

**Systematic Theology Pt. 13**  
**Theology Proper (D)**  
**“The Communicable Attributes of God”**

**I. The Grace of God**

- Ps. 145:8

- The Old Testament idea of God being gracious, denotes the stronger coming to help the weaker who stands in need, but has no claim for gracious treatment. Such an act is experienced as an undeserved blessing or favor.

J. Carl Laney in his book, *“God” who He is, What He Does, How to Know Him Better* states, The overwhelming number of uses of this word in the Old Testament have the Lord as the subject. Jacob explained to his brother, Esau, that the growth of his family and property resulted from the fact that God had dealt “graciously” with him (Gen. 33:5, 11). David explained his prayer and fasting for his dying son by saying, “Who knows? The Lord may be gracious to me and let the child live” (2 Sam. 12:22). Often God’s grace is seen in His deliverance of His own from their sins (Mal. 1:9).

The word “gracious” (*hannun*) appears thirteen times in the Old Testament, eleven of which are in combination with *raham*, “compassionate.” Like the verbal form, the adjective “gracious” denotes the free and undeserved favor of a superior. All the occurrences of the word except one refer to the Lord being favorable toward the afflicted and needy. The exception, Psalm 112:4, uses the adjective to describe the God-fearing person who shares certain characteristics with God. But with people, this attribute is neither perfected nor permanent. With God, you can always count His being perfectly gracious. And because He is, he will hear the cry of the poor (2 Chron. 30:9), and He will never forsake His own (Neh. 9:17, 31).

- The Grace of God in the New Testament - The greek word “charis”, God’s undeserving favor.

*“The New Testament word charis particularly focuses on the provision of salvation in Christ. Grace is reflected in God providing salvation (Rom. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; 2:8) Christ brought grace and truth (John 1:18; Rom. 1:5); the grace of Christ enabled believers to have a positional standing before God (Rom. 5:2); Christ brought life instead of death through grace (Rom 5:17); the grace of Christ exceeded the sin of Adam (Rom 5:15, 20); the grace of Christ dispensed spiritual gifts to all believers (Rom. 12:6; Eph. 4:7); Jews and Gentiles alike are accepted through grace. (Eph. 3:2).” - Paul Enns*

- “Christianity is distinct from all other religions because it is a message of grace,” Charles Ryrie.

- Salvation is all by Grace!

It:

1. Commences in Grace.
2. Continues in Grace.
3. Completed by Grace.

### The Nature of Grace

1. Grace is God acting freely, according to His own nature as Love; with no promises or obligations to fulfill; and acting of course, righteously - in view of the cross.
2. Grace, therefore, is uncaused in the recipient: its cause lies wholly in the *GIVER*, in *GOD*.
3. Grace, also is sovereign. Not having debts to pay, or fulfilled conditions on man's part to wait for, it can act toward whom, and how, it pleases. It can, and does, often, place the worst deservers in the highest favors.
4. Grace cannot act where there is either *desert* or *ability*: Grace does not *help* - it is *absolute*, it *does all*.
5. There being *no cause* in the creature why Grace should be shown, the creature must be brought off from *trying to give cause* to God for His Grace.
6. The discovery by the creature that he is truly the object of Divine grace, works (*utmost humility*;) for the receiver of grace is brought to know his own absolute unworthiness, and his complete inability to attain worthiness: yet he finds himself blessed, *on another principle, outside of himself!*
7. Therefore, *flesh has no place* in the plan of Grace. This is *the great reason why Grace is hated* by the proud natural mind of man. But for this very reason, the true believer rejoices! For he knows that "in him that is, in his flesh, is no good thing"; and yet he finds God glad to bless him, just as he is!

### ***God's Grace is Amazing***

#### **II. The Love of God**

- 1 John 4:8
- God is Spirit, John 4:24
- God is Light, 1 John 1:5
- God is Love, 1 John 4:8

God's Love is:

1. Gracious - Israel; Deut. 7:7-8; 1 John 4:19
2. Sovereign - Rom. 9:13
3. Eternal - Jer. 3:13 & Rom. 8:39
4. Infinite - Eph. 2:4 & John 3:16

5. Immutable

6. Holy - it's not weak or sentimental.

7. Giving - John 3:16

J. Carl Laney in his book "God", points out that the Hebrew word "hesed" is translated "lovingkindness" or "steadfast love" or "unfailing love".

His love is an undeserved, selective affection by which he binds Himself to His people in a way that precipitates their redemption and blessing. He sovereignly grants His gifts and blessings beyond anything for which we might hope and in spite of what we might deserve. Yahweh's *hesed* will never diminish or cease, for it is founded on His covenant commitment. And so the psalmist encouraged us to "give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, His love [*hesed*] endures forever" (Ps. 136:1).

A.W. Tozer (his prayer in Ch. 20 on the love of God in his book, *The Knowledge of the Holy*) -

*"Our Father which art in Heaven, we Thy children are often troubled in mind, hearing within us at once the affirmations of faith and the accusations of conscience. We are sure that there is in us nothing that could attract the love of One as holy and as just as Thou art. Yes Thou hast declared Thine unchanging love for us in Christ Jesus. If nothing in us can win Thy love, nothing in the universe can prevent Thee from loving us. Thy love is uncaused and undeserved. Thou art Thyself the reason for the love wherewith we are loved. Help us to believe the intensity, the eternity of love that has found us. Then love will cast out fear; and our troubled hearts will be at peace, trusting not in what we are but in what Thou hast declared Thyself to be. Amen"*

### III. The Faithfulness of God

- 1 Pet. 4:19

- The word "faithful", "firmness", "certainty", and "dependability".

God is Faithful in:

1. Pardoning - 1 John 1:9

2. Protecting - 2 Thess. 3:3

3. Promising - Heb. 10:23

4. Performing - 2 Cor. 1:18-20

5. Purifying - 1 Thess. 5:23-24

6. Not Permitting - 1 Cor. 10:13

7. Preserving - 1 Cor. 1:8-9

*"Many people cannot be relied on to keep their promises. They break appointments, fail to show up at meetings, and neglect to follow through with their commitments and obligations. How encouraging it is to*

*know that there is One who is forever reliable, whose word can be trusted, whose promises will always be fulfilled. God is eternally true to Himself and His own attributes. He is like the Rock of Gibraltar in a world shaken by uncertainty. He is the One you can count on to always be there at your time of need.” - J. Carl Laney*

