

“The doctrine of God’s grace is central to the truths of Scripture. And yet it has been misunderstood or distorted in numerous ways. Dr. Bing’s book is a much-needed corrective to false concepts of grace that are being taught today. Dr. Bing presents with remarkable clarity the teachings of God’s Word on grace for salvation from sin and on grace for the Christian life. This book should be read by every believer and every Christian leader.”

—Roy B. Zuck, Th.D.

Senior Professor Emeritus of Bible Exposition,

Dallas Theological Seminary

Editor, *Bibliotheca Sacra*

“Some scholars complicate truth; others simplify truth. Dr. Bing falls into the latter category. He has a unique ability to take complex issues and boil them down to clear, straightforward principles that are easy to understand. In *Simply by Grace* he untangles the relationship between faith and works, grace and merit, effort and trust. Thanks, Dr. Bing, for this excellent work.”

—Dave Anderson, Ph.D.

President, Grace School of Theology

“There are some things in life that you cannot get too much of. One of those is a biblical understanding of grace. The more you grasp God’s teaching about grace, the more it will grasp you. In so doing, it will impact every area of your life. That’s why Dr. Bing’s book is worth reading. Biblically based, easy to understand, and thorough, it helps you see grace from God’s perspective. Not only is it instructional, his book will motivate you to live a life that testifies, ‘By the grace of God I am what I am’ (1 Cor. 15:10).”

—R. Larry Moyer, D.Min.

President and CEO, EvanTell

“The history of making sense of the universe finally got on track when the sun, not the earth, was understood to be the center of the solar system. Christianity, and your own spiritual journey, will get on track in the same way when grace, not law or works, is understood as the centerpiece of a life of faith. Dr. Bing has made the high truths of grace sit on the easy-to-reach shelf of practical living with this book. Plain, direct, and understandable; a grace resource for every library, small group, and home!”

—Fred Lybrand, D.Min.

Author, former pastor, and past president of
the Free Grace Alliance

“Dr. Bing portrays the clarity of the gospel with simplicity and grace. Where others pervert or attack the free gift of salvation, Dr. Bing effectively addresses their concerns with sound exposition of the Bible. When others misunderstand or misapply the high cost of discipleship, Dr. Bing provides a perspective that reflects the importance of living in godliness without confusing such efforts with the good news of salvation by faith alone. This book will be a welcome addition to the library of all who cherish the salvation provided *simply by grace*.”

—Jack G. Lewis, Ph.D.

Associate Dean of Faculty, Moody Bible
Institute—Spokane

SIMPLY *by* GRACE

AN INTRODUCTION
TO GOD'S LIFE-CHANGING GIFT



CHARLES C. BING

 **Kregel**
Publications

Simply by Grace: An Introduction to God's Life-Changing Gift

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ISBN 978-0-8254-2303-1

Printed in the United States of America

09 10 11 12 13 / 5 4 3 2 1

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FOREWORD

Grace distinguishes Christianity from all other religions, and grace can affect all areas and aspects of one's life. Yet grace, such a beautiful and important concept, is often misunderstood, limited in its applications, or mixed with impurities.

Dr. Bing makes none of these mistakes.

This book, which deals accurately and comprehensively with the subject of the grace of God, is needed and most welcome. Clear and easy to understand, it explores the many facets and ramifications of grace. Unequivocal in his positions, the author nevertheless represents other views fairly and kindly.

Today, errors regarding additions to and misstatements about grace abound in thinking, teaching, and preaching. Dr. Bing has dealt carefully with what the Bible says about grace in many areas. Salvation, justification, sanctification, security, assurance, and discipleship are examined accurately and clearly. Key Bible passages are plainly interpreted, and so-called problem passages are not avoided or strained to fit a preconceived conclusion.

To spend time in this book will not only sharpen and broaden one's understanding of grace, but will also deepen one's love and appreciation for the grace of God and the God of all grace.

CHARLES C. RYRIE, TH.D., PH.D.

INTRODUCTION

A question posed years ago at a British conference on world religions sparked a lively debate: What makes Christianity unique among all the other religions in this world?

Some argued that it was the Incarnation, others, the Resurrection. But some replied that other religions had similar beliefs. When C. S. Lewis walked into the room, someone explained their quandary. “Oh, that’s easy,” he said. “It’s grace.”

How does Christianity distinguish itself from every other religion? *Simply by grace.*

How does a person become a Christian? *Simply by grace.*

How can a person be eternally saved? *Simply by grace.*

How can one know that one is eternally saved? *Simply by grace.*

How can one live the Christian life? *Simply by grace.*

How should a Christian be motivated to serve God and others? *Simply by grace.*

Do these seem like understatements or overstatements? They could seem like either unless you understand what God’s grace is in its simplest meaning. Only when you understand the simplicity of His grace can you also begin to understand its deep riches.

Simply by Grace implies that the answer to a lot of confusion about salvation and the Christian life is found in a simple and

accurate understanding of grace. I say this not to trivialize grace, but to rescue it from the encumbrances of those who confuse its meaning, complicate its simplicity, or teach it inconsistently.

Grace is a word commonly used among Christians and non-Christians, but too often it is misunderstood or at least underappreciated. Christians, of course, believe in grace, or they really wouldn't be Christians because the Bible says, "By grace you have been saved" (Eph. 2:8). Non-Christian religions and quasi-Christian cults also use the word *grace* frequently. So what does it mean and why does it make a difference to us?

You might think that a consistent view of grace would result from intense Bible study, the kind someone would receive in a Bible college or seminary. But, having graduated with three degrees from such schools with three different groups of colleagues, and having interacted with many more people since then, I can tell you that there are vastly different views of grace. Churches differ in their views, pastors differ, professors differ, and therefore many Christians are confused.

In my study of the Bible and in teaching and preaching it for over thirty years, I've come to see that one's concept of God's grace is not only the key to becoming a Christian, but it is also the key to the assurance of salvation and living in freedom to serve God and others. That's why I've devoted my life and ministry to sharing the message of God's grace with people everywhere I go and however I can.

While it is my privilege to know many Christians who understand grace clearly, I've also met or read works by many

others who have distorted God's grace to the detriment of those who need to be saved, those who are not sure they are saved, and those who need a firm foundation for Christian living. This distortion confuses the simple grace of God to the point of making it void. Between those who understand grace clearly and those who distort it is a larger group of people who use the language of grace and sing songs about grace, but have not applied its truth consistently or clearly in their beliefs about salvation and the Christian life.

Grace grounds us in the Christian life. If you don't understand the nature of grace, you will have problems and confusion in some area of life. You are not well-grounded in grace, for example, if

- you are confused about how to obtain eternal life.
- you are not sure that you ever had eternal life.
- you are not sure that you now have eternal life.
- you are not sure that you will keep eternal life.
- you have trouble feeling accepted by God.
- you don't feel like you have done enough to please God.
- you don't feel that you are good enough to please God.
- you are struggling with sin, guilt, and forgiveness.
- you have trouble forgiving others.
- you are judgmental toward others.
- you hate yourself.
- you hate others.

The list could go on, but getting grounded in God's grace will help resolve all of these issues and more. Those grounded in grace appreciate more fully what God has done in their salvation, and they are properly motivated to live a life that glorifies God. They accept more easily who they are, how God sees them, and how they should see others. They find a new power over their weaknesses and understand the gift of forgiveness.

This book is a discussion that introduces the major issues related to God's grace, helping you be well grounded in it. My prayer is that it will help you understand the beauty of the grace that gives us eternal and abundant life so that you can be free to be all that God made you to be—simply by grace!