

=BIBLE DOCTRINES=

Lesson 5

Grace in Regeneration

Objects to have:

A sign reading JUSTIFIED

A gift that represents the “Freeness of Salvation”

The word GRACE written on chalkboard or poster board

A sheet of stationery that has “permission” for Saul to capture in Damascus any who are Christians

These objects or pictures: a spotlight, a house for the house of Judas, a modern-day man representing Ananias, a basket

Your Bible.

Introducing the lesson:

(Hold up the sign reading JUSTIFIED.) Justified. (Say the following sentence very slowly.) “Just as if I had never sinned.” That’s what I am. Justified. “Just as if I had never sinned.” Justified. That’s what you are if you have asked Jesus to be your Saviour. The Heavenly Father says, “Jesus died for you. His blood came pouring out. He was God’s perfect sacrifice for sin; He became our punished Person. When we trust Jesus, God sees Jesus’ blood. God the Father sees Jesus as being punished for our sin. It’s as if we had never sinned when we have trusted Jesus. We are JUSTIFIED.

(Hold up the gift.) This is a pretend gift. Getting salvation is a gift. We can’t buy it—God gives it to us as a free gift. If we just do something nice to get saved, we aren’t saved—salvation is a gift. If we think that we’ll do some work to get saved, we aren’t saved—salvation is free. We just believe God and take the gift of salvation.

(Show the word GRACE.) Here’s another word for us to know. GRACE. GRACE is getting something nice even though we don’t deserve to get it. God has a lot of grace. He is always giving us blessings that we don’t deserve to get. (Either put down the poster board or turn from the chalkboard.)

Daddy went outside to the back porch. Wiping the tears from his eyes, Richard was sitting out there. Daddy said, “Hey, Richard, I have something I want to give you.”

Richard looked up at his Dad who was standing on the stair beside him. How could Dad sound so kind? Richard had just had a spanking—Dad had just spanked Richard because Richard had said some really unkind words to his mother. When the spanking was over, Richard told his mother he was sorry—he couldn’t believe that he had been so unkind to his mother! Then he went outside to sit on the porch stairs; he felt so bad because he had made his mother sad.

What’s that in Dad’s hand? A new baseball mitt! “It’s yours, Richard.”

“Aw, Dad, how can you be so nice to me when I’ve been so bad? I don’t deserve a present.”

“Richard, none of us deserves anything nice. It’s because I love you. I think you’ll try hard to show your love for Mom from now on.”

That’s GRACE. Richard didn’t deserve Dad’s kindness, but his dad loved him anyway.

How wonderful God’s grace is! He loves us even though we don’t deserve His love. That’s GRACE. God wants us to be saved even though we don’t deserve to go to Heaven.

A man in the Bible surely did not deserve to be saved. God’s GRACE saved that man anyway.

Telling the story:

The young man's name was Saul. We read about him in the New Testament.

(Act this out. Sound gruff and mean!) Saul went to the high priest's palace. He said, "I must see the high priest. I want to go to Damascus. There are probably Christians there, and I want to find them and bring them back to Jerusalem and see to it that they are put in prison and killed for being Christians." The man in charge took Saul to the high priest immediately. Saul said, "Sir, will you give me permission to go to Damascus to round up any Christians who are there?"

The high priest said (say this with a sinister tone of voice), "I will be glad to do that. I will write a note, Saul. In this note I will tell the men who are in charge of the synagogue in Damascus that you have my permission to capture Christians and to bring them back to Jerusalem as prisoners." The high priest got out his stationery (pull out your letter), and he wrote a note. He probably wrote something like this, "Dear Rulers of the Synagogues in Damascus: The man who is handing you this note is named Saul. He has my permission to come to Damascus and to go into the little temples there—called synagogues—to learn of any people who have become Christians. He has my permission to go to their houses and to bring them out handcuffed and to lead them to Jerusalem."

Saul took the letter, and he triumphantly left the high priest's palace. He hurried to some of his friends. He said, "See what I have? I have the high priest's permission to go to Damascus to get whatever Christians are there and to bring them back here to Jerusalem as prisoners. Will you go with me?"

His friends gladly agreed to go with Saul to Damascus, a little city not too far from Jerusalem. They didn't want people to trust Jesus, either. They, too, had letters—letters to take to the rulers of the different synagogues in Damascus. They started down the road from Jerusalem to Damascus and were happy to be on their journey. They really thought that Jesus is not the Son of God.

As they walked down the hot, dusty road toward Damascus, suddenly, and without warning, something happened to stop them. (Hold up your picture of the spotlight.) It was as if a very, very bright spotlight was turned on. It was not a spotlight; it was a light from Heaven. A very bright light shined down onto Saul. It shined down so suddenly and so brightly that it made Saul fall down with his eyes closed.

Then a Voice spoke from Heaven, "*Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?*"

Saul heard that Voice come from Heaven. Saul asked, "*Who art thou, Lord?*"

The Voice said something like this, "I am Jesus. You are treating Me badly, Saul." Saul started to shiver and to shake. He was so frightened! He suddenly realized that he really had been fighting the Son of God. He trusted Jesus as his Saviour!

Saul asked, "What do You want me to do, Lord?"

Jesus called from Heaven, "Get up, Saul. Go into the city of Damascus. Go to the house where you planned to go. Just wait there. You will be told what to do." The light went out, and Saul struggled to his feet. He opened his eyes, but it was as if his eyes weren't opened. Saul could not see. He was blind. The men who were with Saul took him by the arms and guided him into the city of Damascus. These men with Saul had heard a Voice, but they had not seen Anyone. I am wondering whether they got saved at the same time that Saul did; maybe they did!

(Hold up the picture of the house.) The men led Saul to the house of a man whose name was Judas. This is another Judas; he was not Judas Iscariot. Saul stayed in the house of this man whose name was Judas three days and three nights. For all of that time, he could not see. For all of that time, he could not eat; he just did not feel like eating. For all of that time, he prayed and asked God what he should do. I am sure that he was spending a lot of

the time asking God for forgiveness for treating Christians so badly. I am sure that he spent a lot of that time thanking God for God's GRACE, because Saul did not deserve God's love.

(Hold up the picture of the man representing Ananias.) In another house was a man who was named Ananias. Ananias loved Jesus—he was a Christian. God talked to Ananias. God said, "Ananias, go to the house of Judas. Saul is there. Saul is praying to Me. I want you to go talk to him."

Ananias said, "But, Lord, this Saul is the man who has been killing Christians. You want me to go talk to him?"

God said to Ananias, "I have chosen him, Ananias. I have chosen Saul to be a preacher. He has trusted Me as his Saviour. Go see him now. Go to the street that is called Straight. Go to the house of Judas. Ask for Saul."

Ananias obeyed God. When he saw Saul, he prayed for him. As he did so, Saul was able to see again. Little hard pieces of skin fell off Saul's eyes, and Saul was not blind any longer. Saul and Ananias talked for awhile. Then Saul asked, "May I please be baptized, Ananias?"

Ananias said, "Since you have trusted Jesus as your Saviour, Saul, you may be baptized. Follow me. We will go to a pond of water, and there you can be baptized." So, Ananias baptized Saul.

Then Saul felt like eating. He ate a good meal. He stayed in Damascus for many days. He did not stay in a room in the house of Judas. Saul went about the city telling people about Jesus. He went to the synagogues—not for the purpose of finding out who had become Christians; he went there to preach. He preached about Jesus. Christians were afraid of him at first. Those who were not Christians could not believe what they were seeing and hearing. They knew that he had come to Damascus with letters from the high priest, with permission to take Christians as prisoners. Now he was a Christian himself!

Some of the non-Christian men got together. They said, "Saul can't be allowed to continue to preach as he is. We must kill him." Some of the Christians heard these men talking. They said, "We must save Saul's life, but how are we going to do that? The gates of the city walls are being watched day and night. These non-Christian men have put guards at the gates. There is no way to get Saul safely out of the city." They thought and thought. They finally thought of a plan to get Saul safely out of Damascus.

They got a great big basket (hold up the picture of a basket). It had to be at least as big as a clothes basket. It had to be a basket that was big enough and strong enough to hold a man. What were they going to do? They got some rope and tied the ends of the rope to each side of the basket. They waited for nighttime; it was very dark out! They went to a place on the top of the wall of the city. Saul climbed into the basket; the men let the basket down over the side of the wall of the city! What a smart thing to do! As soon as the basket hit the ground on the other side of the wall of the city of Damascus, Saul got out of the basket and hurried as fast as he could along the road to Jerusalem. He wanted to stay alive. He wanted to stay alive to preach about Jesus Whom he had come to love and Whom he wanted to serve.

Saul got to Jerusalem safely. He preached about Jesus. Saul, whose name was changed to Paul, traveled to many, many places, telling everyone who would listen that Jesus loved them, too. They could be saved, too—by GRACE. God loved them so much, even though they didn't deserve it!

(Point to the word GRACE.) This word is GRACE. We don't deserve God's love—that's GRACE.

LEARN OUR BIBLE VERSE: Ephesians 2:8, *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God."*