

## Juggling...

### Managing more things than we have hands

- What do we juggle in life?

### What can go wrong when we juggle?

- Maybe we focus on one while missing the other
- Maybe nothing is handled well
- Maybe we don't have much peace

### Especially when juggling competing things...

- Work and family and church
- Mercy and justice
- **Grace and obedience**

**Prayer: Give us your wisdom in head, heart, and hands**

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## Grace and Obedience

*Ephesians 2:1–10*

**Crossway Conversation  
and the proposed core value**

[bib.ly/Eph2.NIV](http://bib.ly/Eph2.NIV)  
[tiny.cc/cmchandouts](http://tiny.cc/cmchandouts)



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## Four great "acts" in the story of the world

### Who does what?

<b>Creation</b> It was very good	<b>God created</b>
<b>Fall</b> It was spoiled	<b>Humanity went (and still goes) astray ("sin")</b>
<b>Redemption</b> It is being rescued	<b>Jesus' sacrifice    Our faith    Our obedience</b> <b>How much of which when???</b>
<b>New creation/            Restoration</b> Better than creation	<b>God recreates and restores</b>

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### *Ephesians 2:1-3*

#### the Christians in Ephesus

As for you, you were **dead** in your transgressions and sins, in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature **deserving of wrath**.

dead = separated from God and goodness  
 transgressions, sins = attitudes, words, or actions that are immoral or disloyal to God  
 the ruler of the kingdom of the air = Satan  
 gratifying = give in to, satisfy  
 by nature = our default starting point  
 wrath = just punishment

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*Ephesians 2:1-10*

**1-3:** By default, everyone is separated from God by sin

- Every person is in this same trouble
  - Not one of us starts or becomes **good enough**
  - “Each of us has turned to **our own way**” *Isaiah 53:6*
  - When we value money, pleasure, self, my people, ... more than other people or more than God
  - When we do good without honoring God: “Neither glorifying God nor giving Him thanks” *Romans 1:21*
- Going away from God is going away from life
  - It always brings harm
  - It breaks our relationship with God

4-9: • A world without justice is not a good world

10: • Justice results in spiritual death: separation from life

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*Ephesians 2:4-9*

But **because of his great love** for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, in order that in the coming ages he might show **the incomparable riches of his grace**, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

transgressions = attitudes, words, or actions that are immoral or disloyal to God

grace = gift of forgiveness and love

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*Ephesians 2:1-10*

1-3: By default, everyone is separated from God by sin

4-9: By God's mercy,

He makes us alive in Christ through faith

- Entirely as a gift
  - Nothing for anyone to take pride in
- We experience a measure of this goodness now
- We will fully experience the riches of His grace when Jesus returns
- The gift came through Jesus' death and resurrection ("raised us up with Christ")

10:

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*Ephesians 2:10*

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

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***Ephesians 2:1-10***

1-3: By default, everyone is separated from God by sin

4-9: By God's mercy,

He makes us alive in Christ through faith

**10:** God has worked in us so we can do His good works

- Both Christ's rescue of us  
and the good works He rescued us for  
were prepared by God ahead of time
  - They are all a gift
- The purpose of both creation and rescue  
was so that we can join God's good works
  - Being in "the image of God"

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***Ephesians 2:1-10***

1-3: By default, everyone is separated from God by sin

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He makes us alive in Christ through faith

10: God has worked in us so we can do His good works

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## The Big Idea

**We are rescued...**

**FROM** just judgment for those who sin  
straying from God's ways

**BY** the surperabounding grace of Christ  
gift of forgiveness and love

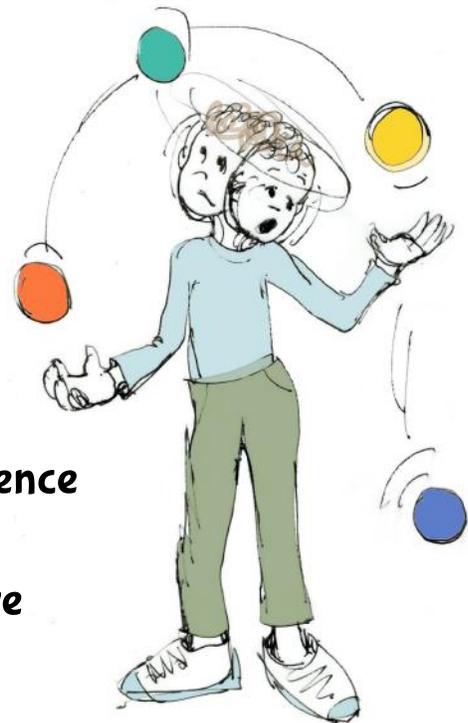
**THROUGH** faith in Christ

**FOR** being like Jesus  
 and doing what He taught

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It is very hard to keep track  
 of more than one thing at a time

- We tend to focus on one  
 and lose track of the others
- The same is true of grace and obedience
  - Sometimes we gravitate toward grace  
 and lose track of obedience
  - Sometimes we gravitate toward obedience  
 and lose track of grace
  - Sometimes we have a confused mixture  
 of grace and obedience



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## Some problematic models of Grace and Obedience

Time 

### Mostly Obedience: Being good

God loves good people  
So we try to be good enough

“Legalism”

Unfortunately, it doesn't work

“...by the works of the law **no one will be justified.**”

(that is, made right with God)

*Galatians 2:16*

- We tend to live in guilt and shame, fearing that we aren't good enough for God
- and/or
- We tend to be judgmental of others

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## Some problematic models of Grace and Obedience

Time 

### Mostly Grace: Being forgiven

God loves us no matter what  
so what we do doesn't really matter

“Cheap  
Grace”

Unfortunately, it gives no evidence of spiritual life

“Faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is **dead.**”

*James 2:17*

- We may have little concern over our wrongs
- Confession may seem like an odd or empty activity
- It is not fruitful and brings little true joy

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### Some problematic models of Grace and Obedience

Time 

#### Confused mixture of Obedience and Grace

God loves us sometimes  
yet also judges us sometimes

“Then we will no longer be infants, **tossed back and forth by the waves**, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.” *Ephesians 4:14*

- We keep feeling somewhat guilty and somewhat loved
- We don't know and experience the amazing love of God
- We don't grow in the ways of God

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### Some problematic models of Grace and Obedience

Time 

#### Moving **from** Grace **to** Obedience

grace

complete obedience

“Are you so foolish? After beginning by means of the Spirit, are you now trying to finish by means of the flesh?” *Galatians 3:3*

- We may fear that God is disappointed with us  
and that He no longer loves us the way He did at first
- We may live without the blessing He intends for us
- Growing in obedience may be hard and unproductive work

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“Legalism”

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“Cheap Grace”

### Confused mixture of Obedience and Grace

God loves us sometimes  
yet also judges us sometimes

### Moving **from** Grace **to** Obedience

grace

complete obedience

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### A better model of Grace and Obedience

Time

Always in grace, and growing in obedience

complete obedience

superabounding grace

“And I pray that you, being **rooted and established in love**, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and **to know this love that surpasses knowledge**—that you may be **filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.**” *Ephesians 3:17b-19*

- We can always enjoy this love that surpasses knowledge, filled with the fullness of God

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**A better model of Grace and Obedience**

Time

**Always in grace, and growing in obedience**

complete obedience

superabounding grace

“In view of **God’s mercy**...offer your bodies as **a living sacrifice.**”  
 “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and **follow me.**” “**Make every effort to add to your faith** goodness...” *Romans 12:1; Luke 9:23; 2 Peter 1:5ff*

➤ Being confident in God’s love for us, we respond in worship that seeks to do what our Savior does, and to live what He taught, depending upon Him to help us

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**The Big Idea**

**We are rescued...**

**FROM** just judgment for those who sin

**BY** the surperabounding grace of Christ

**THROUGH** faith in Christ

**FOR** being like Jesus  
and doing what He taught

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### Application

Instead of **juggling** grace and obedience...

- **Always stand on the superabounding grace of Christ**
- **And increasingly grow in the ways of Christ**
- Trust and rejoice in the superabounding grace in Christ
- We are loved and accepted by God **always and only** because of the exchange of Jesus' perfect holiness for our sin
  - "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." *2 Corinthians 5:21*
  - "For by one sacrifice he has **made perfect forever** those who are being made holy." *Hebrews 10:14*
  - "Therefore, there is now **no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus**" *Romans 8:1*

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### Application

Instead of **juggling** grace and obedience...

- **Always stand on the superabounding grace of Christ**
- **And increasingly grow in obedience to Christ**

**As an act of love, make every effort to be more like Christ**

- "His divine power **has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.** ... that you may **participate in the divine nature**... For this very reason, **make every effort** to add to your faith **goodness**; and to goodness, **knowledge**; and to knowledge, **self-control**; and to self-control, **perseverance**; and to perseverance, **godliness**; and to godliness, **mutual affection**; and to mutual affection, **love.**" *2 Peter 1:3-7*

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### Application

Instead of **juggling** grace and obedience...

- Always stand on the superabounding grace of Christ
- **And increasingly grow in obedience to Christ**

**As an act of worship, put Christ before everything else**

- “Then [Jesus] said to them all: ‘Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.’” *Luke 9:23*

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### Application

Instead of **juggling** grace and obedience...

- Always stand on the superabounding grace of Christ
- **And increasingly grow in obedience to Christ**

**As an act of worship, be like Jesus and do what He did**

- **Show grace** = Give good first: welcome & love
  - even when you suspect good won't come
  - even when good is not what you've already received
  - as a “friend of sinners”, show hospitality to the judged
- **Do the good works of Christ** in Christ
- **Help others grow in the good works of Christ** in Christ

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## The Big Idea

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**BY** the surperabounding grace of Christ  
**THROUGH** faith in Christ  
**FOR** being like Jesus  
 and doing what He taught



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### Proposed Core Value: Superabounding Grace and Complete Obedience

We are committed to building a community that practices **superabounding grace** while calling our people to **complete obedience** to Christ.

In **superabounding grace**, we welcome people to come as they are and we will go to people where they are, and we are committed to building relationships with people as Jesus did, including with those who are often judged by others, just as Jesus welcomed sinners, prostitutes, and tax collectors ([Luke 5:29–32](#)).

We also call our people to **complete obedience** to Jesus in all parts of our lives, conforming to His call to holiness and to sacrificial service ([Luke 5:27–28](#); [9:23–26](#)). And we recognize that this road to **complete obedience** is lifelong and requires grace, patience, perseverance, and mutual encouragement ([Hebrews 10:23–25](#); [12:7–13](#)).

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<https://crosswaymchurch.org/grace-and-obedience/>

With a growing set of questions & answers as we process together:

- What are examples of superabounding grace?
- Are we at risk of implying our approval of sin?
- Who “enforces” complete obedience?
- When do we transition from grace to obedience?
- Why are words needed in front of grace and obedience?
- What words should modify “grace” and “obedience”?
- What makes this not be “bait and switch”?
- What does it mean “to go to people where they are”?

Let’s process together, and grow to be more like Christ together

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### The Big Idea

**We are rescued...**

**FROM** just judgment for those who sin  
**BY** the superabounding grace of Christ  
**THROUGH** faith in Christ  
**FOR** being like Jesus  
 and doing what He taught

Let us stand in His grace, as we grow in obedience to Jesus in all the good works He has prepared in advance for us to do, for the praise of His glorious grace.



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