

### A Mind that Thinks "Never Finishing; Always Completed"

Two weeks ago, I received this message on Facebook: *"About four months ago my wife of twelve years left me. I don't need to get into all the details, but God has given me tons of grace to get through it as well as given me lots of grace for her. We are headed to divorce, but Jesus has allowed me to be kind to her despite the pain she has caused my family. Two days ago, she asked me 'Why are you being so nice to me after all I've done to you?' I told her 'Because Jesus is still kind to me after all I've done to him.' I'm writing to encourage you that what you are teaching has a profound effect on me and many others."*

**Grace changes people.** When God's grace fills up your heart it spills out in your life. During the Protestant Reformation, the debate between Roman Catholics and Protestants was never over the necessity of grace. To this day, both groups believe divine grace is necessary for salvation. Rome says that *grace enables but does not complete salvation*. But we'll see today that what God begins (grace), God will always complete.

*"He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion."* (Philippians 1:6).

Principle #1: **God's love for you is far more significant than your love for God.**

God is the subject of Phil. 1:6. If a person's love for God is always emphasized to the neglect of God's love, or if one is constantly challenged to be *"fully devoted to God"* rather than hearing how *"God is fully devoted"* to His people, or if a person's love for God is always questioned and compared to another person's love for God (especially from those who lead) by *"measuring of each other's personal holiness,"* then one should put on those proverbial sneakers and run from that church as fast as possible. Those who spend more time controlling people than championing God's love lose sight of love's transforming power.

Principle #2: **God initiates the work in you without any condition or merit from you.**

*"He who began a good work in you."* Why did God begin this work? Did you do something to cause it? **Listen to the Apostle Paul.** *"For who makes you different from anyone else? What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as though you did not?"* (I Corinthians 4:7). The work that God begins in you is based on Him being *"the God of all grace who calls you"* (I Pet. 5:10).

All the great movies have biblical themes. Some of the greatest Hollywood movies of all time are based on the prince giving up his own reputation to wed a commoner who has nothing to offer the Kingdom.

*"For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich."* (II Corinthians 8:9)

Principle #3 **God carries to completion His work when you fail to finish yours.**

We persevere in grace because of God. **Listen to Jesus pray for us in terms of God's sustaining grace.**

*"Father, keep them in Your name, those whom You have given Me ... While I was with them, I kept them in Your name, which you have given Me. I have guarded them, and not one of them has been lost ... I made known to them Your name, and I will continue to make it known, that the love with which you've loved Me may be in them"* (John 17)

When you feel God doesn't give up on you, that grace finishes its work, then you'll be the same way.