November 4, 2026

Receive What You Cannot Earn

November Series: Live Generously
Week Focus: Grace First

Scripture – Romans 5:1 (NIV) – *"Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Devotional Reflection

KNOWING ABOUT GOD'S GRACE IS NOT THE SAME AS RECEIVING HIS GRACE. A person may attend church, appreciate Christian teaching, participate in outreach, and demonstrate kindness without personally placing faith in Jesus Christ. While these activities may be meaningful, they cannot provide salvation. Scripture teaches that we are sinners in need of reconciliation with God, and that reconciliation is made possible through the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Romans 5:1 reminds us that believers are justified through faith. Justification means that God declares sinners righteous on the basis of Christ's saving work, received through faith rather than earned through personal goodness. We do not become acceptable to God by accumulating enough good deeds or contributing enough resources. Our peace with God rests upon Jesus Christ. Through repentance and faith in Him, we receive forgiveness and enter a restored relationship with God.

This truth also transforms our motivation for serving. Sometimes people give because they feel guilty. Others serve because they want to be noticed or believe that doing enough good things will make God more accepting of them. But when we understand salvation by grace, our motivation begins to change. We no longer serve to purchase God's favor. We serve with gratitude because Christ has already accomplished what we could never accomplish ourselves.

As we continue through this week, we must remember that generosity is important, but generosity is not the gospel. Jesus Christ is the Savior. Our giving, compassion, and service should flow from a personal relationship with Him. **WE ARE NOT SAVED BY WHAT WE GIVE TO GOD. WE ARE SAVED BY THE GRACE GOD PROVIDES THROUGH JESUS CHRIST.** And when that grace is received, it begins transforming how we live.

🔥 FOCUS FOR TODAY

Grace is received through faith, not earned through works.

🛠️ PRACTICE

- Read Romans 5:1 and reflect on what it means to have peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ.
- Examine whether you have been relying on religious activity, good works, or generosity to gain God's approval rather than trusting in Christ.
- Spend time in prayer affirming your trust in Jesus Christ, thanking Him for the forgiveness and reconciliation made possible through His saving work.

🙏 PRAYER

Heavenly Father, thank You that salvation is Your gift and not something I could ever earn. Help me trust fully in Jesus Christ and rest in His finished work. Remove pride, guilt-driven performance, and the desire for recognition from my heart. Teach me to serve with gratitude and sincere love. In Jesus' name, Amen.

✍️ REFLECTION QUESTION

Am I serving God because I have received His grace, or am I still trying to earn His acceptance?