

ALL OF GOD

Grace

- He inclined his ear unto me.
- He heard my cry.
- He brought me up out of the pit and miry clay.

psalm 40:1-3

Romans 8: 38, 39

- He put a new song in my mouth.
- He established my footsteps.
- He set my feet upon a rock.

NONE OF ME

Satan capitalizes on a weak area and diverts your focus from God. Satan makes you feel like a failure and a worthless Christian.

Satan pulls you lower and lower into the pit of despair as you agree with his accusations (Giving up)

When you hit bottom, Satan turns on you and condemns you for being there!

Satan challenges you to pull yourself out of the miry clay by your own self-effort and you get nowhere! (Giving in)

Finally, you are "reduced" to trusting God! You cry out to Him in your helplessness and He alone rescues you. (Giving over)

Welcome to PITY PIT

Pity Pit / Victory

...He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you (Is. 30:19, NASB).

So the helpless has hope, and unrighteousness must shut its mouth (Job 5:16, NASB).

The Lord preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me (Ps. 116:6, NASB).

In my distress I called to the LORD and He answered me... To the roots of the mountains I sank down; the earth beneath barred me in forever. But you brought my life up from the pit, O LORD my God. When my life was ebbing away, I remembered You, LORD, and my prayer rose to You, to Your holy temple. Those who cling to worthless idols forfeit the grace that could be theirs (Jonah 2:1, 6-8, NIV).

The Lord will fight for you while you keep silent (Exod. 14:14, NASB).

For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Rom. 8:38, 39, NASB).

From the ends of the earth I call to You, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I (Ps. 61:2, NIV).

I will sing to the LORD, for He is highly exalted (Exod. 15:1, NIV).

The LORD is my strength and my song; He has become my salvation (Ps. 118:14, NIV).

The LORD Himself goes before you and will be with you; He will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged (Deut. 31:8, NIV).

This is the victory that has overcome the world, even our faith (1 John 5:4b, NIV).

GRACE for the Rest of Your Life

THE PITY PIT

CORRECTIVE GRACE: Recognizing Enemy Tactics; Futility of Self Rescuing Self; Victory That Overcomes; Grace by Default

Recognizing Enemy Tactics

Starting at the upper left of the card, we will look at some of the subtle tactics of Satan, the enemy of our soul. Note the three fiery darts (pitchforks) of the enemy: lies, truth (to his advantage) and history. He knows our history. He is a great historian. He is not omniscient. He does not know our future, but he loves to review our past for us. He also is a great liar and the father of lies (1 Jn. 2:4)—and the truth is not in him (Jn. 8:44). He can mix truth with lies when it works to his advantage. He can also throw in Scripture, because he knows the Scriptures very well (Jas. 2:19).

Satan disguises himself as a minister of righteousness or an angel of light (2 Cor. 11:14-15). He does not come in a red suit with a tail as he is sometimes pictured. He is a counterfeiter, appearing as close to the real thing as possible. Revelation 12:7-10 speaks about Satan being the old serpent, who goes out to deceive the whole world, and goes before God night and day accusing the brethren. He is an accuser and a deceiver.

Think about this: You know when you are being tempted; you know when you are being accused; but do you know when you are being deceived? No! Deception is the very thing that you do not know—otherwise it would not be deception! This is a subtle area where Satan excels.

Satan tempted the Lord in the wilderness, and the Lord came back with the truths of Scripture each time. Satan departed and waited for another opportunity. Luke 4:13 says, *“And when the devil had finished every temptation, he departed from Him until an opportune time.”* He waits for an opportune time to attack us also. Paul, knowing this, warns us, *“And do not give the devil an opportunity”* (Eph. 4:27).

Missionary author Isabel Kuhn referred to Satan as a “heel-nipper.” Another name for him is the “Grace Snatcher.” He wants to snatch the precious truths of God’s GRACE. He does not want GRACE to grow or spread. (See 2 Pet. 3:18 and 2 Cor. 4:15.)

Now let’s follow the fellow who is under attack. **Satan seizes an opportunity and capitalizes on a weak area in your life and diverts your focus from God. He makes you feel like a failure and a worthless Christian.** He is a master at it: “You are having trouble with that weakness in your life? I thought you would be over that by now, I mean you are thirty, almost forty, and you are still struggling with that? There is never going to be any end to this, is there?”

Futility of Self Rescuing Self

Next picture: **Satan pulls you lower and lower into the pit of despair as you agree with his accusations.** (You are “Giving Up.” “What is the use of fighting?”) He continues to review your history, and he uses lies with some truth mixed in.

“Welcome to the Pity Pit”

Next picture: **When you hit bottom, Satan turns on you and condemns you for being there.** This is exactly where he wants you. One missionary speaker was so discouraged on the mission field that he felt like hiding in the closet, laying in a fetal position and sucking his thumb. He just wanted to quit and go home. This is a real sign of despair. Satan wants to render us immobile.

Next picture: **Satan challenges you to pull yourself out of the miry clay by your own self-effort and you get nowhere!** (You are **“Giving In.”** You are tired of the battle.) He continues, “Maybe you just need to go for a walk; get some exercise. Get something to eat—something that you really enjoy.” Or “Go shopping, go for a drive.”

Perhaps you’ve heard these familiar phrases:

- *“God helps those who help themselves.”*
- *“Pull yourself up by your own bootstraps.”*
- *“Get up, dust yourself off, and get on with it.” (This one is by Ann Landers)*

Do you see this fellow trying to pull himself out of the miry clay (quicksand) by his hair? Impossible! He cannot get any leverage! They say the more you fight in quicksand, the faster you go down. Even well meaning rescuers fail in their attempts. Many people get stuck here and sigh, **“I can’t.”**

“I have sunk in deep mire, and there is no foothold” (Ps. 69:2).

A phrase from an article in Moody Monthly Magazine suggests, “True Christian psychology is going down into the squalid mess with them and giving them boots and a ladder.” Do you think that would help?

“Beware of any belief that makes you self-indulgent; it came from the pit, no matter how beautiful it sounds.” (*Oswald Chambers*)

Victory That Overcomes—Corrective Grace

Finally after all the struggle—he is exhausted! (This could last a couple hours, a couple of days, a couple weeks, a couple months, a couple years, a couple decades, it could go on and on.)

Insert here the true story by Dr. Andrew Bonar (refer to notes and quotes at end of lesson).

Finally you are “reduced” to trusting God. You cry out to Him in your helplessness, and He alone rescues you. (You are **“Giving Over.”** You entrust yourself to God.) *“He will surely be gracious to you at the sound of your cry; when He hears it, He will answer you” (Isa. 30:19).*

Job understood this truth. He said, *“The helpless have hope” (Job 5:16).* Usually when you feel helpless, you feel hopeless. No, the helpless have hope. That is your qualification.

The Lord is waiting for us to acknowledge our helplessness and our dependence on Him. It is a matter of acknowledging and agreeing with God about our condition. When we call on Him, He will then rescue us out of the “Pity Pit.”

The phrase, **“reduced to trusting God,”** was adapted from a film called “Peace Child.” A young missionary couple desired to translate the New Testament into a tribal language.

They were well-trained, intelligent people, working on the language in the midst of this particular tribe. One day the two tribes went to war with each other, and nothing the missionaries did or said could get these two parties at peace. For about a month, every day, they would try to talk to the village leaders, but to no avail. In the film, the missionaries confess, **“We had always depended on what we had learned, but now we were ‘reduced’ to absolute dependence on God.”** Then they went directly to God with the problem. The very next day, the one tribe came and offered a child to the other tribe; and they accepted. At that moment, peace was realized between the two tribes. God provided a redemptive analogy.

When we come to the end of our own resources and confess our dependence on God, He alone rescues us.

Now start again at the top of the card at **GRACE**. Read inside the downward arrow, *“He inclined His ear unto me, He heard my cry, He brought me up out of the pit and miry clay”* (Ps. 40:1-2a).

He heard our cry. We acknowledged our helplessness, “We can’t,” but “He can.”
“ALL OF GOD” and “NONE OF ME.”

Because of His GRACE, the cross and the power of the resurrection, we have a turning point in history that makes victory possible. We have an opportunity to **PIVOT out of the PIT**.

Two letters are in **PIVOT** that are not in **PIT**. What are they? “V” and “O.” “V” will stand for Victory, and “O” will stand for Overcome. Refer to 1 John 5:4, *“And this is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith.”* FAITH is the response to GRACE. So as we call to Him in faith, He in grace rescues us. So we will **PIVOT out of the PIT!** Why stay in the PIT when we have a WAY out? Corrie Ten Boom expressed it this way:

“There is no pit so deep that God’s love/grace is not deeper still.”

**I was sinking deep in sin, far from the peaceful shore,
Very deeply stained within, sinking to rise no more;
But the Master of the sea heard my despairing cry,
From the waters lifted me, now safe am I.
[Christ] lifted me! [Christ] lifted me!
When [no one] else could help, [Christ] lifted me.**
(James Rowe)

Oswald Chambers once said, “Lord, deliver me from the luxury of self pity.” Luxury? Well, it really is a luxury; you just sit back, bask and bathe in it—like a bubble pity bath.

Now read inside the upward arrow, *“He set my feet on a rock, He established my footsteps, He put a new song in my mouth”* (Ps. 40:2b-3).

The fellow has been rescued, lifted up and placed on the Rock:

“From the ends of the earth, I call to You, I call as my heart grows faint; lead me to the rock that is higher than I” (Ps. 61:2). *“Trust in the Lord forever, for in God the Lord we have our everlasting Rock”* (Isa. 26:4).

**My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand.**

(Edward Mote)

Romans 8 begins with no *condemnation* and ends with no *separation* (book-ends).

Notice the musical notes which replace Satan's fiery darts:

"I will sing unto the Lord a new song" (Ps. 98:1). *"I will sing to the Lord for He is highly exalted"* (Exod. 15:1). *"The joy of the Lord is my strength"* (Neh. 8:10). *"The Lord, Himself goes before you and will be with you, He will never leave you, nor forsake you, do not be afraid, do not be discouraged"* (Deut. 31:8). He rescues us; He puts us on the Rock (Jesus), goes before us, goes behind us and gives us a song in our hearts.

Grace by Default

Can you think of a "last resort" prayer—that prayer you cry when you feel all is lost. Or perhaps you had a terrible financial reversal, a broken relationship, or a significant loss in your life, and you were shattered! You were in the "Pity Pit!" Then eventually you sigh, saying, "Lord, I cannot make it! I am depending on You!" Can you think of a situation like that as a pivotal time in your life? Think of your wording in that cry. You can even make one up like, "There is nothing else I can do, You do it, Lord!" Now, if that is our "last resort" prayer, God is going to come through!

This is "**Grace by Default.**" You do find God's grace as you call "911". He is faithful.

O'Hallesby's definition of prayer is:

"A helpless soul's helpless cry unto a faithful God."

Now let's change our "last resort" prayer to a "first resort" prayer. As you wake up in the morning, before your feet hit the ground, pray, "Lord, I cannot make it today! I am depending on You!" He will answer, and you will experience God's "**Grace by Design**" all through the day. So just try that this week and see if you notice a difference.

Finding Him Faithful and Finding Him Precious:

"Unto you who believe, He is precious" (1 Pet. 2:7). To you who do not believe, He is faithful (see 2 Tim. 2:13). He is going to be faithful either way. We do not know that we are missing out on His preciousness.

There is more that we can enjoy than what we are enjoying. *"Be careful that you do not fall short of the grace of God"* (Heb. 12:15).

Let's move from finding Him faithful, to finding Him precious!

Review and reinforce this lesson by incorporating the following notes and quotes pages and by reading the Scriptures.



Confusion. Insecurity. What shall we do? What can we do?

Ah, there's room on the ROCK.



"For in the time of trouble... He shall set me up upon a rock" (Psalm 27:5).

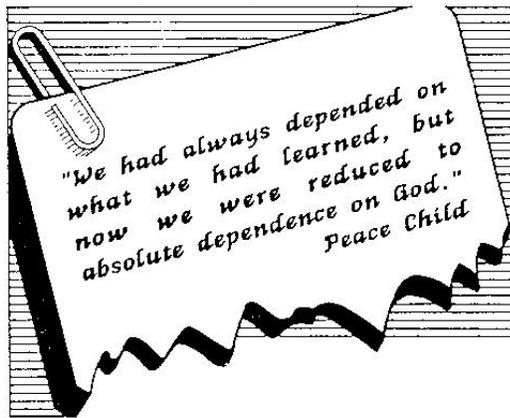
"The Lord is my Rock... In whom I will trust" (Psalm 18:2).

We stand with our feet firmly planted on the Rock, Christ Jesus. And we have the commission from Him to lift the drowning ones all about us and to stand them alongside us on the Rock.

Out of the Pit

He took me out of the pit,
And from the miry clay.
He set my feet on the Rock
Establishing my way.
He put a song in my heart
My Lord to glorify.
And I'll see Him someday
In my home on high.

I'm on the Rock, Hallelujah,
I'm on the Rock to stay, Hallelujah,
For He lifted me from the miry clay.
I'm on the Rock to stay!



"Lord, deliver me from the
luxury
of self-pity!"
Oswald Chambers

"There is no pit so deep
that God's love is not
deeper still."
Corrie Ten Boom

**"A helpless soul's helpless cry
unto a faithful God."**

O. Hallesby Prayer



I was once staying in a place in China with some twenty other brothers. There were inadequate provisions for bathing in the home where we stayed, so we went for a daily plunge in the river. On one occasion a brother got a cramp in his leg, and I suddenly saw he was sinking fast, so I motioned to another brother, who was an expert swimmer, to hasten to his rescue. But to my astonishment he made no move. Growing desperate I cried out: "Don't you see the man is drowning?" and the other brothers, about as agitated as I was, shouted vigorously too. But our good swimmer still did not move. Calm and collected, he remained just where he was, apparently postponing the unwelcome task. Meantime the voice of the poor drowning brother grew fainter and his efforts feeble. In my heart I said "I hate the man! Think of his letting a brother drown before his very eyes and not going to the rescue!"

But when the man was actually sinking, with a few swift strokes the swimmer was at his side, and both were soon safely ashore. Nevertheless, when I got an opportunity, I aired my views. "I have never seen any Christian who loves his life quite as much as you do," I said. "Think of the distress you would have saved that brother if you had considered yourself a little less and him a little more." But the swimmer, I soon discovered, knew his business better than I did. "Had I gone earlier," he said, "he would have clutched me so fast that both of us would have gone under. A drowning man cannot be saved until he is utterly exhausted and ceases to make the slightest effort to save himself."

Do you see the point? When we give up the case, then God will take it up. He is waiting until we are at the end of our resources and can do nothing more for ourselves.

Watchman Nee
The Normal Christian Life

Dr. Andrew Bonar told me how, in the Highlands of Scotland, a sheep would often wander off into the rocks and get into places that they couldn't get out of. The grass on these mountains is very sweet and the sheep like it, and they will jump down ten or twelve feet, and then they can't jump back again. Then the shepherd hears them bleating in distress. They may be there for days, until they have eaten all the grass. The shepherd will wait until they are so faint that they cannot stand, and then they will put a rope around him, and he will go over and pull that sheep up out of the jaws of death.

"Why don't they go down there when the sheep first gets there?" I asked.

"Ah!" he said, "they are so very foolish they would dash right over the precipice and be killed if they did."

And that is the way with men; they won't go back to God till they have no friends and have lost everything. If you are a wanderer, I tell you that the Good Shepherd will bring you back the moment you have given up trying to save yourself and are willing to let Him save you His own way." A story D. L. Moody liked to tell.

*As for God, His way is blameless;
He is a shield to all who take refuge in Him.
For who is God, but the Lord?
And who is a rock, except our God.*

*The Lord lives, and blessed be my rock;
And exalted be the God of my salvation.
Psalm 18:30-31, 46*

God's people are realists. We recognize we are in a decadent society. We see corruption and decay everywhere. Yet amid the mayhem our spirits soar in hope. For our confidence is not in the community of man but in the goodness and graciousness of our God.

We are acutely aware of increasing anarchy. Yet we are intensely excited about the redemptive work of Christ rescuing men and women from the chaos.

We can challenge others to follow the Master. We can inspire them to serve God and serve men. We can look up and see the stars when others only look down and see the mud.

Phillip Keller

GOD IS FOR US. *The Creator of the universe, the upholder of all things, the Redeemer God Himself for us!*



God's elect (defined as those of faith in Jesus) not only believe, but are confident! For there can be no charge laid against them. They boldly challenge any and every foe concerning any possible charge against them before God! It is not that those triumphing are without fault in themselves – they know that! But God is for them! (Romans 8:31).

William R. Newell
Romans Verse by Verse

The coney or hyrax is a brownish rabbit-sized animal resembling a guinea pig, found in Africa and Southwest Asia.

Proverbs 30:26 calls them "feeble folk, yet make they their houses in the rocks." Here is a little animal that is not a predator, and as it goes about its life, protection is found in the rock.

What did David mean when he sang his song of deliverance to the Lord in 2 Samuel 22:2-3? "...The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; God is my rock; in Him will I trust..." Did he not mean that he recognized in the midst of trials, of pain, of loneliness, and weakness that the Lord Jesus Christ was his only source of strength and protection?

The principle of trusting in Jesus, the Rock, is one that is intended for all believers. Christ wants us to look to Him for our present provision, our future, our health, and our family.

Isn't it strange how often we get into the midst of a difficulty and the very last thing we think of doing is praying to the Lord our Rock. What would happen to the coney, if when he was being chased by a predator, decided not to run to his rocky fortress, but instead, first tried every other source of help and protection? It would probably be "coney's last stand"! Oh, that our first response would be like David's, "From the end of the earth will I cry unto Thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I" (Psalm 61:2). See also Psalm 104:18.

Bryan Coupland
Dependence on the Rock

*Out of the depths to the glory above,
I have been lifted in wonderful love;
From every fetter my spirit is free –
For Jesus has lifted me!
Cris Christiansen*