

We are looking at areas of growth and maturity for a Jesus Follower.

Today, look at this piece of the puzzle:

### **A growing and maturing ability to listen to and obey God as the result of His enabling Grace**

The real power of our Christian life comes as we obey God's will. Often God's will is clearly stated in His word and very obvious. Sometimes it's a challenge to know God's will. Other times, we know His will but are hesitant to obey it. How do we learn to discern His will and obey Him? God gives us His grace to help. There are many definitions of grace; one is, "Anything God uses in our lives to get us from point A to point B," another one is, "The power to know and obey God's will." Biblical discipleship equips people to understand how God's grace helps us to obey Him.

God's grace is an intricate part of His will for our lives. We are nothing without His grace. We have no purpose without His grace. His grace has a deep and lasting effect on our lives. Paul understands the delicate balance of our responsibility as Christians to work hard at obeying God's will for our lives while realizing that our hard work and faithfulness is nothing without God's grace.

**1 Corinthians 15:10** *But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them--yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.*

As we walk along the path of life, we occasionally find it challenging to walk in sincerity and holiness. Circumstances can arise at work, in our families and friends that can put us in awkward situations. Sometimes there are occasions when we have to make split-second decisions concerning the "gray areas" of life. If we rely on worldly wisdom, we will grow more confused and frustrated. As we live through God's grace even the "gray areas" will become clearer and more focused.

**2 Corinthians 1:12** *Now this is our boast: Our conscience testifies that we have conducted ourselves in the world, and especially in our relations with you, in the holiness and sincerity that are from God. We have done so not according to worldly wisdom but according to God's grace.*

If we walk in ignorance, rebellion and/or disobedience, we are not taking advantage of the grace God has given us to be victorious in Him. We all receive God's grace, but if we don't take advantage of it, we have received it in vain.

**2 Corinthians 6:1** *As God's fellow workers we urge you not to receive God's grace in vain.*

As we mature in the Lord, we desire to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives. There are many ways that people try to achieve this goal. If we attempt to accomplish this goal in our own strength and understanding, exercising our own willpower and self-discipline, we can become legalistic and like those Paul described to Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:2-5—having a form of godliness but denying its power. If we strive to meet this goal with God's grace as our motivating force, we can overcome sin and obey Him.

**Titus 2:11,12** *For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age.*

Even though God's grace is available to us, we can still miss it if we walk in selfishness and disobedience. God's grace is available to us in any and every situation we face (**2 Corinthians 12:9** *But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."*) but if we miss it then we can't take advantage of His amazing grace.

**Hebrews 12:15** *See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.*

### **Hale Pule Question**

**Think about how God's grace is operating in your life. Is there one or more of the areas that we talked about above that you need to press in and embrace His grace in a more intentional manner?**

**Ask the Father to show you if there are any areas of your life where you are "receiving His grace in vain" or where you are "missing His grace."**

**Feel free to share your observations with a mature Jesus Follower that you trust so they can support and pray for you.**