

POWER ACADEMY

Switching On Your Faith

Module 1: The Basics

Lesson 5: Grace: License
to Believe

Power Academy Module 1

Lesson 5 – Grace: License to Believe

1. Christianity is the only religion in the world that is not based on rules and regulations. It is based on what Jesus has done to enable us to have relationship with God.
 - a. God loves you, and there’s nothing you can do about it!
 - b. If anyone understood grace, it was Paul.
 - c. Paul was a highly trained Pharisee, who was zealous for the law of Moses. He actually persecuted Christians.

2. Acts 8:1-3 – *“Now Saul was consenting to his [Stephen’s] death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. ² And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. ³ As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.”*
 - a. One reason Saul/Paul hated Christians so much is because although the Jews had been waiting for their Messiah to come, they did not believe that it was Jesus.
 - b. Everything changed for him when he had a personal encounter with Jesus.
 - c. Acts 9:1:9 – *“Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest ² and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. ³ As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. ⁴ Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” ⁵ And he said, “Who are You, Lord?” Then the Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.” ⁶ So he, trembling and astonished, said, “Lord, what do You want me to do?” Then the Lord said to him, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”*
 - d. Up to this point, Saul didn’t realize that when he was persecuting these Christians he was actually persecuting Jesus, the Messiah.
 - e. When we are born again and become spiritually alive, we receive Jesus. Our identity is in Him. Jesus told Saul, “You are persecuting Me!”
 - f. Jesus revealed himself to Saul as the Messiah.
 - g. Acts 9:15 – *“But the Lord said to him, “Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.”*

3. Even though Saul was highly religious, and responsible for the arrest and murder of Christians, the Lord still chose him for the work of the ministry!

- a. This is a picture of grace. Saul went from a point of law, encountered grace personified in Jesus, and his life was transformed.
 - b. Paul went on to have a greater revelation of grace than anyone else in Scripture.
4. Acts 20:24 – *“But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”*
- a. There is only one Gospel, and it is the Gospel of grace. Any other message is not the true Gospel.
 - b. The word for “grace” here is the Greek *charis*, which is everything that Jesus did for us. It is many things:
 - c. Undeserved favor
 - d. Benefits
 - e. The goodwill of God toward us (Luke 2:14)
 - f. Any message that is about rules and regulations and paints a picture of the Lord as one who is angry with mankind: that is not the Gospel!
5. Galatians 1:6 – *“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel.”*
- a. At the time Paul was preaching, there were other people preaching other gospels. They had moved away from the grace of God—everything Jesus had paid for—and moved back into the bondage of following rules in order to please God.
 - b. Anytime we add something to what Jesus has done, it is not the Gospel (good news). Paul uses the words “grace” and “Gospel” interchangeably.
 - c. Galatians 1:8 – *“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, **let him be accursed.**”*
6. Galatians 5:1 – *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.”*
- a. Now that you have experienced grace, don’t go back into the bondage of legalism!
Don’t make your relationship with the Lord based on your performance.
 - b. Every other relationship that we have with people is conditional. Even the best marriage relationship has some conditions to it. However, our relationship with God is 100% unconditional. He does not require anything from us other than to believe in and receive what Jesus has done for us.
 - c. God’s love for you is unconditional!

7. It is very subtle, but we can easily move out of grace and into a performance mentality.
 - a. Even our prayer lives can become complaining, or a constant asking the Lord for forgiveness.
 - b. This happens when we don't fully understand that the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus has completely paid the price for our sin.
 - c. We hold our sins against us, even though God does not.
 - d. Our hearts condemn us (1 John 3:20). But Romans 8:1 says that there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ!
 - e. However, when you gave your life to Jesus, you became worthy and in right-standing with God.
 - f. Most of us try to modify our behavior with these rules and regulations. But when we understand our true, righteous identity in Jesus, our actions will change. When we change the root, we will change the fruit!

8. Galatians 5:4 – *“You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.”*
 - a. We use this phrase in Christianese, “fallen from grace”, when someone has made a mistake or committed a moral failure.
 - b. Paul was explaining that those who try to please God or make their way into Heaven by obeying the law of Moses (rules and regulations, traditions), have fallen from grace. They have fallen away from what will actually save them!
 - c. It was (and still is) literally *impossible* to perfectly follow the law. Even if you wear mixed fabrics (like polyester and cotton), you are breaking the law!
 - d. The purpose of the law was to show humanity that they needed a Savior! (Romans 7:7).
 - e. The law strengthens sin (1 Corinthians 15:56; Romans 5:20).
 - f. There are those who incorrectly believe that teaching grace is giving people a “license to sin”. Well, people are sinning just fine without a license!
 - g. If this question does not come up, then the true Gospel probably isn't being preached.
 - h. But when you realize how much you are forgiven and accepted by God, you will not *want* to sin anymore!
 - i. Before sin was the focus, but God doesn't want us to be sin-conscious. He wants us to be righteousness conscious! When you focus on your righteous nature, you will be set free from sin.

9. Galatians 3:24 – *“Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”*
- We teach our children the difference between right and wrong through setting rules for them and applying a punishment if the rules are broken.
 - However, as they grow, they begin to understand the difference between right and wrong and begin to make good choices for themselves.
 - In the same way, the law was meant to teach us God’s standards for morality, what is right and wrong. However, now under grace, we are free to make righteous decisions and take righteous actions.
10. Matthew 5:17 – *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”*
- The law was not intended for born-again believers after the cross.
 - Jesus came to fulfill the law—to live it out perfectly *for us* so that we would not be obligated to do so.
 - We are living in the benefits that Jesus died to give us, so why would we put ourselves back under the law?
 - Even your good works will not be good enough! Your righteousness is by grace, not by your performance.
 - Ephesians 2:8-9 – *“⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.”*
11. Romans 6:22-23 – *“²² But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*
- The more we understand that we have been freed from sin, we will begin to display the fruit of holiness.
 - We have a capacity for holiness that we didn’t have before we were born again. Our sin nature was replaced with God’s nature. Holiness is a fruit of grace!
 - Holiness alone will not make you righteous. You could find the most outwardly perfect person on the outside, but who is rotten at their core. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart (1 Samuel 16:7).
 - On the other hand, you can find someone who is born again on the inside, but they are still a bit rough around the edges because their mind is still in the process of being renewed!
 - Holiness is a fruit, and fruit grows! Growth is a process and takes time.

12. Romans 7:8-9 – *“But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. ⁹ I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. ¹⁰ And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death.”*
- a. The law causes sin to have strength in your life. If you say, “You can’t have chocolate,” then you want chocolate even more!
 - b. Effects of Sin
 - Our outward behavior will never affect the way God sees and loves us, but it will affect the way we see and love God.
 - Sin gives an inroad to the devil.
 - There are natural consequences of sin.
 - It can affect your health and relationships.
 - It can affect your ability to receive from God because of the way you see God.
13. Romans 5:16, 17, 18, 19 – We cannot be justified by the law, we are made righteous through Jesus.
14. Romans 6:1-4 – *“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*
- a. Grace is not a license to sin; it is freedom from sin.
15. What happens when we sin as a believer?
- a. 1 John 1:7 – *“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”*
 - b. Sin here is singular. This is referring to eternal salvation.
 - c. 1 John 1:8-10 – *“⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”*
 - d. Your spirit is perfect, but your flesh has not yet been made new. Therefore, you will sin!
 - e. Hebrews 10:12-14 tells us that Jesus’ sacrifice paid for all sins, for all time.
 - f. However, when we confess our sins (plural, talking about individual sins), He forgives us and cleanses us from those sins.

- g. Confessing sins is not to get God to forgive us because we are already forgiven.
16. James 5:16 – *“¹⁶ Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.”*
- a. Confession of sins is to close the door to the enemy.
 - b. It is a recognition of sin so that it loses its power over you.
 - c. The enemy wants to keep your sin in secret, but when it is brought into the light it loses its power and you can receive healing.
 - d. Confession also releases you from the condemnation the enemy tries to bring.
 - e. Your outward actions do not affect your spirit, for bad or for good.
17. Ephesians 4:24 – *“And that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”*
- a. Holiness is part of your new nature.
 - b. Sin does not affect your eternal salvation.
 - c. Jesus has dealt with the sin issue as it pertains to our relationship with God. However, sin affects how we relate to the world around us.
18. **Grace is not a license to sin; it is a license to believe!**

Module 1 Lesson 5 Scriptures

Acts 8:1-3 – *“Now Saul was consenting to his [Stephen’s] death. At that time a great persecution arose against the church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria, except the apostles. 2 And devout men carried Stephen to his burial, and made great lamentation over him. 3 As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering every house, and dragging off men and women, committing them to prison.”*

Acts 9:1:9 – *“Then Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest 2 and asked letters from him to the synagogues of Damascus, so that if he found any who were of the Way, whether men or women, he might bring them bound to Jerusalem. 3 As he journeyed he came near Damascus, and suddenly a light shone around him from heaven. 4 Then he fell to the ground, and heard a voice saying to him, “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?” 5 And he said, “Who are You, Lord?” Then the Lord said, “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It is hard for you to kick against the goads.” 6 So he, trembling and astonished, said, “Lord, what do You want me to do?” Then the Lord said to him, “Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.”*

Acts 9:15 – *“But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel.’”*

Acts 20:24 – *“But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.”*

Galatians 1:6 – *“I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel.”*

Galatians 1:8 – *“But even if we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel to you than what we have preached to you, **let him be accursed.**”*

Galatians 5:1 – *“Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.”*

Galatians 5:4 – *“You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace.”*

Galatians 3:24 – *“Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.”*

Matthew 5:17 – *“Do not think that I came to destroy the Law or the Prophets. I did not come to destroy but to fulfill.”*

Ephesians 2:8-9 – *“⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not of works, lest anyone should boast.”*

Romans 6:22-23 – *“²² But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. ²³ For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Romans 7:8-9 – *“But sin, taking opportunity by the commandment, produced in me all manner of evil desire. For apart from the law sin was dead. ⁹ I was alive once without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. ¹⁰ And the commandment, which was to bring life, I found to bring death.”*

Romans 6:1-4 – *“What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? ² Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? ³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? ⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”*

1 John 1:7 – *“But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.”*

1 John 1:8-10 – *“⁸ If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.”*

Hebrews 10:12-14 – *“¹² But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, ¹³ from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool. ¹⁴ For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are being sanctified.”*

James 5:16 – *“Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed.”*

Ephesians 4:24 – *“And that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.”*