

When Grace Meets Faith

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This past week, I found myself doing something pretty simple. I wanted to make a funny video. Nothing deep or spiritual, just something light to share and maybe make a few people laugh. To do that, I needed to download TikTok, and I did not think twice about it at the time. It just felt like a tool. But once it was on my phone, I ended up doing what most people do. I started scrolling, and before long, I was pulled into that endless stream of content that just keeps going.

As I watched, I noticed something beyond the humor and trends. Mixed in with everything else were a lot of conversations about God, salvation, and truth. People spoke confidently, and some of it sounded convincing. But the more I listened, the more I realized that a lot of what was being said was either incomplete or just not lining up with Scripture. It made me slow down and really think about how easily we can absorb ideas if we are not grounded in the Word.

One phrase kept coming up again and again, and it is one we all recognize. “Saved by grace through faith.” That phrase comes directly from the Bible, and it carries so much weight. But the way it was being explained often felt oversimplified, almost like it was being used to suggest that nothing else matters, that there is no real response expected from us. That did not sit right with me, so I went back to the passage itself and read it carefully.

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast” (Ephesians 2:8–9). When I really sat with that verse, I realized how important it is to let the Bible define its own words instead of relying on popular interpretations because grace is not just a vague spiritual idea, it has a clear and powerful meaning. Grace is God’s unearned favor toward us, Him giving what we could never earn no matter how hard we try, and that truth humbles me every time I think about it because it reminds me that salvation is not something I achieve, but something God freely gives.

Scripture reinforces this in a powerful way. “For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace” (Romans 3:23–24). That word “freely” carries so much significance. It means there is nothing we can do to deserve or earn our salvation. No amount of good works, no effort, no striving can place us in right standing with God on our own. Salvation begins with Him. It starts with His love, His mercy, and His willingness to reach down to us when we could not reach up to Him.

But then we come to faith, and this is where things often get misunderstood in today’s culture. Faith is often reduced to something intellectual, like simply agreeing that God exists or saying the words “I believe.” But when we look at how the Bible describes faith, we see that it is much more than that. Biblical faith is active and alive. It is not just something we say. It is something that shapes how we live and how we respond to God.

James addresses this very directly when he writes, “Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead” (James 2:17). That statement is strong, but it is meant to clarify what real faith looks like because faith is not just a mental acknowledgment or simply agreeing with truth in our minds. It is a kind of trust that leads to action, a belief in God that is deep enough to actually follow Him even when it requires obedience, change, or surrender. When faith is genuine, it does not remain passive or still, but instead it moves and shows itself in the way we live.

When we begin to understand both grace and faith in their biblical sense, we see how they work together rather than against each other. Grace is the source of salvation. It is where everything begins, with God’s initiative and His gift. Faith is the means by which we receive that gift. It is our response to what God has already done. These are not opposing ideas. They are connected in a way that reveals the full picture of salvation.

This also helps us understand where baptism fits into the conversation, because it is often misunderstood. Some people see baptism as a work, something a person does in order to earn salvation. But when we look at Scripture, we see that baptism is not presented as a human achievement. It is presented as an act of faith, a response to God’s grace.

Paul explains this clearly when he writes, “Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God” (Colossians 2:12), and that phrase, “through faith in the working of God,” is so important because it shows that baptism is not about what we accomplish, but about what God does. Scripture does not present baptism as optional or merely symbolic, because it is in this moment of faith that we are united with Christ, as we trust in His work while being buried and raised with Him. Baptism is not a work that earns salvation, but the moment where, through faith, we receive what God has promised and our new life in Christ begins.

We see the same principle in Acts when the people ask what they should do, and the response is, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38), which shows that this is not about earning forgiveness, but about trusting God to forgive as He has promised, because in this step of faith God is at work, and this is what faith looks like when it moves into action, a heart that truly believes and then follows through

Sometimes the idea of “grace through faith” is presented in a way that removes any sense of obedience, as if nothing is expected from us at all. But when we read the whole of Scripture, we see that this is not the case. Obedience is not about earning salvation, but it is very much a part of responding to it.

The writer of Hebrews makes this clear when he says, “And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him” (Hebrews 5:9), and this shows that obedience flows from trust because it is the natural result of genuine faith, so when we truly believe God, we are moved to follow Him, not out of obligation or pressure, but out of a sincere trust and surrender to Him.

The more I reflect on it, the clearer it becomes. Salvation begins with God’s grace and is received through a faith that responds to Him. After all the noise and opinions, I came back to something steady. God’s Word does not change. When I trust Him and simply follow, placing my life in His hands, there is a kind of peace the world cannot give.