# What it means to be

# “GOSPEL-Centered”

Introduction

* The term “gospel-centered” has become very popular these days in light of the resurgence of the doctrines of grace. But what does it mean to be “gospel-centered?”
* Being gospel-centered is a term that simply describes the means by which believers are sanctified… it is also referred to as “gospel-sanctification.”
* In other words, biblical sanctification is empowered and sustained by the gospel—the glory of Jesus Christ in His person and work on the Cross.

🕮 **2 Corinthians 3:18** ~ 18But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

* Paul states that spiritual transformation (*sanctification*) takes place as believers continue to “behold” (*believe, place their faith in*—cf. John 6:40) “the glory of the Lord” (*the gospel*—cf. 4:4–6).
* As we continue to place our faith in what Christ has accomplished for us in His death and resurrection, our hearts are changed and transformed more and more into the likeness of Christ.
* This all occurs through the powerful working of the Holy Spirit within us.
* Without the Gospel at the center, the believer’s focus inevitably shifts off the glory of God and onto the exaltation of men (Gal 6:14)
* Instead of seeing what “Christ has done,” the believer focuses on what “I must do.”
* Because the Gospel is primary in Scripture as the starting point for the Christian life and the truth that enables and motivates our sanctification, an understanding of Gospel-sanctification is utterly crucial for all of life.

Two Ways to Live the Christian Life

* Most Christians begin their spiritual journey in good form with great excitement and joy, but then peter out and struggle in the faith. This often occurs because believers abandon the simplicity of their devotion to Christ and walking by faith and default back to a legalistic understanding of their relationship with God.
* This is exactly what took place with the Galatian believers. They started their Christian lives walking by faith (Gal 2:20) and empowered by the Holy Spirit (Gal 3:3).
* But as time passed, they reverted back to a lifestyle of self-produced works as the means for their relationship with God and their sanctification (Gal 3:1–5).
* When the believer’s heart regresses to a “legalistic” and “conditional” relationship with God, sanctification aborts completely!

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| **Legalistic Christian Life** | **Gospel-Centered Christian Life** |
| a legalistic & dutiful relationship with God | a relationship with God based on love and joy  ***John 15:1–11*** |
| godliness centered on external rules & activity | godliness centered first on heart motives & desires  ***John 14:15*** |
| “God is angry with me and is hard to please, therefore, I must earn His favor through good works” | There is no condemnation in Christ Jesus and God is always for me and loves me.  Rom 8:1, 31–39 |
| spiritual life consistently lacking joy | spiritual life consistently characterized by joy  ***John 15:11*** |
| Christian life lived based on my faithfulness and self-discipline. | Christian life lived based on grace through faith.  ***Gal 2:20*** |
| self-righteousness is the main aroma of this life | humility is the main aroma of this life  ***Gal 6:14*** |
| no genuine holiness but lots of hypocrisy | true heart/life transformation and authenticity  ***2 Cor 3:18*** |
| trouble in defeating besetting sins | hope in the transforming power of the Gospel  ***Rom 1:16*** |
| angry, harsh, & embittered towards people | learning to extend the grace that was given to me  ***Eph 4:31–32*** |
| fear of men & desire to please people | fear of God & desire to love others  ***Gal 1:10*** |
| see obedience as the greatest heart character | see love for Christ as the greatest heart character  ***1 Cor 13:13; Matt 22:37–38*** |
| God was used for self-glory | God’s glory is revealed in Christ as the best  ***2 Cor 4:4–6*** |
| the Bible was the highest value | the Bible is the means to the highest value… Jesus  ***1 Cor 15:3–4*** |
| a variety of theological centers in Scripture | Christ is the theological center of Scripture  ***Gen 3:15; Rev 22:3–4*** |
| heaven was the avoidance of hell | heaven is to be with Jesus  ***Phil 1:23; 1 Pet 3:18*** |

Theological Foundations of Gospel-Centeredness

## So what is the Gospel? A Working Definition

* The Gospel is “good news” that sinners can be saved (justified) by ***grace alone*** through ***faith alone*** based on ***the blood and righteousness of Christ alone*** for ***the glory of God alone***.[[1]](#footnote-1)

## What is the Aim of God in Our Salvation?

* The aim of God in the salvation of sinners is… ***His glory, namely the glory of His grace and mercy as redeemed sinners worship, love, and adore God and the Lamb forever!***

🕮 **Ephesians 2:7** ~[He saved us]7so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

🕮 **Romans 9:23** ~ 23And *He did so* [God chose some] to make known the riches of His glory upon vessels of mercy, which He prepared beforehand for glory,

🕮 **Romans 15:9** ~ 9and for the Gentiles to glorify God for His mercy; as it is written, “Therefore I will give praise to You among the Gentiles, And I will sing to Your name.”

* Since this is the aim of God for all of eternity, this is also His goal for us while we live on earth… to glorify God’s mercy and grace by living upon that grace.

🕮 **1 Corinthians 15:10** ~ 10But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

🕮 **1 Timothy 1:16** ~ 16Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.

🕮 **1 Peter 4:10–11** ~ 10As each one has received a *special* gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 11Whoever speaks, *is to do so* as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves *is to do so* as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

## Why is the Gospel the clearest revelation of the Glory of God?

* The absolute freedom of God’s sovereign grace is what it means for God to be God. This is the essence of what it means to be God.

🕮 **Exodus 33:18–19** ~ 18Then Moses said, “I pray You, show me Your glory!” 19And He said, “I Myself will make all My goodness pass before you, and will proclaim the name of the Lord before you; and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show compassion on whom I will show compassion.”

🕮 **Romans 9:15** ~ 15For He says to Moses, “I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion.”

* Therefore, the death of the Son of God stands as the summit of God’s glory because more than any other act of God, it reveals His sovereign grace most evidently.

🕮 **John 8:28** ~ 28So Jesus said, “When you lift up the Son of Man, then you will know that I am *He,* and I do nothing on My own initiative, but I speak these things as the Father taught Me.

🕮 **Titus 2:11** ~ 11For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men,

* This explains why for the rest of eternity, the object of praise will be “the Lamb who was slain” and His grace towards redeemed sinners.

🕮 **Ephesians 2:7** ~ 7so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

🕮 **Revelation 5:12** ~ 12saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.”

🕮 **Revelation 22:3** ~ 3There will no longer be any curse; and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and His bond-servants will serve Him;

## Why is the Gospel the Starting Point of both our Justification *and* Sanctification?

* The Gospel is the starting point of our justification because man is dead in his sin (Eph 2:1–3) and the work of Christ is the necessary power of God unto salvation. The glory of Christ embodied in the Gospel truth is necessary for the Spirit to regenerate us (Rom 10:17).

🕮 **Romans 1:16** ~ 16For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek.

🕮 **2 Corinthians 4:6** ~ 6For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

🕮 **2 Timothy 1:10** ~ 10but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel,

* The Gospel is also the ongoing starting point of our sanctification because God has designed heart/life transformation to take place as the believer is repeatedly exposed to the glory of God through the glory of Christ in His Cross-work.

🕮 **2 Corinthians 3:18** ~ 18But we all, with unveiled face, beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

* And nowhere is the glory of God more clearly visible than in the Gospel—the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for sinners!

🕮 **2 Corinthians 4:4, 6** ~ 4in whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God… 6For God, who said, “Light shall shine out of darkness,” is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the Light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

* Since the justified believer still carries the remaining sin principle in his body (Rom 7:15–24), the only means of sanctification is the perfect righteousness of Christ which has been graciously imputed to the sinner through the death and resurrection of Christ.

🕮 **Galatians 2:20** ~ 20”I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

🕮 **Romans 6:5–7** ~ 5For if we have become united with *Him* in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be *in the likeness* of His resurrection, 6knowing this, that our old self was crucified with *Him,* in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; 7for he who has died is freed from sin.

* The Gospel is also the focal point of our glorification as well since we will worship the Lamb of God forever and ever!

🕮 **Revelation 5:12–13** ~ 12saying with a loud voice, “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing.” 13And every created thing which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things in them, I heard saying, “To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, *be* blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever.”

The Practice of Gospel-Centeredness

## How is Justification the basis of our Sanctification? Or, How does the Gospel change the way we relate to God?

* Justification by faith is that doctrine whereby God declares the sinner righteous on the basis of faith (Rom 3:28) through the means of Christ’s death and righteousness (Rom 5:9).
* Justification is broken down even further into the spiritual events of ***expiation*** and ***imputation***.
* ***Expiation*** ***(Pardon)*** ~ Christ removes all our sin through His substitutionary death (Rom 3:25; Col 2:13–14).
* ***Imputation (Power)*** ~ Christ imputes to us His perfect righteousness so that we always remain in perfect legal standing before the Father (Rom 4:3; 5:19; 2 Cor 5:21).
* Therefore, the sinner can approach the throne of God’s grace (Heb 4:16) because by faith, we have been declared forgiven and righteous by God Himself.

🕮 **Romans 8:1**, **33–34** ~ 1Therefore there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus… 33Who will bring a charge against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies; 34who is the one who condemns? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.

* Being able to approach the Lord Himself brings us into His glorious presence, the glory that enables us to be sanctified and provides for us every spiritual blessing and benefit we need for holiness (see below “Union with Christ”).
* But not only is all of our sin forgiven, everything we need to love and obey God is provided for us through the perfect righteousness of Christ!

🕮 **2 Peter 1:3–4** ~ 3seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence. 4For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, so that by them you may become partakers of *the* divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust.

🕮 **John 15:5** ~ 5“I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

🕮 **Galatians 2:20** ~ 20”I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

* Therefore, the Gospel eliminates my sinful bent towards ***penance***—earning God’s favor through self-effort—by reminding my wayward heart that God has already finished the work of forgiveness and has removed the wrath and guilt for every single one of my sins against Him.

🕮 **John 19:30** ~ 30Therefore when Jesus had received the sour wine, He said, “It is finished!” And He bowed His head and gave up His spirit.

🕮 **Matthew 27:46** ~ 46About the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, “Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?” that is, “My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?”

* The Gospel also eliminates my sinful bent towards ***performance***—becoming righteous through self-effort, i.e. “self-righteous”—because it is only through Christ’s righteousness that I can ever become holy and Christ-like!
* The Gospel then becomes the means of killing my sinful pride and reminding me that there is absolutely no reason to boast in anything but the Cross of Christ!

🕮 **Galatians 6:14** ~ 14But may it never be that I would boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

## Where do I draw on spiritual resources for godliness?

* Not only has the believer been justified by faith, faith also brings the believer into a permanent and everlasting union with Jesus Christ.

🕮 **Colossians 2:12** ~ 12having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

🕮 **1 Corinthians 1:30** ~ 30But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,

* All spiritual resources for eternal life and godliness are available to the believer because of his union with Christ. The supernatural, powerful life of Jesus is the basis of the believer’s new life in Christ.

🕮 **Galatians 2:20** ~ 20“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

* Therefore, believers already possess everything they could possibly need (2 Pet 1:3–4) in order to live a life pleasing to God and bearing much fruit (John 15:5).

## How do I appropriate the power of the Gospel in my life?

* The only means we have available to us in appropriating God’s gospel grace and benefits is by FAITH alone!

🕮 **Galatians 2:20** ~ 20”I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me.

* Faith is both a ***renunciation*** of self and a ***reliance*** upon Christ alone for all of the gracious benefits of His perfect life and sacrificial death.

🕮 **Hebrews 11:6** ~ 6And without faith it is impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is and *that* He is a rewarder of those who seek Him.

🕮 **John 15:5** ~ 5”I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me and I in him, he bears much fruit, for apart from Me you can do nothing.

🕮 **Ephesians 3:17** ~ 17so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; *and* that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

* Therefore, faith in the Gospel is not only the means of our justification (Rom 1:16), but also of our sanctification.

🕮 **Romans 1:17** ~ 17For in it *the* righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “But the righteous *man* shall live by faith.”

🕮 **2 Thessalonians 2:13** ~ 13But we should always give thanks to God for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God has chosen you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.

⦿ “Obey by Faith. Every duty must be done in faith, in the strength from Christ. Apart from Him we can do nothing (John 15:5). It isn’t enough for you to be a believer, though that’s the beginning of every good work (Eph. 2:10)—you must also act in faith in every duty. Our whole obedience is ‘the obedience that comes from faith’ (Rom. 1:5). So Christ is called ‘our life’ (Col. 3:4), meaning He is our spiritual life: the Spring, Author, and Cause of it. No spiritually living act—no duty that is acceptable to God—can be performed but by the actual working of Christ, who is our life. ‘The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God’ (Gal. 2:20).”[[2]](#footnote-2)

⦿ In answer to Hudson Taylor’s struggles during a season of spiritual despair, a fellow missionary wrote to him these words that provide the answer he was looking for. This is the “spiritual secret” Hudson Taylor sought after: “Not by striving after faith, but by resting on the Faithful One.”[[3]](#footnote-3)

## How does Faith “work”?

* For the Christian, the ability to have faith and to work out our salvation in fear and trembling (Phil 2:12–13) is a gift from the Lord as well.

🕮 **Philippians 2:12–13** ~ 12So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for *His* good pleasure.

🕮 **1 Corinthians 15:10** ~ 10But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.

🕮 **Hebrews 13:20–21** ~ 20Now the God of peace, who brought up from the dead the great Shepherd of the sheep through the blood of the eternal covenant, *even* Jesus our Lord, 21equip you in every good thing to do His will, working in us that which is pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom *be* the glory forever and ever. Amen.

* The Christian works because it is God who is at work in him. The constant flow of grace gives the believer the motivation and desire to live a life pleasing unto the Lord.
* True faith results in a relationship with God who forever is for us and works in us for our joy in Him.
* Therefore, God’s work in us does not eliminate our work, it enables it.
* When faith works, this results in unspeakable joy in Christ!

🕮 **John 15:11** ~ 11“These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.

🕮 **2 Corinthians 1:24** ~ 24Not that we lord it over your faith, but are workers with you for your joy; for in your faith you are standing firm.

🕮 **Philippians 1:25** ~ 25Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy in the faith,

## How does the Gospel produce heart transformation?

* The core of sin is unbelief, which underlies each and every sin (Gen 3:1–7). The Gospel produces heart transformation by bringing the truths of the Gospel to bear on the believer’s mind and heart through faith.
* By trusting in the Gospel truth…
* Believing that God chose me before the foundation of the world to be His (Eph 1:4)
* Believing that I am a sinner and deserving of God’s eternal wrath (Eph 2:1–3)
* Believing that I am saved by grace alone through the precious death of the Son of God (Eph 2:8)
* Believing that this salvation is undeserved for this “chief of sinners” (1 Tim 1:15)
* Believing that the Cross is the pinnacle of God’s love and mercy for this sinner (Rom 5:8)
* Believing that in Christ, I have all that I need to be holy and that God is truly for me (Rom 8:31–32)
* God ***convicts*** me of my sin and ***convinces*** me of His love… and this truth received by faith humbles my heart and God grants a passionate love for Him within me (John 8:42 & 1:12).

🕮 **1 John 4:19** ~ 19We love, because He first loved us.

🕮 **Luke 7:47** ~ 47”For this reason I say to you, her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little.”

 “We will love God to the degree that we recognize the magnitude of our sins and the immensity of God’s grace to forgive them… As a Pharisee, Simon likely had significant theological learning, memorized extensive portions of Scripture, exercised rigorous self-discipline, tithed meticulously, spent much time ‘serving’ God, and enjoyed a reputation as a godly man. And yet he did not love God. The woman, however, who had nothing to offer except shameful sin, was described by Jesus as a model for true worship. Why? Simply because she knew how desperately she needed the forgiveness Jesus offered in His gospel, and she believed that He could grant it… That is what Jesus is looking for. That is the faith that saves… True worship is a passionate love for God. And, for sinners like us, the fuel of that love is a profound realization, in the words of former slave trader-turned-pastor, John Newton, ‘that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior.’”[[4]](#footnote-4)

* Therefore, love for God motivates and empowers all acts of obedience for God and fulfills the greatest commandment in the Bible (Matt 22:37–38).

🕮 **John 14:15** ~ 15”If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

## What is the greatest gift of the Gospel?

* The greatest gift of the Gospel is God Himself and the enjoyment of His glory through the precious work of His Son.

🕮 **1 Peter 3:18** ~ 18For Christ also died for sins once for all, *the* just for *the* unjust, so that He might bring us to God, having been put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit;

🕮 **Psalm 16:11** ~ 11You will make known to me the path of life; In Your presence is fullness of joy; In Your right hand there are pleasures forever.

⦿ “Salvation may be described as the blind receiving sight, the deaf receiving hearing, the dead receiving life; but we have not only received these blessings, we have received CHRIST JESUS himself. It is true that he gave us life from the dead. He gave us pardon of sin; he gave us imputed righteousness. These are all precious things, but we are not content with them; we have received Christ himself. The Son of God has been poured into us, and we have received him, and appropriated him. What a heartful Jesus must be, for heaven itself cannot contain him!”[[5]](#footnote-5)

Questions Related to Gospel-Centeredness

## How do you know if you’re living a gospel-centered life?

* There are experiential realities for the believer who is walking by faith in the gospel of Christ. These include:
* a wholehearted, first love for Jesus Christ for all that He is and all that He’s done

🕮 **Ephesians 3:17–19** ~ 17so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; *and* that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

* joy in Christ

🕮 **John 15:11** ~ 11“These things I have spoken to you so that My joy may be in you, and *that* your joy may be made full.

* the fruit of the Spirit

🕮 **Galatians 5:22–23** ~ 22But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, 23gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

## Isn’t it better to obey, even if it’s not in faith?

* From a purely human/consequence standpoint, it is better to obey externally even if the heart lacks faith.
* It’s “better” (in the sense of not having to face the consequences) to say “no” to the sin of drunkenness since that choice will avoid the consequences of getting drunk (i.e. a DUI, a car crash that kills someone, etc…).
* But this is pure morality, not biblical obedience for the glory of God.
* God does not look favorably upon “good” outward actions from a heart of unbelief. He considers those acts as “vain.”

🕮 **Matthew 15:8–9** ~ 8‘This people honors Me with their lips, But their heart is far away from Me. 9‘But in vain do they worship Me, Teaching as doctrines the precepts of men.’ ”

* Any obedience to the law of God that is not born out of a love for God is not biblical obedience to God.

🕮 **Matthew 22:40** ~ 40“On these two commandments depend the whole Law and the Prophets.”

🕮 **John 14:15** ~ 15“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.

## Does Gospel-Centeredness undermine Lordship Salvation?

* The question may arise as to whether this emphasis on the grace of God may lead to a casual, cavalier life of libertinism for the believer (i.e. Rom 6:1).
* What about repentance and holiness as the fruits of conversion? Won’t this emphasis on the grace of God keep us from becoming holy? (cf. Jam 2:14ff)
* Two groups of people may ask this question:
* The first are those who are struggling with the abandonment of their pride in self-righteousness (Luke 15:2, 25-30). The grace of the Gospel challenges pride and confronts the self-righteous person head on.
* The second are those who truly care about the Gospel and desire to protect it from the kind of fruitlessness that stems from false professions of faith (cf. Jam 2:14ff).
* Gospel-centeredness does not undermine Lordship salvation, but elevates Christ as Lord to the highest degree since love for Christ is the underlying motive behind all acts of obedience.
* The believer who loves and cherishes Christ does so because he sees the gravity of his sinfulness before a holy and merciful God (Luke 7:47).
* And the weight of the glory of Christ and His Cross-work upon his soul causes him to abandon sin and self and to pursue Christ alone because they have seen that Jesus is more satisfying than sin ever could be (2 Cor 4:6; Heb 11:24–26).
* The Gospel reaches down, not merely to our outward behavior—something that we can change on our own—but to our motivations and affections, something that we cannot change on our own.
* Therefore, Gospel-centeredness transforms, not just outward behavior, but starts with the heart motives which inevitably lead to holiness of life and character (John 14:15).
* This complete transformation of one’s life—motives, affections, desires, thoughts, attitudes, speech, and actions—gives all glory to the One who died for our lives (Rom 6:8-14).
* Motivations determine who gets the glory… therefore, the motivation for the glory of Christ will inevitably lead to Christlikeness!

## Can Grace be Abused?

* A misunderstanding of grace can be abused, but not a true working of grace.

🕮 **Romans 6:1–2** ~ 1What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? 2May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

* The Bible makes it clear from this verse that abusing grace is an absurdity for the believer who has already died to sin’s mastery over him.
* It may be possible to intellectual affirm the grace of God in the Gospel all the while living a life of sinful rebellion to the Lord (cf. Phil 1:15–18).
* But, it is impossible to believe the gospel and hold fast the grace of God and not be changed by that powerful truth (2 Cor 3:18; 1 Cor 15:10).

1. John Piper, *Did Jesus Preach Paul’s Gospel?* (Sermon delivered at the 2010 T4G Conference). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Kris Lundgaard, *The Enemy Within* [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Hudson Taylor, *Spiritual Secret* [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Jon Bloom, DGM August 2009 Newsletter. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Charles Spurgeon, *Morning & Evening,* Nov. 8th [↑](#footnote-ref-5)