

SOVEREIGNTY—Heb. 13:8

GLORY

AND

GRACE

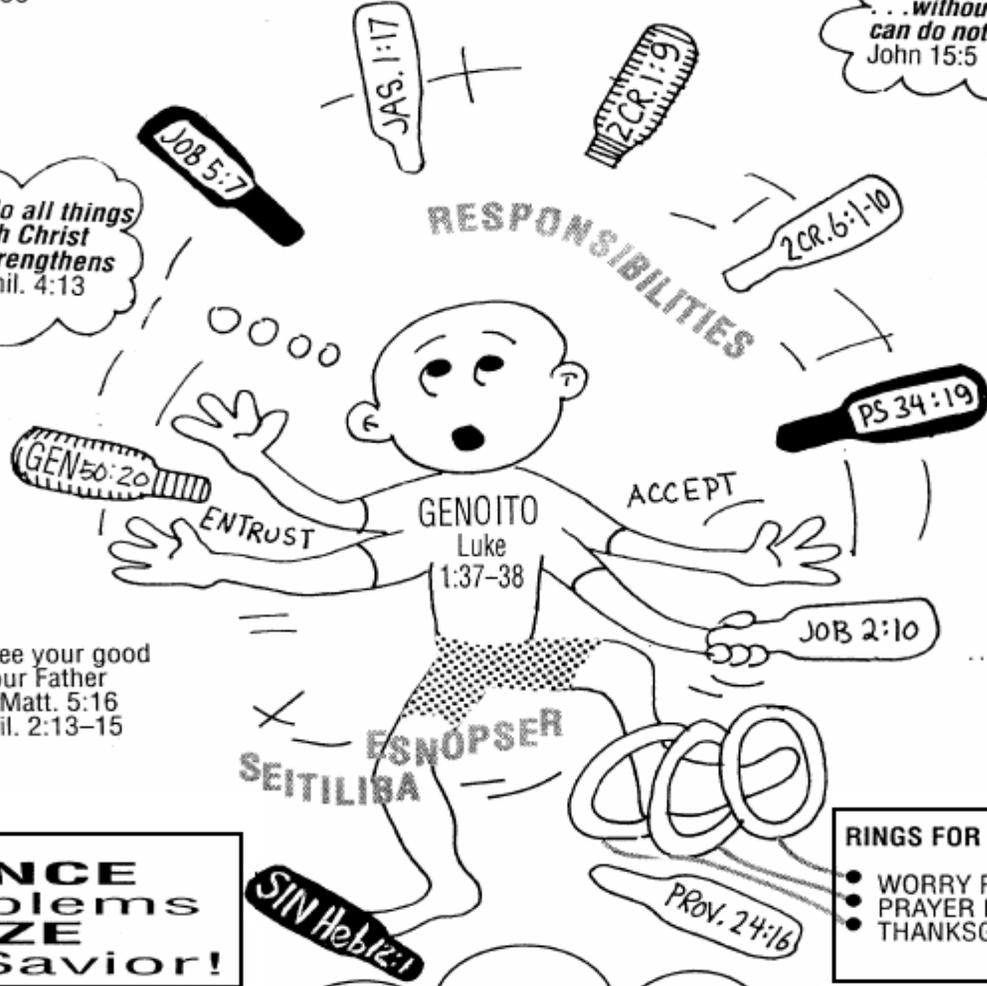
to whom be **glory** forever.
Rom. 11:36

...without me you
can do nothing.
John 15:5

And God is able to make all grace
abound toward you... 2 Cor. 9:8

I can do all things
through Christ
who strengthens
me. Phil. 4:13

RESPONSIBILITIES



...that they may see your good
works and **glorify** your Father
Matt. 5:16
See Phil. 2:13-15

...Whatever you do,
do all to the **glory** of God...
1 Cor. 10:31

GLANCE
at problems
GAZE
at the Savior!

RINGS FOR PEACE—Phil. 4:6-7

- WORRY RING— *Place nothing*
- PRAYER RING— *Place everything*
- THANKSGIVING RING— *Place anything*

So great a cloud of witnesses —Hebrews 12:1-3

Juggler

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work (2 Cor. 9:8, NIV).

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning (James 1:17, KJV).

...But this happened that we might not rely on ourselves but on God, who raises the dead (2 Cor. 1:9, NIV).

As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain...We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited. Rather, as servants of God we commend (entrust) ourselves in every way: (see list of Paul's hardships) (2 Cor. 6:1, 3-10, NIV).

A righteous man may have many troubles, but the Lord delivers him from them all (Ps. 34:19, NIV).

What? Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil (Job 2:10, KJV).

But as for you, ye thought evil against me; but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive (Gen. 50:20, KJV).

Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward (Job 5:7, KJV).

For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen (Rom 11:36, KJV).

For though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again (Prov. 24:16, NIV).

...Let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles... (Heb. 12:1, NIV).

For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Do all things without murmuring and disputings: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world (Phil. 2:13-15, KJV).

GRACE for the Rest of Your Life

JUGGLER

FOCUSING GRACE: Priorities or Pray-orities; God's Sovereignty vs. Man's Responsibility; Acceptance and Entrustment; Good and Evil for God's Glory

Priorities or 'Pray'-orities

We juggle many things each day. Many priorities press upon us. The stressors in our lives almost immobilize us. How can we keep going all day? First of all, before we call them priorities, let's call them '**pray**'orities. We need to pray over everything first, and then the priorities will be chosen by the Lord Himself as we move forward following His leading. *"Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus"* (Phil. 4:6-7).

God chooses WHAT we go through.
We choose HOW we go through it.

"And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that you, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work" (2 Cor. 9:8).

God's Sovereignty vs. Man's Responsibility

An ongoing theological debate regarding God's sovereignty and man's responsibility is heard in most Bible schools and seminaries. The Juggler visual addresses a unique way of presenting God's sovereignty and man's responsibility. At the top of the visual is written, God's SOVEREIGNTY. Over the juggler's head we have the word, RESPONSIBILITY. Notice the strange words below that resemble Greek—"SEITILIBA—ESNOPSER." They spell "RESPONSE-ABILITIES" (backwards). As the juggler accepts the **pray-orities** in any given day as from the Lord, he is entrusting them right back up to the Lord.

This is how we are going to look at "response-ability" or, "respond-ability." We understand a responsive child, and we recognize a self-willed or a resistant child. We love responsiveness in children. The Lord desires the same from us.

Response-ability is the ability to respond positively to God in every life situation despite the difficulties, including the ability to *"do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you"* (Matt. 5:44). Now it is easy to respond when good things come our way. We rejoice, thank God, and praise Him, but when the "Oh no's" come our way, that is a different story.

Note the bottles handed off by the juggler in a circular direction: dark, shaded, and clear representing the shades of evil to good. They all fall from the Sovereign Hand of God—He is allowing these things to come into our lives.

Start with Job 5:7, *"Man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward."* It is a given—there will be trouble in our lives. We live in a cursed and fallen world.

Next, James 1:17, (a clear bottle) representing the good things that God sends. *“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation at all or any shadow.”* Good gifts—that is the kind we like. No problem.

Paul remarked about the things that happened in his life, *“so that we would not rely on ourselves, but on God, who raises the dead”* (2 Cor.1:9). Even in life-threatening situations, Paul knew that God still raises the dead.

Paul faced many trials that he reiterates in 2 Corinthians 6:1-10. Paul is urging the Corinthians not to fall short of the grace of God, nor to receive it in vain. Now read verses 1-10. Paul responded to different kinds of things in his life, and accepted them all as from God’s all-knowing hands.

Now to Psalm 34:19, *“Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivers him out of them all.”* Afflictions are a given, but the other given is that the Lord delivers in afflictions.

Acceptance and Entrustment

Job 2:10 says, *“Shall we receive good at the hand of the Lord and not evil?”* *“The rain falls on the just and the unjust”* (Matt. 5:45). How do we handle these stressors in our lives, and the pressures that come on us? We ACCEPT those as coming from God; we ENTRUST them back into the Lord’s hands.

If a juggler is distracted and loses concentration, soon all the bottles will fall. What if we were in the audience? Note the audience down below—*“the great cloud of witnesses”* (Heb. 12:1). What if the juggler did drop everything and sat in a heap with the bottles all around him? What would the audience expect? Do we want him just to sit there? Do we want him to walk off and just leave the mess? Everything in us wants him to do what? Get up and resume juggling. The quicker he would recover and start juggling again, the louder we would clap. There is something in us that does not settle for defeat. If he did walk off stage, the audience would probably shout ‘BOO.’

In our lives when things come crashing down, occasionally we sit and do nothing. But that is not what the Lord wants. Proverbs 24:16, *“Though a righteous man falls seven times, he rises again.”* He is our strength to keep us going.

“Without Me, you can do nothing” (Jn. 15:5). Note the figure as he is juggling, he is thinking, *“I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me”* (Phil. 4:13).

God works in us to produce the right attitudes and gives the strength, wisdom and grace that we need. We ACCEPT and ENTRUST—continually.

“In acceptance lieth peace.” (Amy Carmichael). One of the fruits of the Spirit is ‘peace’ (Hebrew: Shalom = ‘Peace’). [Shalom is not the absence of conflict, BUT the presence of adequate resources.]

How do we have peace? The Holy Spirit is pictured as a dove. Doves have tail feathers that come together effortlessly—for them. We could never lay the feathers in the tail of a dove together—one on top of the other—if we tried. But the dove himself lays them all together so graciously. When you start your day and try to plan everything, there are usually too many things to do each day, but when things are accepted and then entrusted, the Holy Spirit has a way of “dovetailing” them all together for you—graciously.

Things get done simultaneously that we could never have planned on our own. It is good to ENTRUST each day to the Lord so He can 'dovetail' it together for us.

Peace, perfect peace,
By thronging duties pressed?
To do the will of Jesus
This is REST!
(Edward H. Bickersteth)

Good and Evil for God's Glory

Genesis 37-50 tells the story of Joseph who was thrown into a pit, sold as a slave to Egypt, falsely maligned, and forgotten in prison. Later, when he was ruler over Egypt under Pharaoh, his brothers came to him desperate for food for their families. At a most dramatic moment, Joseph said to his brothers, "*You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good to save many people alive*" (Gen. 50:20).

God always has a bigger picture in mind. The bigger picture was to save many people alive. Actually, Joseph had to be in that place at that time to spare the lives of his whole family who would have died in the famine. God had planned several years earlier for Joseph to be in Egypt in the right place at the right time. But there is a BIG-bigger picture. The name of one of his brothers was Judah. Judah was in the lineage of Christ. There is not only a big picture, but a BIG-bigger picture that we may never be aware of. Even though we may experience evil in our life, God can even turn evil into good.

Romans 8:28 says, "*All things work together for good.*" For example: when you bake a cake, you might like the taste of chocolate, and you might like the taste of sugar, but if you ate a teaspoon of the soda and tablespoon of the egg, they would not taste very good separately. But when you mix all of the above together and bake the mix, they all work together for good—and it is delicious. God works in our lives in the same way. He works all the components together for His purposes. It may not be limited to our little sphere, but there may be spheres in our extended family, spheres in our neighborhood, spheres in our world where God is working—in the BIG-bigger picture.

The will of God in evil is the same as it is in good—to bring glory to Himself and to benefit His children!

Hudson Taylor kept the following poem on his desk:

*Ill that God blesses is our good,
But unblest good is ill.
And all is right that seems so wrong,
If it be His sweet will.*

Full Cycle of Grace

Everything comes through His GRACE and is used for His GLORY. "*Whatever you do, do all to the GLORY of God*" (1 Cor. 10:31).

It starts from God's GRACE and it is for our GOOD. The Lord has a way of juggling our responsibilities as we respond to Him—and we receive the benefit. It is for our GOOD.

As we accept things in our lives from God's hand, we receive the benefit—the GOOD, but others also GAIN. So we have GRACE, GOOD, GAIN.

“Let your light so shine among men that they may see your good works [grace works], and GLORIFY your Father which is in Heaven” (Matt. 5:16). Onlookers are observing. As they see God working in our lives, then they GLORIFY God. GRACE, GOOD, GAIN, GLORY!

What if we had said, “Lord, I have accepted this, I have accepted that, I have obeyed you here, and I have obeyed you there, but NOT THIS ONE! This one is too hard to accept!” We say, “This far and no farther.” So what happens? It is like a three-way robbery. We do not receive any good, others do not have any gain, and God does not get the glory. If we choose not to display God's grace in any given situation, we may rob that onlooker from perhaps the only opportunity for him to see God's grace at work during his entire lifetime.

Philippians 2:13-15 deals with our contemporary attitude. *“For it is God who works in you both to will and to work for His good pleasure. Do all things without murmurings and disputings that you may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation among whom ye shine as lights in the world.”*

God in His GRACE uses/transforms things in our lives for our GOOD, for others' GAIN, for His GLORY, as we GAZE at the Savior and GLANCE at the problems.

Prayer Rings

“Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension, shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 4:6-7). We will apply these verses to the large rings on the juggler's foot.

This first ring is a **worry ring**, *“Be anxious for nothing.”* What should be put into a worry ring? **Put nothing into the worry ring.**

“In everything by prayer.” The next ring is the **prayer ring**. What goes in the prayer ring? Everything! **Place everything in the prayer ring.**

“With thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God.” Third is the **thanksgiving ring**. What goes in the thanksgiving ring? **Place anything [any request] in the thanksgiving ring.** (Original idea from Norman B. Harrison.)

Near the bottom of the card, notice the bottle called **SIN**—one thing we do not need to juggle. *“Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which does so easily beset us” (Heb. 12:1).*

Genoito: Submission and Readiness

Notice the T-shirt on the juggler. *“Genoito” (a Greek word)* was Mary's response when the angel came to her and announced that she would be the mother of the Christ Child (Lk. 1:38). She responded, *“Genoito. Be it unto me, I accept.”* Hers was a quick response. In fact, it is the first time and the only time that *“Genoito”* is used in the affirmative in the New Testament. You may have heard the words *“Me genoito”* meaning “God forbid, may it never be!” Paul used it many times when he asked the rhetorical question, *“Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?”* (Rom. 6:1). The negative in the Greek is *“Me genoito.”* “May it never be”—“a thousand times, No!” But when you take off the *“Me”* (which is the negative), you have *“Genoito.”* “May it be!” (the affirmative).

“GENOITO” actually has two elements to it: *submission* and *readiness*. Many times we submit to God’s will, but that readiness part is a little bit harder to come by. We are often half-hearted.

Many times we do serve the Lord, but with resignation, instead of with a full heart. “GENOITO” puts that whole concept into just one word. As things come your way, just say, “*Genoito*,” which means “Okay, Lord, I am ready, I am accepting it and I am entrusting it to You.” This is one concept in the Greek language.

When scholars were translating the Old Testament into the Septuagint, they needed a Greek word to fit the Hebrew translation for AMEN. “GENOITO” was the word of choice. Think of “*Genoito*” as a resounding YES—AMEN!

Read here about feudal lords (on the notes and quotes, at end of lesson).

Concluding Thoughts

Our focal point is Jesus. Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith—the one Who began with us, Who will finish with us (Heb. 12:1). We need **Focusing GRACE**.

“And Thou will keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee, because He trusteth in Thee” (Isa. 26:3).

“Blessed are those who see the hand of God in the haphazard, inexplicable, and seemingly senseless circumstances of life.” (*Erwin Lutzer*)

“Obstacles are the things you see when you take your eyes off the Lord.”

“Interruptions are divine instructions.”

“You do the casting; He will do the caring.”

“The Lord gives grace and glory, no good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly” (Ps. 84:11).

“God wants us all to move on with Him. He wants us to walk with Him. He wants it not only for our welfare, but for the benefit of others as well as His own dear reputation...It will please the Shepherd no end.” (*Phillip Keller*)

Every joy or trial
Falleth from above,
Traced upon our dial
By the Sun of Love.
We may trust Him fully
All for us to do;
They who trust Him wholly
Find Him wholly true.

Stayed Upon Jehovah
Hearts are fully blest,
Finding as He promised,
Perfect peace and REST

(*Frances R. Havergal*)

Simply trusting every day,
Trusting through a stormy way;
Even when my faith is small,
Trusting Jesus, that is all!

Trusting as the moments fly,
Trusting as the days go by;
Trusting Him whate’r befall,
Trusting Jesus, that is all.

(*Edgar P. Stites*)

“Preach Christ at all times, if necessary use words.” (St. Francis of Assisi)

God’s GLORY is nothing more than GRACE fully developed.

The Westminster Confession states the following:

“Man’s chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy Him forever.”

“He is the same yesterday, today and forever” (Heb. 13:8).

*“For of Him, through Him and to Him are all things to Whom be **glory** forever”* (Rom. 11:35).

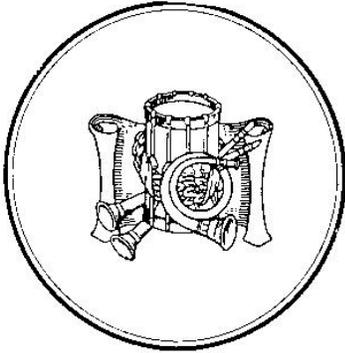
PRAYER

Lord, we are very thankful that You are Sovereign. In Your **sovereign grace** You know what to bring into our lives. We trust Your timing and Your way in dealing with pressures that are never more than what You can bear through us. We pray that as we live our lives, we will accept every circumstance, every situation, every relationship in life as from Your hand. And we entrust it back to You so that You can work in and through us and the situation for Your glory, for our good, and for others’ gain as they see You living in and through us. We ask that you give us **focusing grace** as we juggle the many things in life for Your glory. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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

**My glorious Victor
Prince Divine, clasp
these surrendered
Hands in Thine. At
length my will is all
Thine own, Glad
vassal of a Saviour's
throne!**

Moule



In the old feudal days, when the vassal did his homage to his lord, he did this: he put his hands together, and put them within the hands of his lord, in token of absolute submission to his will and readiness for activity in his work. That is the only true position for a Christian's hands, the hands and heart and will, the spirit and life. Not one hand but both, completely within the hands of the Sovereign, the infinitely more than feudal lord, ...the infinitely trustworthy, infinitely sovereign Lord Jesus Christ.

**Sorrow looks back
Worry
looks around
Faith looks up!**

Guideposts



**Worry does not empty
tomorrow of sorrow.
Worry empties today of strength**
Corrie Ten Boom

**Ill that God blesses
Is our good;
And unblessed good is ill.
All is right that seems so
wrong -
If it be His sweet will.**
Hudson Taylor

In Everything...

(Philippians 4:6, 7)

An important help in the life of prayer is the habit of bringing everything to God, moment-by-moment, as it comes to us in life. This may be established as a habit on the principle on which all habits are formed, of repeated and constant attention, moment-by-moment, until that which is at first an act of the will becomes spontaneous and second nature.

If we will watch our lives, we shall find that God meets the things that we commit (entrust) to Him in prayer with special blessing, and often allows the best things that we have not committed (entrusted) to Him to be ineffectual, simply to remind us of our dependence upon Him to be everything. It is very gracious and mindful of Him thus gently to compel us to remember Him and to hold us so close to Himself that we cannot get away even the length of a single minute from His all-sustaining arm.

'In everything... let your requests be made known unto God.'

A. B. Simpson

Responsibility is Respondability

What is responsibility? Responsibility is the ability to respond as God says man should respond to every life situation, in spite of difficulties. It is the ability to do good to those who despitefully use you. It is the ability to feed one's enemy when he is hungry. It is the ability to give him a drink if he is thirsty. It is the ability to overcome evil with good (compare Romans 12:9-21 and also Matthew 5:43-48). Responsibility is respond-ability: the God-given ability to respond to any situation of life in accordance with his commandments (will). It is the ability to respond biblically to whatever God or man does or says. It is the ability as Romans 15:1-3 says, to bear the weaknesses of those without strength and not just please ourselves. It is the ability to please one's neighbor for his good to his edification. It is the ability to emulate Christ who did not please Himself, "but as it is written, the reproaches of those who reproached thee fell upon Me."

Jay E. Adams
Competent to Counsel



In bearing patiently the little contradictions, the slight inconveniences, the trifling losses so frequently encountered, the daily cross will become our daily bread. The nourishment of our life will be to do the will of God as it comes to us in those things that were once trivial annoyances, but are now opportunities of saying a continual AMEN (GENOITO) to the will of God. Herein is meat which the world knows not of, and in accepting that will, the soul finds perfect rest and complete satisfaction.

J. Gregory Mantle
Beyond Humiliation



Have you ever watched workmen engaged in the construction of a building as they stand at three different levels of the scaffolding and pass bricks from the lowest level to mid-level and from there to the top? The work goes on apace as long as each brick, when it reaches the lowest level, is at once passed on to the level above. What if the man in the middle did not hand on each brick as it came? What if the man at the top level refused to receive the bricks? The poor man in the middle would be crushed by the load. That very thing happens to us continually in the unseen realm. When the first trouble reaches us we fail to send it on to a higher level, and soon we feel by degrees we are worn out and collapse under the load. As soon as any anxiety threatens us, we must immediately pass our burden on to a higher level. Let us learn to follow the directions the Lord has given for our release from the downdrag of care: "In everything" – big things as well as little things, little things as well as big things – "by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Philippians 4:4-7)

Watchman Nee
Twelve Baskets Full