

Transfired Ministries

TO KNOW CHRIST AND TO MAKE CHRIST KNOWN

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The Grace of God

Most people, both Christians and non-Christians alike, know the words to one of the most famous Christian hymns ever written, Amazing Grace (John Newton, 1725-1807): "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found. Was blind, but now I see. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved. How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed!" This beautiful and brief song describes some of the wonderful effects of the grace of God in a person's life.

A simple and common definition of the word "grace" is "unmerited favor." Another definition is "an undeserved favor or gift; the underserved forgiveness, kindness and mercy that God gives us." Grace is something that can never be earned or deserved. It is something that is given freely because of love. Christians being saved purely because of the grace of God is one of the foundational doctrines of the Bible. The scriptures are very clear in teaching that we could never possibly earn the forgiveness of our sins and the gift of everlasting life. *Romans 6:23 "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ*

Continued on page 2

Andrew & Tammy Lapins - Evangelists

Transfired Ministries

You Never Know

I am sure that many times Christians choose not to speak to people about their faith and the gospel because they are convinced that it won't do any good. It can certainly get discouraging at times to faithfully share the gospel with people and not see any immediate and positive effects. But you never know how a simple conversation or handing someone a gospel tract can have a profound and lasting effect on someone's life.

Not long ago my wife Tammy was on her Facebook page going through messages she had received. She was surprised to read a message from a man she had gone to high school with in Ohio. During high school this young man used drugs and was known for being very disrespectful. This man told my wife that a short conversation they had on the last day of school their senior year had a profound and lasting effect on him. His message said: *"The last time I saw you I remember questioning your morals. You told me about purity...I left high school with a conviction that has stuck with me until now. Even though we ran with different crowds I was most affected by that last conversation on my last day of school."* In a second message this same man wrote the following about the effects of that conversation on the final day of high school: *"When school was finally ending, I ended up having a conversation with you about being a virgin. I was being my usual disrespectful self and you started telling me...how you were waiting to be married. The Tammy that I already respected became someone that deserved respect in my eyes. You made me realize that the reward of being yourself is always greater than being someone that you think the world wants you to be. Today I mentor young men that are lost, so that they know that there are better things in life. Man will always let you down, but Christ never will. This is a*

Continued on page 3

SENDING IN FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Please remember the following when sending in financial support for Transfired Ministries:

- 1.) Make all checks payable to: **Centerpoint**
- 2.) Send support to: **12836 Salem Redford, MI 48239**
- 3.) Make sure that on the memo of the check you write, "**Transfired Ministries**". This will be very helpful to the accountant in identifying our financial support.
- 4.) At the end of the year everyone who has supported us will receive a financial statement to use for tax purposes. *Thank you so very much!*

Jesus our Lord. All every human being has ever “earned” from God is eternal death (i.e. “the second death” *Revelation 2:11, 20:6, 21:8*) because of our sins. Salvation from the wrath of God and reconciliation with God is only possible because of the grace of God: *Ephesians 2:8-9* “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith – and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no one can boast.” *Romans 3:23-24* “...for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.” *Titus 3:5-7* “...he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.” How wonderful and amazing is the grace of God!

The grace of God is available to everyone (*Titus 2:11*) but it is not given to everyone. In *James 4:6* the bible says, “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.” God only extends His grace to those who are humble, stripped of all pride and self-righteousness and who understand their desperate need of God’s grace. One of the greatest tragedies in the church, that is causing deception and false conversions, is Christians trying to give grace to people that God is unwilling to give grace to because of their spiritual and heart condition. God reserves His grace for those who are humble, contrite, broken by a realization of their sin and wickedness and are filled with Godly sorrow (*Isaiah 57:15, 66:2, II Corinthians 7:10*). As we are sharing the gospel we need to be conscious of this and continually pray for godly discernment.

The grace of God is something that can be perverted and misunderstood. One of the primary purposes of the book of Jude is to educate believers about false teachers and give a warning of their message and tactics. One characteristic of false teachers is found in *Jude 4* “For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign

and Lord.” Jude wrote that some people would teach that because of God’s grace people can continue to live in willful and habitual sin (obviously lacking any genuine repentance) and still be forgiven and receive eternal life. Sadly, there are still many people who try and use the grace of God in this way today. The Bible clearly states that without repentance we will perish (*Luke 13:3*) and if someone claims to be a Christian yet continues in willful and habitual sin they are a liar and are no Christian at all (*I John 2:3-4, 3:6-10*).

The grace of God is not only what forgives and removes our sins, it is also an active and ongoing manifestation of the working and strength of God in the lives of Christians: *II Corinthians 9:8* “And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.” There will be visible evidence of the working of God’s grace in people’s lives: *Acts 11:23* “When he (Barnabas) arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts.” *Titus 2:11-13* describes the evidence and work of God’s grace in the life of a true Christian: “For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say ‘No’ to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, while we wait for the blessed hope – the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ...”

Again, it is impossible for someone to be born again and forgiven of their sins apart from the grace of God. Has someone truly received God’s grace, i.e. is a genuine Christian, just because they say they are or will there be visible and discernable effects of the grace of God in someone’s life? According to *Titus 2:11-13* if someone has truly received God’s amazing grace there will be an ongoing process of sanctification and holiness: 1. Saying “No” to ungodliness and worldly passions, 2. Saying “Yes” to living self-controlled, upright and godly lives, 3. Looking forward to and longing for the return of Jesus Christ.

As Christians we need to study and meditate on the amazing grace of Almighty God. But we should also learn about who that grace is given to (*James 4:6*) and how that grace is manifested in our lives and teach these truths to others as well. What a tragedy to sing about God’s grace but never truly receive it.

WEB-SITE & E-MAIL

PLEASE CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB OR
FEEL FREE TO CONTACT US VIA EMAIL.

WEB SITE: www.transfired.org

EMAIL: alapins@transfired.org

SPEAKING SCHEDULE

- **February 7** – Cornerstone Christian Center – Bridgeport, MI – Speaking AM only
- **February 28** – First Assembly of God – Chelsea, MI – Speaking AM & PM
- **March 7** – Canton Calvary Assembly of God – Canton, MI – Speaking AM & PM
- **March 14** – Redeeming Love Christian Embassy – Bay City, MI – Speaking AM only

Cutting Quote

Why is it that so many professing Christians make no spiritual progress, and indeed make no efforts to grow in grace? Why? Because they care nothing about it! To take up a "mere profession" is all they desire; but to proceed from one degree of piety to another; to grow in grace – is no part of their desire... Is it possible to be a Christian and yet destitute of this desire to grow in grace? No, it is not! I tell you, it is not! If you have no concern to grow in grace – there is no grace in you! You are a piece of dead wood – and not a living branch! You are a spiritual corpse – and not a living man! In this state there can be no growth – for dead things never grow!

John Angell James

short and brief chapter in my life that I've wanted to share with you for a long time. You were a seed God put in my life. God bless you and all you do." All we as Christians can do is plant seeds of God's truth into people's lives and God can make them grow (I Cor. 3:6).

A number of weeks ago I read a similar story from my friend Ray Comfort in his newsletter. He wrote: *"I received a very encouraging email recently. It was from someone who heckled me daily for 2-3 years, as I preached (open air) in New Zealand back in the mid 1980's: 'You always appeared to me to have a relationship with God that was the same as having a friendship with someone (with) flesh and blood. Anytime I have tried to talk to God, it always feels a bit artificial and I am a bit jealous of my Christian friends who seem to be able to hold a real conversation and hear the answers. I kind of "get it" on an intellectual level but can't seem to let go enough to let God in.' I told him to go to www.livingwaters.com and listen to "Hell's Best Kept Secret" and "True and False Conversion." Please keep him in your prayers. This was 30 years ago! It reminded me that God is faithful to watch over His word – which cannot return void. So never be discouraged as you reach out to the lost in this coming new year. Keep sowing in tears with the confident assurance that someday someone will reap in joy."*

Don't listen to the lies of the devil and your own sinful nature that try to discourage you from sharing the gospel. You never know what God can do with a precious seed of His truth that you plant in love and obedience in the life of someone else.

Paper Newsletter Renewal

We try to be the best stewards of the resources that God has given our ministry. If you receive a printed paper newsletter each month we are asking you to please indicate if you wish to continue receiving our newsletters and if you would like to change and begin receiving an email version instead. Please completely fill out the enclosed flyer and send it back to us before April 1st. Regardless of how long you have received our newsletters we are asking everyone who receives a paper newsletter to please participate. If we do not receive your completed renewal form back by April 1st your name will be removed from our mailing list.

Ten for Training Partnerships

The "Ten for Training" program allows you the opportunity to become a vital part of Transfired Ministries and also enter into an exciting partnership with our ministry. "Ten for Training" partners commit to financially supporting Transfired Ministries with \$10 each month and with their faithful prayer support as well. Your participation in this important program enables us to continue helping pastors and strengthening churches by conducting training in regards to biblical and personal evangelism, as well as producing gospel tracts and other resources to help people reach others for Jesus Christ. Instructions for sending in financial support can be found in the box in the lower left hand corner on the front page of this newsletter. Please make all financial support checks payable to: Centerpoint (our home church) and write "Transfired Ministries" in the memo area of your check. Please let us know of your desire to partner together with us in this program and we will add your information to our monthly prayer partner list. We greatly value your support and partnership in the gospel with Transfired Ministries!

TOOL TIME

Practical tools and tips for personal witnessing and evangelism

Tool/Tip of the Month: MINISTERING AT NURSING HOMES

I can remember as a young boy living next to a retired Christian couple. Once a week I would join this couple as they went to a local nursing home. We would set up chairs and some sound equipment in a multi-purpose room. Then we would walk through the hallways, invite residents to come to a service and help some elderly people in wheelchairs come down to the room we had set up. Once everyone was in the room and it was time to start my next door neighbors would begin leading the people in attendance in some hymns and a short song service. Then the husband would share a short message from the bible and take prayer requests. Once all the requests had been received the group would spend some time in prayer led by my neighbor. After the service ended we would spend some time talking with the people and then we would help those in wheelchairs back to their rooms. This was my first exposure to real Christian ministry. I believe that every church should have an ongoing ministry to people in nursing homes and retirement communities. These are wonderful places to minister and share the gospel and love of Jesus Christ. So many of the precious people who live in these facilities are lonely and forgotten people. Many residents at these kinds of places are unable to drive and go to church on their own. If they cannot come to church then the church should go to them and you could help make that happen. Contact a local nursing home or retirement village and ask to speak to the chaplain or supervisor. You could also speak with your pastor and see if he would like the church as a whole to get involved. This is also something just you or your family could do together.

Questions & Objections

(Taken from "The Evidence Bible" by Ray Comfort, Bridge Logos Publishers)

"Religion has caused more wars than anything else in history."

It is true that man has used religion for political gain. Nazi Germany had "God with us" engraved in German on the belts of Nazi soldiers. America said, "Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition." The law may even allow you to start the Christian Nazi Party, if you so desire. You can become a "reverend" for a few dollars through the tabloid classifieds and then further your political agenda with the world's blessing, no matter how much it smears the name of Christ.

Jesus tells us in John 16:2,3 that there will be some who, in their error, commit atrocities and murder in the name of God: "The time is coming that whosoever kills you will think that he does God service." However, He informs us that these are not true believers: "And these things will they do to you, because they have not known the Father, nor me." (See also 1 John 3:15.)

Jesus told His followers to love their enemies. So if a man puts a knife into someone's back in the name of Christianity, something obviously isn't right. If we human beings can detect it, how much more will God? He will deal with it on Judgment Day.

"I know that the Lord is always on the side of right. But it is my constant anxiety and prayer that I—and this nation—should be on the Lord's side."
-Abraham Lincoln

"Judge not lest you be judged. You therefore have no right to judge me when it comes to my sins!"

The world often takes this verse out of context and uses it to accuse Christians of being "judgmental" when they speak of sin. In the context of the verse Jesus is telling His disciples not to judge one another, something the Bible condemns (Romans 14:10; James 4:11). In Luke 6:41, 42 He speaks of seeing a speck in a brother's eye. In John 7:24 He said, "Judge not according to the appearance, but judge righteous judgment." If someone steals, lies, commits adultery or murder, etc., the Christian can make a (righteous) moral judgment and say that the actions were morally wrong, and that these sins will have eternal consequences. Chuck Colson said, "True tolerance is not a total lack of judgment. It's knowing what should be tolerated—and refusing to tolerate that which shouldn't."