

Lesson 9: GRACE SUPERABOUNDING IN OUR LIVES¹

Many who have awakened to grace have spent years living under “Christian” laws and formulas, manipulated by fear and obligation instead of love and grace. This way of “living” then worked its way into every aspect of our existence and in multiple ways had very harmful personal effects along with damaging results in our relationships. Since the law strengthens sin, many believers today are dismayed to realize they are overtaken with sin, constantly struggling to be free, but unable to find the victory from sin they once knew. Many Christian marriages failed or are unhealthy because they were based on methodology and manipulation instead of love and grace. Parents, who only ever wanted God’s best for their children and who worked diligently to be very good parents, now find that their children are indifferent or cold toward anything “Christian” having been exposed to mixture most of their lives in church. Whole congregations sit each Sunday unaware of God’s grace, programmed to accept the “get right with God” formula, willfully herding like autotrons to the altar each week hoping to get forgiveness and longing for something—anything from God if even but a crumb from the Master’s table. They are baffled, miserable and confused. Where is the joy? Others travel long distances hoping to find a “move of God” or a “refreshing”, even feigning “worship” just to feel His “manifest” presence, His love, some joy, if only for a moment and then do it again and again because they are in the true sense of the word “desperate” for Him. How do we get off of this not-so-merry-go-round?

This life of drudgery, misery, hopelessness (desperation), constant hunger and thirst, and death is NOT what God had in mind for His beloved children when He gave His only begotten Son.

*For God so LOVED the world
that He GAVE His only begotten Son,
that whoever believes in Him should not perish
but have everlasting LIFE. -John 3:16*

Instead of enjoying the everlasting LIFE Jesus died to give us, many believers have a sense of perishing. Then WE wake up to grace and rediscover the joys of knowing we are loved by God, yet the devastating effects of living under law remain!!! Now, what do we do?

It will take some time but you can trust that just as death seeped its way into all the crevices of your life, much more now will God’s grace superabound and flow where it is needed. This is always what God intended (as seen in the verse below), but we got side-tracked into formula living (which amounts to laws). Now, we go back to the beginning (“a very good place to start”) and truly allow God’s abundance of grace to repair the damage and overflow into every part of our lives.

¹Unless otherwise noted, Scripture is taken from NASB, © Nelson Publishing
© C.D. Hildebrand

For a video version of this lesson or more information about this ministry, please go to:
<http://www.graceandfaithministries.org>

Romans 5:17

For if by the one man's offense **death reigned** through the one, much more those who receive **abundance of grace** and of the **gift** of righteousness will **reign in life** through the One, Jesus Christ.

We have received abundance of grace and the GIFT of righteousness (right-standing with God)! "Abundance" here in the Greek actually means **superabundance**, surplus, superfluity (excess, oversupply, something unnecessary²). In other words, God has not only given us all the grace we need but more than we need. Our lives are overflowing with His grace. Perhaps this superabounding overflowing grace sounds familiar!

John 7:37-39

"If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink.³⁸ He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will **flow rivers** of **living** water."³⁹ But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

This Spirit which we received when we were born again³ FLOWS. Many of us remember that water flowing in our lives when we first became believers. We felt the life and others around us felt the life. Think of flowing water. It can't be contained. It will go anywhere it can. If you are filling your bathtub upstairs and let the water run, it will flow out of the tub, onto the floor, down the stairs, fill the downstairs and if it doesn't bust out the walls and windows first will eventually flow back up the stairs and out the upstairs windows, down into the streets and never stop⁴.

Water FLOWS. Now, the Spirit flows as RIVERS, not just the meager draining from a spout!!! Also, the waters that flow in our lives are LIVING waters. Everywhere these waters flow, they bring life! Life.

John 4:14

"Whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will **never** thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a **fountain** of water **springing up** into **everlasting life**."

John 10:10

The thief does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have LIFE, and that they may have it more abundantly (superabundantly).

As we begin to understand His love and grace again,
 we are faced with a myriad of broken relationships.
 So, we ask ourselves,
 "What do I do now? How do I untangle this web binding me?"
 The answer is as simple as this:
 "Let the rivers of God's grace superabound into you
 and into every relationship in your life."

² Definitions are taken from Strongs, unless otherwise noted.

³ We do not believe that this verse is referring to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, but rather to salvation.

⁴ Disclaimer: Don't try this at home!

I. THE “PRIORITIES” LIST ON THE CHOPPING BLOCK



Many see their lives as a list of priorities with God always at the top. This list varies slightly from person to person. This model is very limiting in that it portrays parts of our lives as spiritual and other parts as “not really”. Allow me to place this list on the chopping block. “Wait a minute,” you might say. What’s wrong with seeking God first?”

Matthew 6:33

But seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

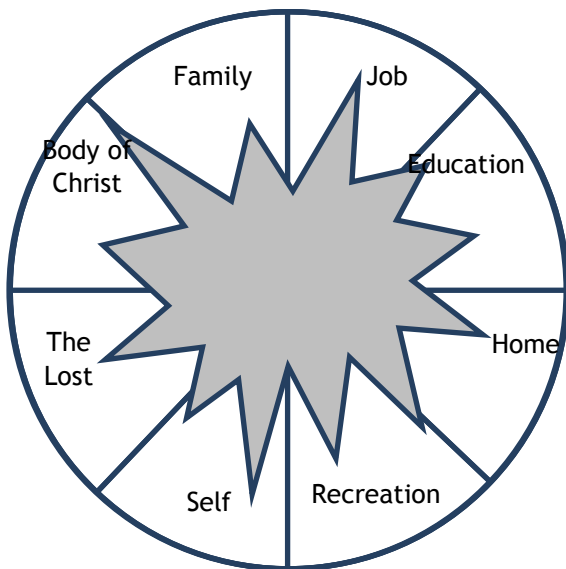
Think about this. Jesus was speaking to those who were not yet born again. They were to seek the kingdom of God and HIS righteousness. After Jesus rose from the dead, they would receive them. **WE ALREADY HAVE**

BOTH THE KINGDOM AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. We do not need to seek for what we already **HAVE**. So, even though God is everything to us, this verse does not teach believers to put God “first”.

II. SUPERABOUNDING GRACE: JESUS IN EVERY AREA OF OUR LIVES

God doesn’t want to be at the top of your list in life; in other words, He doesn’t want to be *part* of your life. He doesn’t need you to make Him the Lord. He **IS** the Lord. You believed that and were saved. Now, He wants **RIVERS OF LIVING WATER** to flow into every aspect of your life. It is no longer about how **YOU** love God, but about **HIS** love for **YOU**.

He isn’t focused on what **YOU** give to Him but on what **HE** can give to you! He knows that when you know His love for you, you will love Him and others. That’s why He wants to love you. He **KNOWS** it will change you. You don’t need to prove to God or anyone that He is Lord. Just let Him love you. Let the superabundance of grace flow superfluously into all you are and do. Following is a graphic of how this might look. Notice God is not even one of the pieces of this pie. His grace now flows to every area of your life.



1 John 4:10

*In this is love, not that **we** loved God, but that **He** loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.*

1 John 4:19

*We love (Him) **because** He first loved us.*

1 Corinthians 2:12

*Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been **freely given to us by God**.*

III. FRUIT GROWS

Some who come back to grace seek formulas for fixing their lives, but if you think about it, formulas are basically laws, and what we need now is grace not law. What we want to share with you in this lesson is this: God is love and we love BECAUSE He first loved us. Love is not a formula. Love is a fruit. It grows. As we understand and believe the love God has for us, love begins to grow in our hearts and flows into our lives almost effortlessly. So, this lesson will focus on some of the characteristics of God's love for you and ask you to allow this same type of love to flow out to others. We trust that the Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth and produce this love in your heart and life. We trust that this life inside of you will flow and bring healing where there has been hurt. It WILL take some time, so be patient. Soon, you will begin to see the fruit of love in your life and this love will bless those who receive it.

IV. AVOIDING SHAME AND BLAME

In putting together the next part of this lesson (the characteristics of God's love), we noticed that often when showing us what God's love IS like, scripture points out to what God's love is NOT like. To ignore what God's love is NOT would be to miss the whole picture of His love for us. For example, we rejoice to know that "God is for us!" Yet also we give praise that He is NOT against us. We see this so obviously is this well-known passage.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8

Love endures long and is patient and kind; love never is envious nor boils over with jealousy, is not boastful or vainglorious, does not display itself haughtily.

5 It is not conceited (arrogant and inflated with pride); it is not rude (unmannerly) and does not act unbecomingly. Love (God's love in us) does not insist on its own rights or its own way, for it is not self-seeking; it is not touchy or fretful or resentful; it takes no account of the evil done to it [it pays no attention to a suffered wrong].

6 It does not rejoice at injustice and unrighteousness, but rejoices when right and truth prevail.

7 Love bears up under anything and everything that comes, is ever ready to believe the best of every person, its hopes are fadeless under all circumstances, and it endures everything [without weakening].

8 Love never fails [never fades out or becomes obsolete or comes to an end].

In pointing out what God's love is and isn't like, we are frequently faced with the inadequacy of our love for others AND their inadequate love toward us. Seeing these nasty things in our lives and how they have or are hurting those we love (or seeing that you are not being loved this way) can be a very painful process indeed. Please know that we are not sharing these things as a way of blaming or shaming anyone. We ALL fall short in the area of love. So, when you realize your love isn't the type of love God gives, if you see yourself in the "what God's love is NOT like" column, or you sense this lack of love coming from others, do not be discouraged. Simply, allow God to heal your concept of His love for you until your love for others no longer reflects the devastating effects of law, but the glorious superabundance of His grace.

V. LOVE EACH OTHER AS (in the same way as) I HAVE LOVED YOU

*Jesus said, "As the Father loved Me, I also have loved you; abide in My love. 10 If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in His love. 11 "These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full. 12 **This** is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. 13 Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends," (John 15:9-13).*

- A. Notice that JESUS loved us as the Father loved HIM. That was His Father's commandment to Him...to LOVE us. By loving us, he abided in His Father's love.
- B. Now HE asks us to love each other as He loves US. By keep Jesus' commandment to love each other we will abide in HIS love.
- C. Jesus has a reason for giving us this new commandment. He says it clearly, that His joy would remain in us and our joy would be full.
 - *This should tell us something very important. It brings joy to Him to love us.*
 - *The second thing it shows us is that when we love each other, we will also have a fullness of joy.*
 - *Then, of course, our love for others will bring joy to them.*
- D. *Some have suggested that it is impossible for us to love as Jesus loved. Then why does He command it? Was He trying to frustrate us? No. He knew that we would become new creations and that the fruit of love would grow in our hearts.*
- E. *As we discuss God's grace superabounding toward you, allow yourself to view them through both perspectives. "THIS is how God loves ME!" and "THIS is how I will love others." This is what Jesus meant when he said to love each other AS He loved us...in the same way.*

VI. WHERE IS THE LOVE?

- A. *If you listen carefully, you will sometimes hear the idea of focusing on loving one another demeaned. We've even heard ministers say that focusing on loving each other can be "dangerous" because it takes the focus off of loving Jesus. We need to keep in mind that it was JESUS Himself who told us to love one another. When we care for and love each other, we are in fact, loving Him.*

Matthew 25:40

"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did it to one of the least of these My brethren, you did it to Me.'"

John 21:15-17

So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me more than these?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Feed My lambs."

16 He said to him again a second time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?"

He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You."

He said to him, "Tend My sheep."

17 He said to him the third time, "Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?"

And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You."

Jesus said to him, "Feed My sheep."

© C.D. Hildebrand

For a video version of this lesson or more information about this ministry, please go to:
<http://www.graceandfaithministries.org>

- B. *The good news is that as you begin to realize more and more how deeply God loves you and how He dearly accepts you “as is”, not only will healing come to your heart, but the fruit of love will begin to grow and flow out to others and bring healing to their hearts. You will be amazed at how easy it becomes to love each other when you know you are loved.*
- C. *This will likely take some time because law-based relationships are bogged down with multiple knots that need to be untied. Untying them can be painful, but the joy that comes when health is restored is worth it.*

VII. GRACE AND LOVE THAT SUPERABOUNDS

It isn't possible to cover every characteristic of God's love in this one lesson, but please allow us to discuss a few just to get you started in this great discovery process.

Ephesians 3:14-19

For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, ¹⁶ that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height— ¹⁹ to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

A. God's love for us is full of grace (unmerited favor).

- *God does not love us because we love Him.*
- *We cannot sew enough good to ever reap His good pleasure and love.*
- *The love we receive from God is completely undeserved and there is a very high probability that many of the people in your life DO NOT DESERVE your love either. Your kids have been misbehaving, disobedient and perhaps even cruel. Your spouse has been inconsiderate and rude. Your friends have been unkind. Your ogre of a boss has been treating you like a vending machine wanting more and more and then not even thanking you for all your hard labor.*
- *Yet because God demonstrates His love for us even though we don't deserve it, we can also show this type of undeserved love for others.*
- *Isn't that the kind of love we also need, that we long for, to be loved as we are without needing to do something to deserve it?*
- *Know that God loves you this way and let Him love others this way through you. No, they don't deserve it, and that's the point.*

Romans 5:6-11

*For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly. **7** For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. **8** But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were still sinners**, Christ died for us. **9** Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. **10** For if when **we were enemies** we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son, much more, having been reconciled, we shall be saved by His life. **11** And not only that, but **we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ**, through whom we have now received the reconciliation.*

- *We were God's enemies, yet He died for us.*
- *We were guilty sinners, and He died for us resulting in our justification.*
- *We were reconciled to God by His act of love for us.*

- *This reconciliation brings rejoicing.*
- *We love our family and friends in the same way, without them having a sense that they have to earn our love or that we will withhold our love if they are not “good enough”.*
- *No one likes to feel like someone is trying to “fix” them. It says two horrid things. One, something is wrong with me, and two, you don’t like me. Instead of trying to fix people, why not love them and let God do any fixing that is needed?*

B. God’s love for us is compassionate.

*Ever heard that rather comical but sad country song, “Here’s a Quarter, Call Someone Who Cares”? Ever feel like no one cares at all what you are living through? Does it seem like even God is indifferent? Let me assure you, He isn’t. He is **CONSTANTLY CONCERNED** about you. In fact, He is concerned about you, even when you are indifferent toward Him, even if you’ve done something to offend Him.*

- **God wants to hold you close and protect you. His love will cause us to want to help and protect those we love.**

Matthew 23:37

“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!

- **God is not neutral about what you are going through. He truly does care. He WANTS you to bring your concerns to Him.**

1 Peter 5:6-7

Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time, 7 casting all your care (anxiety) upon Him, for He cares for you.

- **God cares when you are weary.**

Matthew 9:36

But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.

- **God’s compassionate love causes Him to heal us.**

Matthew 14:14

And when Jesus went out He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick.

Matthew 20:34

So Jesus had compassion and touched their eyes. And immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him.

Mark 1:41

Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, and said to him, “I am willing; be cleansed.”

- **God’s compassion causes him to meet our needs.**

Matthew 15:32

Now Jesus called His disciples to Himself and said, “I have compassion on the multitude, because they have now continued with Me three days and have nothing to eat. And I do not want to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way.”

As we study the various ways in which God loves us, think of how you can love those in your life with the same type of love.

- We have compassion on each other.

1 Peter 3:8-9

Finally, all of you be of one mind, having compassion for one another; love as brothers, be tenderhearted, be courteous; 9 not returning evil for evil or reviling for reviling, but on the contrary blessing, knowing that you were called to this, that you may inherit a blessing.

C. God’s love is kind, merciful⁵, and forgiving.

- *The act of sending and giving up His Son is the kindness and love of God.*

Titus 3:4-7

But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, 6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

- His kindness and love was not because of our works of righteousness but according to his mercy.
- His kindness, love, and mercy caused him to pour His Holy Spirit upon us abundantly through Jesus.
- His kindness, love, and mercy caused us to be justified (made righteous) by His grace.
- His kindness, love, and mercy caused us to be heirs of eternal life.
- We were forgiven much without deserving it and we never were made to pay for our sin. His forgiveness continues to flow in our lives without merit and without penalty.

Ephesians 4:29-32

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

D. God’s favor and love for us is generous and superabounding.

Ephesians 1:7-8 AMPLIFIED

In Him we have redemption (deliverance and salvation) through His blood, the remission (forgiveness) of our offenses (shortcomings and trespasses), in accordance with the riches and the generosity of His gracious favor, ⁸ Which He lavished (superabounded) upon us in every kind of wisdom and understanding (practical insight and prudence).

1 Thessalonians 3:12 AMPLIFIED

And may the Lord make you to increase and excel and overflow (superabound) in love for one another and for all people, just as we also do for you.

E. God’s love for His children is risky.

- He’s willing to risk that we will take advantage of His grace.

It has been said that if we teach people about God’s grace instead of warning them about possible judgment, they will run out and begin to sin wildly.

⁵ Mercy is what is extended to someone who deserves to be punished, but then isn’t. Having mercy on someone is to not punish him/her for what he/she has done.

However, God knows better. He knows that His grace is so amazing that by understanding it, we will run from sin not toward it. Are we willing to take the same risk that our grace toward others will cause them to “sin” against us?

- **God is willing to risk that we will become spoiled and ungrateful.**
Others have mused that if we talk about grace and love too much, God’s people will become lazy, spoiled, and ungrateful. Actually, the opposite takes place. When we understand that we are “safe” in His love, worship follows.
- **God is willing to risk that we will despise His love.**
Few things are as painful as to have someone despise your love. It seems the more you love them, the less you are loved. God is willing to take this risk. Paul was willing to take this risk as well.

2 Corinthians 12:14-15

Now for the third time I am ready to come to you. And I will not be burdensome to you; for I do not seek yours, but you. For the children ought not to lay up for the parents, but the parents for the children. ¹⁵And I will very gladly spend and be spent for your souls; though the more abundantly I love you, the less I am loved.

Colossians 3:12-17

Therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, put on tender mercies, kindness, humility, meekness, longsuffering; ¹³bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do. ¹⁴But above all these things put on love, which is the bond of perfection. ¹⁵And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. ¹⁶Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. ¹⁷And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him.

There are many other facets of God’s superabounding love and grace for us that you will discover. Remember, love is a fruit and will take some time to grow. Also know that you have rivers of LIVING water flowing out of you, flowing in you to benefit you and through you to benefit others. God does not ask us to love in any way that He Himself does not love us, and He does not command us to love without putting in us the grace to love others in the same way He loves us.

Let the Spirit of God love all of those in your life through you. Graciously, compassionately, generously, with kindness, mercy, and forgiveness; even taking the risk of being despised or rejected, allow His grace to SUPERABOUND to you and through you.



OH, LOVE OF GOD

*The love of God is greater far
Than tongue or pen can ever tell;
It goes beyond the highest star,
And reaches to the lowest hell;*

*The guilty pair
bowed down with care,
God gave His Son to win;
His erring child He reconciled,
And pardoned from his sin.*

*Oh, love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure—
The saints' and angels' song.*

*Could we with ink the ocean fill,
And were the skies
of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill,
And every man a scribe by trade;*

*To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry;
Nor could the scroll
contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.*

*Oh, love of God, how rich and pure!
How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure—
The saints' and angels' song.*

REPEAT

*Frederick Martin Lehman | Meir Ben Isaac Nehorai
Public Domain
CCLI License # 3240603*

LOVE ONE ANOTHER

1 John 4:7-8

*Love one another
For love is of God
He who loves is born of God
And knows God.*

*He who does not love
Does not know God
For God is love.
God is love.*

REPEAT

*Janice Detweiler
© 1973 Maranatha! Music
CCLI License # 3240603*

ABOVE ALL

*Above all powers above all kings
Above all nature and all created things
Above all wisdom and all the ways of man
You were here before the world began.*

*Above all kingdoms above all thrones
Above all wonders the world has ever known
Above all wealth and treasures of the earth
There's no way to measure what You're worth.*

*Crucified, laid behind the stone
You lived to die rejected and alone
Like a rose trampled on the ground
You took the fall and thought of me
Above all.*

REPEAT

*Like a rose trampled on the ground
You took the fall and thought of me
Above all.*

*Lenny LeBlanc | Paul Baloche
© 1999 Integrity's Hosanna! Music
CCLI License # 3240603*