

## “Grace to Help”

### Hebrews 4:12-5:2

Over and over again the author of Hebrews warns his readers against being disloyal to Christ. To abandon the Son of God will lead to a fearsome accountability. But intermixed with these warnings are powerful invitations assuring the weak and sinful they have nothing to fear if they will repent and bring their sins to Christ. No one should allow shame or fear to prevent him or her from coming to Him. In fact, all are invited to boldly draw near because His is a “throne of grace” where we are certain to find mercy for our sins but also divine help for our weakness. When we come to that throne we’re told we’ll find “grace to help in time of need” meaning Jesus can help us find freedom so we can stop sinning. He not only forgives us, He frees us and that’s wonderful news because sin brings much trouble to our lives. We need God’s help, not just God’s mercy if we’re going to live blessed lives.

#### 1. Read 4:12-5:2

#### 2. The Warning

Abandoning Christ whether by small, subtle steps (2:1), passive neglect (5:12) or defiant apostasy (10:29) can harden the human heart until repentance becomes impossible (6:6; 12:16, 17). However, we should remember that the warnings given in this letter are not to pronounce judgment but rather as a plea calling those moving down this road to repent and return to Christ (1Jn 5:16, 17; 2Jn 1:7-11).

#### 3. The Invitation

In God there is much patience and mercy toward human weakness. He understands our ignorance, our passions, our fears and our deceptions. It’s not that sins of weakness don’t do damage, they do! (sickness, loss of ministry, broken family relationship, public shame, jail, career failure, low self-esteem, anger, depression...). But as long as the deepest motivations in my heart are submission to and faith in Jesus Christ, He forgives me and helps me gain freedom.

- How often? Matthew 18:21, 22; Luke 17:4

#### 4. The Danger

This truth is greatly comforting, however, we should never allow it to undermine our determination to live a pure and holy life. It should never lead to passive indifference to sin because sin always brings with it a dangerous by-product: deceitfulness. One way or another we are deceived into sinning in the first place, but as time passes if that sin is not removed it tends to deceive us further. Our thinking about God and His people becomes twisted. The incessant conviction every time we do it makes us harden our conscience to get relief. In time we grow angry at God and His people, blaming them for making us feel guilty. So, though sin won’t keep us out of heaven (thanks to the blood of Christ), sin can, if let persist too long, damage the faith that saves us. You might say, sin can slowly smother faith.

- John 8:34 “...everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin.”
- Romans 6:16 “...you are slaves of the one whom you obey...”

#### 5. The Rescue

If we refuse to take sin seriously God will step in with harsher forms of discipline than just the spoken word. He won’t let us go without a fight, so He’ll initiate discipline as needed to help “change our minds” until we decide deep down that we want to be free. After all, “whom He loves He disciplines and chastens every son that comes to Him” (Heb 12:6), so in some measure all of us need this treatment at times.



# LIFE LESSONS

## WITH DR. STEVE SCHELL

Teaching the Bible  
practically & understandably  
and seeing lives changed by  
the truth of the Gospel

### 6. What “grace to help” does He provide?

- He forgives my sins because of His Son’s sacrifice (no wrath)
- He gives His Holy Spirit to dwell in me (convict, encourage, guide, heal, discern...)
- He speaks through His Word
- He surrounds me with His people (prayer, encouragement, confrontation...)
- He guards me with His angels (Ps 91:11-13)
- He guides me away from temptation (Mt 6:13, 1Co 10:13)
- He teaches and disciplines me like a Father (Heb 12:7-11)
- He refreshes me with His Spirit when I worship
- He grants me spiritual authority to bind the enemies’ power (Mt 18:18; Lk 10:19) and in prayer (Mt 18:19)
- He leads me into His plan for my life which is full of eternal purpose (knowing I’m called and fruitful is a great protection)

### 7. What is my role?

- Pray: pursue on-going communication (listening more than talking)
- Read the Word
- Gather with His people (Heb 10:24, 25)
- Worship Him
- Confess my sins (constantly let God show me my sins; communion; confess some sins to others, Jas 5:16)
- Repent regularly: Accept responsibility and determine to change by drawing on God’s power
- Accept the price that comes with being a disciple of Jesus
- Take steps of faith in areas where I know His will (Heb 11:6)
- Step out in service to others (reorient the heart off of self)

### 8. Questions

- Describe a time when God gave you “grace to help in time of need.”
- Look over the list in item #7. Describe how one of these is part of your life.