



# LESSON 2

# Making Grace Amazing

*“All heaven is interested in the cross of Christ, all hell terribly afraid of it, while men are the only beings who more or less ignore its meaning.”*

**OSWALD CHAMBERS**

## **Kirk’s Comment**

Grace never made more sense to me, or became so beautiful, as when I saw it in the light of God’s Holy Law. The Law illuminates a sinner’s understanding and shows that God’s grace is amazing.

## QUESTIONS & OBJECTIONS

*“Mother Nature sure blew it...”*

Hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, droughts, and earthquakes kill tens of thousands of people each year. Multitudes endure crippling diseases, endless suffering, and unspeakable pain. Many non-Christians credit a heartless Mother Nature for giving us all this grief. They fail to consider that “Mother Nature” has a Senior Partner—Father God.

However, if God is responsible for all this heartache, that presents an interesting dilemma. If God is an “all-loving” Father figure, as we are told, we seem to have three choices: 1) God blew it when He made everything (He’s creative but incompetent); 2) God is a tyrant, who gets His kicks from seeing kids die of leukemia; 3) something between God and man is





We can see the work of God's Law illustrated in civil law. For example, when there is no visible sign of the law on a freeway, motorists often transgress the speed limit. Apparently each speedster says to himself that the law has forgotten to patrol his part of the freeway. He is transgressing the law by only 15 mph, and besides, he isn't the only one doing it.

Notice what happens when the law enters the fast lane, with red lights flashing. The speedster's heart misses a beat. He is no longer secure in the fact that other motorists are also speeding. He knows that he is *personally* as guilty as the next guy, and *he* could be the one the law pulls over. The fact that there are other people doing it is irrelevant. Suddenly, his "mere" 15 mph transgression doesn't seem such a small thing after all; it seems to abound.

Look at the freeway of sin. The whole world naturally goes with the flow. Who hasn't had an "affair" (or desired to) at one time or another? Who in today's society doesn't tell the occasional "white" lie? Who doesn't take something that belongs to someone else, even if it's just a little "white-collar" crime? Sinners know they are doing wrong, but their security is in the fact that so many others are just as guilty, if not more so. It seems God has forgotten all about sin and the Ten Commandments; the sinner says in his heart, "God has forgotten; He hides His face; He will never see it" (Psalm 10:11).

Now watch the Law enter with red lights flashing. The sinner's heart skips a beat. He lays his hand upon his mouth. He examines the speedometer of his conscience. Suddenly, it shows him the measure of his guilt in a new light—the light of the Law. His sense of security in the fact that there are multitudes doing the same thing becomes irrelevant, because every man will give an account of *himself* to God. Sin not only becomes personal, it seems to "abound." His mere lust becomes *adultery of the heart* (Matthew 5:27,28); his white lie, *false witness* (Revelation 21:8); his own way becomes *rebellion*; his hatred, *murder* (1 John 3:15); his "sticky" fingers make him a thief—"Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound." Without the Law entering, sin is neither personal, nor is it evident: "For without the Law, sin is dead [the sense of it is inactive...]" (Romans 7:8, Amplified).



It was the “Commandment” that showed Paul sin in its true light—that it is “exceedingly sinful” (Romans 7:13). Paul spoke from his own experience because he had sat at the feet of Gamaliel, the great “teacher of the law,” and therefore saw sin in its vivid colors.

According to the Scriptures, “[the real function of] the law is to make men recognize and be conscious of sin [not mere perception, but an acquaintance with sin which works toward repentance . . . ]” (Romans 3:20, Amplified).

Charles Spurgeon said that “the Law serves a most necessary purpose.” How true are his words regarding sinners: “They will *never* accept grace, until they tremble before a just and holy Law.” Those who see the role of the Law will be Sons of Thunder *before* they are the Sons of Consolation. They know that the shoes of human pride must be removed before sinners can approach the burning bush of the gospel.

It is important to realize that we *can* evoke a tearful response from sinners by saying that God loves them. The message is more appealing to both the Christian and the sinner. It certainly is easier to speak of love than of sin. Many years ago, before I understood the function of God’s Law, I told a prostitute of God’s love and was delighted that she immediately began weeping. Unbeknown to me, her tears were not tears of godly sorrow for sin, but merely an emotional response to the need of a father’s love. In my ignorance, I joyfully led her in a sinner’s prayer. However, I was disappointed sometime later when she fell away, and her tender heart became very callous toward the things of God.

Paradoxically, the Law makes grace abound, in the same way that darkness makes light shine. It was John Newton, the writer of “Amazing Grace,” who said that a wrong understanding of the harmony between Law and grace would produce “error on the left and the right hand.” I don’t know if any of us could claim to have a better understanding of grace than the one who penned such a hymn.

To help sinners understand that grace is truly amazing, use the Moral Law of God. As John Wesley advised a young evangelist, for effective evangelism, preach 90 percent Law and 10 percent grace.



## QUESTIONS

- 1. What is a definition of grace?**
- 2. Why should the Christian be concerned about how to make grace amazing to the world?**
- 3. What is it that makes grace abound?**
- 4. What caused the speedster to see the seriousness of his transgression?**
- 5. What did Charles Spurgeon say about the Law?**
- 6. Why did the prostitute weep at the mention of God's love?**



## 7. What did John Newton say about the harmony between Law and grace?

### FEATHERS FOR ARROWS

Imagine going back in time two hundred years and trying to describe a jumbo jet. You say, “Where I come from, we have these huge tin cans, weighing hundreds of thousands of tons, that float across the sky filled with hundreds of people.” Someone says, “Do you think we are stupid? That’s impossible. There is such a thing as the law of gravity. Not even a feather can float across the sky unaided, without descending.”

However, we now have discovered that when an object of a particular shape travels at a certain speed, it moves out of the law of gravity into another law, the law of aerodynamics. The law of gravity remains, but the object supercedes it.

We have also discovered that when a person becomes a Christian, he moves out of one law into another. The law of life in Christ Jesus supercedes the law of sin and death. The Christian lives in a higher plane: “For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2).

### WORDS OF COMFORT

As I stood at the checkout counter in a well-known hardware chain, a woman gasped and pointed to the floor. There was a pile of white sand pouring from a 50-pound bag I had placed into my shopping cart. I had accidentally made a hole in it when I lifted it a few minutes earlier. I looked behind me and saw a 180-foot trail of white sand going back to where I had begun my journey. The sand was thin when I had sped up and thick when I had slowed down. Its trail not only revealed when I had



turned to the left and to the right, but it also led directly to the guilty party.

### Last Words

**Tony Hancock** (British comedian):

**“Nobody will ever know I existed. Nothing to leave behind me. Nothing to pass on. Nobody to mourn me. That’s the bitterest blow of all.”**

### Memory Verse

*“Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.”*

**ROMANS 5:20**