JM Jason Mayfield

SERMON OUTLINE FOR PASTORS

OUR FATHER

Grace Upon Grace: Why Breakthrough Is Tied to Your Understanding of Grace

> Grace has a spiritual side that is settled the moment you believe and a physical side that grows with your insight into the finished work of Jesus, so you need an abundance of grace to reign in life.

MAIN TEXT
Romans 5:1-21

FIRST PREACHED
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SERIES
Our Father, Week 1 of 4

BY
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AT A GLANCE

THE MESSAGE

1. Why this series exists. Hebrews 4:16 says come boldly. You cannot come boldly if you do not feel able to pray. The three obstacles to prayer are discomfort, content, and condemnation. Condemnation is the real enemy.
2. Romans 5:1-5. We stand in grace in its full measure, not a portion. NASB "obtained our introduction" exposes the problem: most believers never move past an introductory knowledge.
3. Two manifestations. Spiritual (your name written, settled, nothing you can do about it) and physical (hope that lands in the earth and produces breakthrough).
4. The mechanism. Verse 5. Love poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. Physical manifestation is directly tied to insight and revelation of grace.
5. Romans 5:6-11. What the love of God actually is, and the stacked guarantees in "much more" and "more than that."
6. Romans 5:12-19. Adam and Jesus are similar but not the same. You cannot commit Adam's sin and you cannot reproduce Christ's obedience, yet both are fully imputed.
7. Romans 5:17. His favorite verse. In Adam death reigns. In Christ, you reign. The object changes.
8. Romans 5:20-6:2. Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more. Then he heads off the objection before it lands.



WATCH IT PREACHED

youtu.be/GPArLhSB4tg



READ THE ARTICLE

jasonmayfield.com/messages/our-father-grace-upon-grace

PREACHING NOTES

Before You Preach

This message opens a four-week series called Our Father, part of a larger series on the Lord's Prayer. Pastor Jason preached it with no notes and no points: he walked through Romans 5 verse by verse and let the text carry the message. These notes follow the order he preached. Keep the Scripture on the screen and keep reading it aloud. The power of this message is in the text itself.

It ran long (about 69 minutes). If you need to shorten it, move faster through the background on Adam and Moses in point 5 and keep the time for Romans 5:17 and 5:20.

Next week's message is on the law of Moses. This week sets it up by naming the "yeah, but" that people raise against grace. Do not try to answer every objection today. Ask people to give you a few weeks.

Introduction

> **MATTHEW 6:9-13** ESV
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> [9] Pray then like this: "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. [10] Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. [11] Give us this day our daily bread, [12] and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. [13] And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Pray the Lord's Prayer together. We are in a series on the Lord's Prayer so that you have content to pray with, using the template Jesus gave us.

The reason for this series is one verse: "Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need" (Hebrews 4:16). It is hard to come boldly before the throne of grace if you don't feel you are able to be there.

There are three obstacles to prayer:

- **Discomfort.** If you don't feel comfortable, you won't pray.
- **Content.** If you don't have anything to say, you won't pray.
- **Condemnation.** This is the real enemy of prayer. If you do not feel worthy to go boldly before the throne of grace, you will never do it. When condemnation gets a stronghold on you, you will not activate the things of God that actually set you free.

The next four weeks are about the "Our Father" of the Lord's Prayer, and about grace upon grace: "For from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace" (John 1:16).

A REVELATION OF GRACE

Tell the story of how the gospel of grace opened up.

Years into ministry, after reading the Bible through more than once, the gospel came alive. The first time through the Bible, you find the stories you already know. The second time, you start to see things you have never seen. By the third time, it was like the Holy Spirit took a blacklight and waved it over the page. For the first time, the gospel of grace came into view: a new covenant way of seeing God.

Illustration: the picture you can't unsee. There are images online that make no sense until you see what they are: purple columns that turn out to be the prongs of an upside-down fork. Once you see the fork, you can't unsee it. Once you see grace, you can't unsee it either. It changes everything.

Illustration: the kitchen in Adrian, Michigan. A few years later, at the kitchen counter with Honey Nut Cheerios, coffee in a Winnie-the-Pooh mug and a Bible open to Romans 5, the Lord spoke: **"Help my people experience grace for life through Jesus Christ."**

The gospel of grace is so transformative that Paul called it "my gospel" (Romans 2:16). Because it is so big, it is hard to know where to start. So instead of a systematic theology, we are going to parachute into Romans 5 and let the Scripture do the work. You will not leave fully understanding it. None of us do. We keep growing: "But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). The point is not becoming more gracious. It is learning about the grace God has toward you.

1. We Stand in Grace

> **ROMANS 5:1-5** ESV
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> [1] Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. [2] Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. [3] Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, [4] and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, [5] and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Romans 1 through 4 has brought us here: we are justified by faith. If you believe that Jesus Christ is Lord, that He died for your sins and rose from the dead, and that He is the soon-coming King, you are saved.

Look at verse 2: "Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand" (Romans 5:2).

- **Grace in its full measure.** If you are saved, the grace of God has been extended to you in its full measure. Not a little bit of grace. Not just enough grace. All the grace God has.
- **We stand in it.** We are not laid over, hurting or defeated in it. We stand. It is a proper posture and a proper position.

The NASB says we have "obtained our introduction" into this grace. Both renderings are good, but that word names the problem. Most of us have an introductory knowledge of the grace of God. We are introduced to it, and then we move past it very quickly. For most of the last 2,000 years the church has struggled to keep grace in front of it. When Martin Luther saw that we are saved by grace through faith, it split church history wide open. That is the power of grace.

Pentecost that works runs on grace. You don't get it from fun services that fall off in the parking lot. You get it from knowing what Jesus has done for you. The power of God and the grace of God are directly connected.

A word on "rejoice." Other translations render it "boast" or "exult." To exult is to celebrate from a place of victory: you have already won, and you celebrate from there.

2. Grace Has Two Manifestations

Verse 2 and verse 3 describe two things that happen when you stand in grace.

The spiritual manifestation: "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God." The moment you put your faith in Jesus, a spiritual reality takes place immediately. Your name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life. You are the righteousness of God in Christ. You are on your way to heaven, and there is nothing you can do about it. That is settled.

The physical manifestation: "Not only that." Have the congregation say it: *Not only that.* A lot of times we think things that are spiritual stay spiritual. But Paul goes on: "we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame" (Romans 5:3-5).

When you have hope, you have breakthrough, a promise, the ability to overcome. And hope is tied to faith: "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). This is where faith and grace and hope and the promises of God start to work together.

This doesn't mean everything is roses. If you are not dealing with something, you are dead. But in what you go through, you can access, by the grace in which you stand, a hope that comes down into the earth: one that resolves situations, brings breakthrough, produces healing and gives power.

You don't have to choose between grace working in heaven and grace working on earth. You can have both.

3. Breakthrough Is Tied to Your Insight into Grace

Verse 5 tells us how a spiritual reality becomes a physical one: "because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us" (Romans 5:5).

God's love and God's grace go together. Often what Paul calls grace, John calls love.

Key line: the physical manifestation of the grace of God in your life is directly tied to your understanding of, and your insight into, the grace of God.

- You don't have to get past the salvation prayer for the spiritual manifestation to work.
- But "I don't want to pastor a church full of people who know how to get saved and live in defeat." I want a church full of people who, through the grace of God, have learned how to access breakthrough in every area of their life.

Even in a series on prayer, receiving from God is less about prayer than about your revelation of grace. When we pray, we put on the table where we want breakthrough, and God gets the credit when He does it. But receiving it is tied to revelation. If you do not get under preaching that points to the finished work of Jesus and the price paid at Calvary, you will live from struggle to struggle.

Why is there so little breakthrough among believers? In many churches there is a lack of revelation on this subject. Some pastors have it but are afraid to preach it, because they fear their people will run wild. Others are moving so fast from one message to the next that it is hard to receive revelation.

Pastor Jason recently heard a pastor say, "You think the law was bad? Grace is harder than the law. Grace raises the standard." He called it an affront to the cross.

Breakthrough is going to be directly connected to your understanding, your insight, of the grace of God.

4. The Love of God and the "Much More"

> ROMANS 5:6-8 ESV
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> [6] For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. [7] For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare even to die—[8] but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Verse 5 told us how the physical manifestation comes: through the love of God poured into our hearts. Verses 6 to 8 tell us what that love is.

God gave you something you did not deserve and could not get for yourself. No matter how good you are, how right you have lived, or what family you were born into, you couldn't do it. "But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).

Grace, in its simplest definition, is unmerited favor: undeserved, unearned favor. You can't earn it and you can't buy it. It is not unique favor, for some and not others. It is favor for anyone who puts their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

> ROMANS 5:9-11 ESV
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> [9] Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. [10] For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. [11] More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.

Notice the language: "much more," then "much more," then "more than that." In the finished work of Jesus you have a guarantee that has a guarantee that has a guarantee.

- He died for your sins and brought peace between you and the Father.
- He was raised from the dead. He is not just a good teacher or a rabbi. He is God in the flesh.
- He sits at the right hand of God, and He is coming again.

Illustration: the parent and the teacher. Satan is "the accuser of our brothers" (Revelation 12:10). When he comes to accuse you, Jesus answers the way a parent does when the teacher calls with the wrong tone of voice: "I don't care what he did. You're not going to talk about my boy like that." The price has been paid. The receipt for that victory is the cross.

5. In Adam or in Christ

> ROMANS 5:12-16 ESV
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> [12] Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—[13] for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. [14] Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. [15] But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. [16] And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification.

Now Paul turns to Adam. We are all sinners because Adam sinned. Sin is in our nature. But that is not the whole story: death spread to all men "because all sinned" (Romans 5:12). We have reinforced our responsibility by participating in sin. "If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 John 1:10).

At the end of verse 12 the sentence breaks off. Paul stops to answer a Jewish understanding of the law, sin and death: where there is no law there is no sin, and where there is no sin there is no death.

- "sin is not counted where there is no law" (Romans 5:13). The word *counted* is an accounting term, a ledger of debts. It appears in only one other place in the New Testament, Philemon 18. Sin was in the world before the law, but there was no ledger.

- Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses. People were dying the whole time. That is Paul's correction: the problem was there long before Sinai.

Hold on to one phrase from verse 14: death reigned "even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come" (Romans 5:14). We will come back to it.

Adam and Jesus are similar, but they are not the same. Adam is a type of Christ, but "the free gift is not like the trespass" (Romans 5:15). Many Bible teachers reach illogical conclusions that would have been avoided by remembering this: types and shadows look alike, but they are not the same thing.

- Adam sinned once, and condemnation came on all humanity.
- Jesus' free gift followed *many* trespasses, every sin ever committed, past, present and future, and it brought justification.

Adam got it wrong from the easiest place he could have ever been. Jesus took on every sin ever committed. That is how powerful He is.

6. Receive an Abundance of Grace and Reign in Life

> ROMANS 5:17 ESV
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> [17] For if, because of one man's trespass, death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ.

This is Pastor Jason's favorite verse in the whole Bible.

Romans 5:17 tells you how to maximize your return on the grace of God: **you need an abundance of grace.** Fill your life with grace. Look toward grace, talk about grace, receive grace, listen to preaching about grace. "grace upon grace" (John 1:16).

That is why preaching should not spend its time on what we can't figure out (end-times charts) or what we already know. People need an abundance of grace, because the more insight and revelation you have of the grace of God, the more you see supernatural breakthrough.

Everyone is in one of two people: in Adam or in Christ.

- **In Adam, death reigns.** It is the curse of sin. God told Adam, "cursed is the ground because of you" (Genesis 3:17). The ground would resist him. Everything would work against him. That is death reigning over you.
- **In Christ, you reign.** Notice the object changes. Paul does not say "life will reign." He says those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness will "reign in life." God placed Adam and Eve in the garden to "have dominion" (Genesis 1:28). In Christ, that dominion is restored.

Why am I not seeing that? Probably because you don't yet have insight and revelation of the grace of God. Get that, and you can start to reign over things in your life.

Remember that "as he is so also are we in this world" (1 John 4:17). Is Jesus on the throne? Has He overcome sin? Is He reigning over life? Then the answer for you is the same.

7. One Man's Obedience

> **ROMANS 5:18-21 ESV**
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> [18] Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. [19] For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. [20] Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, [21] so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Go back to the phrase from verse 14: "even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam."

You cannot sin like Adam sinned. Adam was given one prohibition in the garden: do not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. He ate, his eyes were opened, and God sent him and Eve out of the garden (Genesis 3:6-8, 23). At the east of the garden God placed "the cherubim and a flaming sword" (Genesis 3:24). You couldn't commit Adam's sin today if you tried. And yet the full weight of his sin has been imputed to us.

You cannot obey like Jesus obeyed. He is God, born of a virgin. He lived a sinless life, obeyed the Father to the point of death on the cross, rose from the dead and ascended into heaven. Just stop at "sinless." Have you done that? No.

"For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous" (Romans 5:19). We can't sin like Adam, and we can't obey like Jesus. And yet, completely apart from our behavior, Jesus' righteousness is fully imputed to everyone who has faith in Him.

That is why "I'm a good Christian" misses it. The only thing you can do is serve a good Jesus, who is a good Savior, who gives His righteousness to us.

8. Where Sin Increased, Grace Abounded All the More

"Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more" (Romans 5:20). That could have been the whole message.

Some preaching is law, law, law: do, do, do; don't, don't, don't; detail after detail that doesn't matter. You don't need that. You need an abundance of grace, so that grace can abound all the more, "so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Romans 5:21).

Next week is about the law of Moses, because many of us live in the "He loves me, He loves me not" zone: How sure am I that I am saved? That I am blessed? That God is pleased with me?

> **ROMANS 6:1-2 ESV**
>
> [1] What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? [2] By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?

THE "YEAH, BUT"

Paul heads off the objection before it lands. Everything you hear about grace will meet a "yeah, but": "Yeah, but brother, you need to live right."

- Paul confronted that thinking and answered, "I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose" (Galatians 2:21).
- There will be plenty of "yeah, buts" online, and plenty in the Bible if you read it without rightly dividing the word of truth (2 Timothy 2:15).
- The biggest "yeah, but" to grace is Moses. That is next week.

Paul was a brilliant scholar. Jesus called fishermen, but when the message needed to be written down, He knocked a scholar off his horse on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:3-6). Paul would not spend five chapters building an argument and then say, "Don't pay attention to it." Romans 6:1-2 is not a retreat from Romans 5.

THE ALL CLEAR

For the first time since the revelation, Pastor Jason has the all clear to preach "the uncompromising, dangerous, church-splitting gospel of grace." "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes" (Romans 1:16). This message came on strong about 20 years ago, and its preachers were labeled "hyper-grace." Pastor Jason owns the label.

Everyone who has received a revelation of grace finds the same thing: **you will live better for God on accident than you previously did on purpose.** It unlocks something that can only be explained as the love of God poured into our hearts.

Illustration: "It can't be that good!" When the revelation first came, Pastor Jason was preaching it to Ashleigh in their living room, and she finally shouted, "It can't be that good!" She had grown up with a distorted version of grace that depended on how well you behaved: God will bless you when you get it right. But Christ died for us "while we were still weak" (Romans 5:6).

Conclusion

Everything in you will fight against this message. Give it a few weeks. Every time you think, “I don’t know about that,” hang on. You will see it page after page in the New Testament.

This is what it looks like to just read the Bible. No cute points, no poems, no alliteration. The Bible is a glorious, messy, confronting work of the Holy Spirit. “For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword” (Hebrews 4:12). It will get down into the joints and marrow of your life, and it will change you.

You need an abundance of grace. In Adam, death reigns. In Christ, you reign.



ABOUT

PASTOR JASON MAYFIELD

Pastor Jason Mayfield is the Senior Pastor of Citylight Church in Saraland, Alabama, an author, and the creator of POWER 27. He has given more than 20 years to the local church and helps pastors and ministry leaders lead BIG.

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