

Appropriating God's Grace

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I. Introduction.

A. Christ's grace has already paid for all the blessings of this life.

B. The spiritual disciplines do not earn us God's grace.

II. Understanding the relationship of grace and spiritual disciplines is important to understanding God's blessings in our lives. (Joshua 1:8)

A. The blessings of God's grace have been earned by Jesus, not us. This is the meritorious cause of the blessings.

B. Meditating on God's word and applying it to our lives allows us to appropriate those blessings. This is the instrumental cause through which God blesses us. (Deuteronomy 8:17-18)

1. The word of God teaches us the principles of the spiritual life but also the principles of this life. Our success in this life comes from applying these principles to our lives. (Proverbs 15:16-17)

III. The spiritual disciplines are often the means God uses to provide blessings to us.

A. The primary spiritual discipline is getting into the word of God. (Acts 20:32)

B. The secondary spiritual discipline is prayer. We can come to God in his throne room through grace. (Hebrews 4:15-16; Isaiah 6:8)

1. Prayer forces us to acknowledge our inadequacy and rely on God's grace. (Philippians 4:13)

2. Jesus understands our weakness and that is why God's throne is a throne of grace. (Hebrews 4:15-16)

C. Adversity is another form of spiritual discipline. (1 Peter 5:5)

1. Our response to adversity can determine the amount of grace that we receive from God to withstand the trial. Our attitude under adversity can cause grace to be given to us or taken away.

D. Spiritual fellowship with other Christians to grow the ministry and to support each other. (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10)

IV. The spiritual disciplines do not earn us grace, but the spiritual disciplines are necessary to experience his grace in our lives.

Application questions:

1. Which of the spiritual disciplines do you find the most difficult to practice? Why?

2. How have you experienced God's grace by practicing what the Bible says?

3. How has having close relationships with other Christians helped you experience God's grace?
How can you be an instrument of God's grace in the lives of other Christians?
