

Introduction: The Pillars of Grace

- Four pillars of grace: **honouring others, thankfulness, generosity, and faith.**
- Today's focus: **Selective Faith** — faith as the channel to receive God's grace.
- Faith = trusting something unseen, often based on the trustworthiness of a person or authority.
- Everyone exercises faith daily (examples: advertisements, satnav, investments, relationships).
- The challenge: faith must be **selective**, since sincere belief in the wrong thing leads to deception.
- Key truth: **Grace is God's gift through Jesus (John 3:16). Faith is the means of receiving it.**

Point 1: The Nature of Faith

- Faith = belief in what cannot be verified with senses (Hebrews 11:1).
- Everyone has faith, but not all faith is **true or well-placed.**
- Wrong faith examples: satnav errors, failed investments, misplaced trust in people.
- Bible warns of deception — by others, by ourselves, and by the devil.
- Selective faith = **placing trust in Jesus and His Word.**

Point 2: All-In Faith

- Selective faith requires **wholehearted trust.**
- Example: **Peter stepping out of the boat** (Matthew 14:29).
- Faith means committing fully when truth is certain, not holding back.
- Application: choose to be a person of **great, trusting faith.**

Point 3: The Challenge of Discernment

- Many voices and options compete for our faith.
- **Paul's warning to Timothy:** "Evil men and impostors will grow worse... deceiving and being deceived" (2 Timothy 3:13).
- We are only deceived when our hearts want something God doesn't want.
- Solution: continue in what you have learned and been assured of (2 Timothy 3:14).
 - Trust the **Holy Scriptures**, which "make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 3:15–16).
 - Test teachers by their **fruit of righteousness** (James 3:13–18).
 - The ultimate standard = **Jesus' words and the Scriptures.**

Point 4: Jesus – The Bread of Life

- **John 6:28–35** – Jesus: "The work of God is to believe in Him whom He sent."
- Jesus declared: *"I am the bread of life."*

- True faith rests not in religion, works, or miracles, but **in the person of Jesus and His words**.
- Peter's confession: *"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life"* (John 6:68).

Point 5: Key Principles of Selective Faith

1. **Faith is a gift of grace** – not works or religion (Ephesians 2:8–9).
2. **Faith comes by hearing God's Word** – Romans 10:17.
3. **Faith is not based on sight or feelings** – 2 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 11:1.
 - Emotions, miracles, or signs ≠ true faith.
 - Faith is a spiritual "sense" given by God's Word. (Eph 1:18)
4. **Faith is more than mental assent** – James 2:19.
 - Example: trusting a doctor's prescription requires acting, not just agreeing.
 - Faith without works is dead (James 2:26).

Point 6: Evidence for Trusting Jesus

- Historical evidence: Jesus lived, performed miracles, crucified, and believed risen from the dead.
- Eyewitnesses risked their lives to testify.
- Scripture manuscripts demonstrate authenticity and reliability.
- Application: **settle in your heart that Jesus and His Word are trustworthy**.

Point 7: God's Word as a Living Scalpel

- **Hebrews 4:12** – God's Word is living, active, sharper than a sword.
- Divides soul/spirit, judges thoughts/intentions, exposes truth from deception.
- Faith requires allowing the Word to cut, correct, and change us.

Point 8: The Parable of the Soils (Matthew 13)

- Hard path = no faith.
- Rocky soil = shallow faith, lacks endurance.
- Thorny soil = faith choked by competing beliefs (science over Scripture, societal pressure, pleasures, fears).
- Good soil = uproots competing beliefs, produces lasting fruit.
- Application: **Selective faith requires actively removing false beliefs and uprooting weeds**.

Conclusion & Life Applications

- Faith must be **wholehearted and selective**.
- Choose to:
 - Believe in **Jesus and His Word** above all.
 - Let Scripture test and correct beliefs.
 - Uproot competing ideas, fears, or worldly influences (2 Corinthians 10:4–5).

- Act on God's Word, not just agree mentally.
- Final warning: zeal without knowledge leads to destruction (Romans 10:2; Hosea 4:6).
- Practical takeaway: **Everyone believes something – the key is to believe selectively in the truth of Jesus and His Word.**

Scriptures Used in this talk:

John 3:16 NKJV “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”

Matthew 14:29 NKJV “So He said, ‘Come.’ And when Peter had come down out of the boat, he walked on the water to go to Jesus.”

2 Timothy 3:13-17 NKJV 13 But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.

14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,

15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

James 3:1-12 The tongue is powerful. This relates to us as individuals, but also to teachers of God's word. Be careful.

James 3:15-18 - how to recognise a good teacher - the fruit to look for

2 Timothy 3:15-17 NKJV 15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

John 6:28-29, 32, 40, 48, 63, 67-69 NKJV 28 Then they said to Him, “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?”

29 Jesus answered and said to them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.”

32 Then Jesus said to them, “Most assuredly, I say to you, Moses did not give you the bread from heaven, but My Father gives you the true bread from heaven.”

40 “And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

48 “I am the bread of life.”

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63 “It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and they are life.”

67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”

68 But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

69 Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

John 12:48 NKJV “He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”

Matthew 7:24-27 NKJV 24 “Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock:

25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock.

26 But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand:

27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall.”

John 6:67-69 NKJV 67 Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?”

68 But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.

69 Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJV 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,

9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Romans 10:17 NKJV “So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Psalms 119:128 NKJV “Therefore all Your precepts concerning all things I consider to be right;”

2 Corinthians 5:7 NKJV “For we walk by faith, not by sight.”

Hebrews 11:1 NKJV “Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.”

Ephesians 1:18 NKJV “the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.”

James 2:19, 26 NKJV “You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!”

26 “For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.”

Heb 4:12 ESV - "12 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart."

Mark 4:19 NKJV "and the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the desires for other things entering in choke the word, and it becomes unfruitful."

2 Corinthians 10:5 NKJV "casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ,"

Romans 10:1-3 NKJV 1 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved.

2 For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.

3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and seeking to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted to the righteousness of God.

Hosea 4:6 NKJV "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge. Because you have rejected knowledge, I also will reject you from being priest for Me; because you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children."