Our Response
- Agape: Grace Received and Shared

## Teaching Covenant

- Allow Scripture to examine your own heart before applying the teaching to someone else.
- Do not confuse grace with permission to remain unchanged.
- Listen for the invitation of the Holy Spirit and respond honestly.
- Ask, "Lord, what are You saying to me?"

## Teaching Section 1: God's Invitation: A Relationship of Love and Grace

### Read

Genesis 1:26-31; Luke 15:11-24

### Big Idea

**God created us for relationship, and His love continues calling us home when sin has carried us into separation.**

### Teach

Creation establishes purpose: humanity bears God's image and is made for relationship with Him. Sin disrupts that relationship, but God does not abandon His purpose.

The prodigal son gives a vivid picture of distance and return. The son turns toward home, and the father receives him with compassion. The story helps us see that God's grace is greater than our failures.

Jesus repeatedly invites people into relationship. The heart of the invitation is not rule keeping as a substitute for love, but restored relationship that produces a changed life.

## **Application**

Ask where you are standing in the story: distant, turning, returning, or learning to live as a son or daughter who has been welcomed home.

## **Key Statements**

- God initiates relationship.
- Grace calls the lost home.
- Relationship with God is the center, not religious performance.

## **Reflection and Discussion**

- What does the father's response in Luke 15 reveal about grace?
- What has separation from God looked like in your own life?

## **Teaching Section 2: Saying Yes: Justifying Grace**

### **Read**

Ephesians 2:8-9; Romans 3:21-28

### **Big Idea**

**Justifying grace is the gift by which we personally receive through faith the relationship God offers through Christ.**

### **Teach**

Prevenient grace describes God drawing us. Justifying grace marks our accepting for ourselves the relationship God offers through Jesus Christ.

The April teaching describes this experience with several familiar terms: salvation, conversion, forgiveness, and being born again. Each emphasizes a dimension of the same decisive turning toward Christ.

Salvation cannot be earned. Faith is our trusting response to God's gift. Our "yes" does not purchase grace; it receives grace.

### **Illustration**

Courtship becomes covenant when an invitation is answered. In a similar way, God's pursuit calls for a genuine response of trust and commitment.

## Application

Do not ask, “Have I done enough to deserve God?” Ask, “Am I trusting the grace God has given in Christ?”

## Key Statements

- Grace is received, not achieved.
- Faith is trusting response.
- Saying yes begins a transformed life.

## Reflection and Discussion

- Why is receiving a gift sometimes harder than earning something?
- What does saying yes to God require of your trust and will?

## Teaching Section 3: The Cross: The Center of Grace

### Read

Romans 5:6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20

### Big Idea

**The cross demonstrates God’s love and makes reconciliation central to the Christian message.**

### Teach

Christ’s death is the decisive demonstration of God’s love toward sinners. At the cross we see that reconciliation is costly and that God Himself acts to restore what sin has broken.

The cross gives us a memorable picture of restored relationship: the vertical dimension points toward reconciliation with God; the horizontal dimension points toward reconciliation with others.

Justification is not permission to remain unchanged. The cross that forgives us also calls us into a life shaped by Christ.

## Application

Bring both dimensions to the cross: your relationship with God and the relationships in which you need truth, forgiveness, wisdom, boundaries, or reconciliation.

## Key Statements

- The cross stands at the center of grace.
- Reconciliation begins with God's action in Christ.
- Forgiven people are called into reconciled living.

### **Reflection and Discussion**

- What does the cross reveal about God's love?
- Where do you need reconciliation?

## **Teaching Section 4: God's Work and Our Response**

### **Read**

Romans 12:1-2; Revelation 3:20; Matthew 16:24-26

### **Big Idea**

**God acts first, yet grace calls for the response of our mind, will, heart, and daily life.**

### **Teach**

The April material describes a "double acceptance": God says yes to us in creation and in Christ, and we answer God's invitation with faith.

We respond with the mind as truth renews our thinking, with the will as we freely choose obedience, and with the heart as love becomes more than passing emotion.

Faith becomes visible in surrender and discipleship. We continue saying yes as we seek God's will and practice prayer, Scripture, meditation, and obedience.

### **Application**

Identify the part of your response that is weakest today: understanding, willingness, affection, or action. Bring that area deliberately before God.

### **Key Statements**

- Grace calls the whole person.
- Obedience flows from faith.
- Conversion begins decisively and continues to shape daily discipleship.

### **Reflection and Discussion**

- What does it mean that God invites but does not force?
- How can your mind, will, and heart respond together?

# Teaching Section 5: Agape: Grace Received and Shared

## Read

1 John 4:7-12; Matthew 28:18-20

## Big Idea

**God's sacrificial love is freely given to us and then becomes visible as grace flows through us toward others.**

## Teach

Agape is presented in the April teaching as unconditional, sacrificial love - love given rather than earned.

God often makes His love tangible through prayer, service, sacrifice, encouragement, and acts of care within the Christian community.

The person who experiences grace is called to share grace. Discipleship joins Christ's mission: loving, teaching, baptizing, serving, and making disciples.

## Application

Receive God's love personally, then choose one person to whom you can make that love visible this week.

## Key Statements

- God's love is gift.
- Grace received becomes grace expressed.
- The disciple joins Christ's mission.

## Reflection and Discussion

- When have you experienced God's love through another person?
- How can grace move through you toward someone else?

## Closing Challenge

God has already made the first move in Christ. The question is not whether you can earn His grace. The question is whether you will receive it and say yes to the relationship He offers.

## Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, thank You for the cross and for the gift of salvation. Teach us to stop trying to earn what You freely give. Give us faith to receive Your grace and courage to follow You daily. Amen.

## Personal Response

What is the Lord showing me personally?

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What truth do I need to receive or obey?

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What specific act of obedience will begin this week?

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# From Lost to Welcomed Home

## Read

Luke 15:11-24

## Deepening the Teaching

The prodigal son gives justifying grace a relational picture. The son turns toward home, but the father is already ready to receive him. Restoration is not presented as wages for improved performance; it is received in relationship.

Repentance is a genuine turning. Grace does not tell the son that the far country was harmless. Grace receives him and restores him to the father’s house.

## Teaching Application

Ask participants to identify the difference between regret, repentance, and restored relationship.

## Key Takeaway

**Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God’s gift to receive and a life to live.**

## Notes / Personal Response

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# Grace Through Faith, Not Achievement

## Read

Ephesians 2:8-10; Romans 3:21-28

## Deepening the Teaching

Justifying grace confronts the instinct to earn acceptance. Salvation is God’s gift received through faith. Good works matter, but they are fruit of grace rather than the purchase price of grace.

This distinction protects both humility and obedience. We cannot boast that we saved ourselves, and we cannot use grace as an excuse to remain unchanged.

## Teaching Application

Have participants complete the sentence: I am most tempted to prove my worth to God by \_\_\_\_.

## Key Takeaway

**Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God’s gift to receive and a life to live.**

## Notes / Personal Response

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# The Cross at the Center

## Read

Romans 5:6-8; 2 Corinthians 5:18-21

## Deepening the Teaching

The cross reveals both the seriousness of sin and the depth of divine love. God does not ignore brokenness; in Christ, God acts to reconcile.

Your Grace teaching uses the cross as a picture of restored relationship: vertically with God and horizontally with others. Justification begins reconciliation that then shapes the disciple's life.

## Teaching Application

Invite participants to consider what the cross says about God, sin, forgiveness, and their own worth.

## Key Takeaway

**Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God's gift to receive and a life to live.**

## Notes / Personal Response

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# Repentance and the New Direction

## Read

Mark 1:14-15; Acts 2:37-39

## Deepening the Teaching

Jesus begins His public proclamation with a call to repent and believe. Repentance is more than feeling bad. It is a change of mind and direction that turns toward God.

Justifying grace is not merely a legal idea to discuss. It marks a real reorientation of life around Jesus Christ.

## Teaching Application

Ask: What would turning toward God look like in one concrete area of life this week?

## Key Takeaway

**Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God’s gift to receive and a life to live.**

## Notes / Personal Response

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# Responding With Mind, Will, and Heart

## Read

Romans 12:1-2; John 14:15

## Deepening the Teaching

Your April teaching emphasizes a whole-person response. Faith engages the mind, the will, and the heart. We learn truth, choose surrender, and grow in love.

This guards against reducing conversion to emotion alone or to intellectual agreement alone. Christian faith becomes trust expressed through allegiance and obedience.

## Teaching Application

Let participants identify which area - mind, will, or heart - most needs to come under Christ's leadership.

## Key Takeaway

**Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God's gift to receive and a life to live.**

## Notes / Personal Response

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# Agape: Love We Cannot Earn

## Read

1 John 4:7-12

## Deepening the Teaching

Agape is sacrificial, God-centered love. We receive it before we can adequately reflect it. God's love becomes both the foundation of salvation and the pattern for Christian relationships.

People often understand grace through embodied love: prayer, sacrifice, patience, generosity, truthfulness, and forgiveness. The Church should make invisible grace visible through faithful love.

## Teaching Application

Ask participants to name one person to whom they can intentionally show Christlike love this week.

## Key Takeaway

**Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God's gift to receive and a life to live.**

## Notes / Personal Response

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# Assurance and Identity in Christ

## Read

Romans 8:1; Romans 8:31-39

## Deepening the Teaching

Justifying grace changes how believers understand their standing before God. Condemnation is not the final word for those in Christ. Identity rests in God's action and promise rather than constant self-accusation.

Assurance should lead to gratitude and holiness, not carelessness. Secure love creates room for honest confession and continued growth.

## Teaching Application

Invite participants to write one accusation or shame statement they need to place beneath the truth of God's grace.

## Key Takeaway

**Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God's gift to receive and a life to live.**

## Notes / Personal Response

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# Conference Response: Saying Yes

## Read

Matthew 11:28-30

## Deepening the Teaching

The recurring question in your April material is simple: God has already made the first move. Will we say yes? Justifying grace calls for trust in Christ, repentance, and reception of the relationship God offers.

For believers, the same yes continues in discipleship. Conversion begins a life of repeated surrender to Christ.

## Teaching Application

Provide quiet space for prayer: gratitude for grace, confession of sin, trust in Christ, and a renewed yes to God.

## Key Takeaway

**Grace is not merely a truth to understand; it is God’s gift to receive and a life to live.**

## Notes / Personal Response

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