

EXTENDING THE KINGDOM OF GOD...ONE PERSON AT A TIME.

ONE-TO-ONE[®]

SPRING 2023

THE RHYTHMS OF GRACE

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The Rhythms of Grace

Entering into the rest and restoration Jesus has prepared for us

BY STEPHEN SIMPSON



There were five of us sitting in a small conference room in a hotel near Columbus, Ohio, in the early Autumn of 2022. I had gathered these friends in ministry for two days of fellowship, worship, and good food. Pastor Derek Miller had just led us in a powerful time of worship, and the presence of the Holy Spirit was very evident among us.

As we began to share Scripture and personal testimonies together, Pastor Gerard Montenegro opened Matthew 11:28-30 from The Message paraphrase of The Bible, and began to read these words of Jesus:

“Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you’ll recover your life. I’ll show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me—watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you’ll learn to live freely and lightly.”

Something in my heart and mind took a deep breath. The phrase “unforced rhythms of grace” washed over me, and tears came to my eyes. “Lord, I want to learn from You,” I silently prayed.

According to Strong’s Dictionary, the word used in the original Greek language of the New Testament is *Charis*, which comes from root words meaning “joy” and “to rejoice.” It is the word for the grace

of God extended to sinful man; it is unmerited favor, undeserved blessing, a free gift of God to us. *Charis* is the root word where we get the word “charismatic”. The late Bible teacher Ern Baxter often said that having charisma in the modern sense is no guarantee of character righteousness. Charisma that is divorced from character is a recipe for deception and disaster. According to the New Testament, a true “charismatic” is a person who

How can His unforced rhythms of grace carry us through times of tumult and uncertainty?

has received the free gift of the grace of God and is now extending that same grace to others as they live and move in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Grace is not only a New Testament concept; in the original Hebrew language of the Old Testament, the word grace is translated from the word *Chen*, which means favor, grace, graciousness, kindness,

beauty, pleasantness, compassion, attractiveness, loveliness, affectionate regard. Grace is not just something that God does, but it’s at the core of Who God is...the very fabric of His nature. When the Lord declared His name to Moses in Exodus 34:6, He said it is: *“The Lord God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness” (Exodus 34:6).*

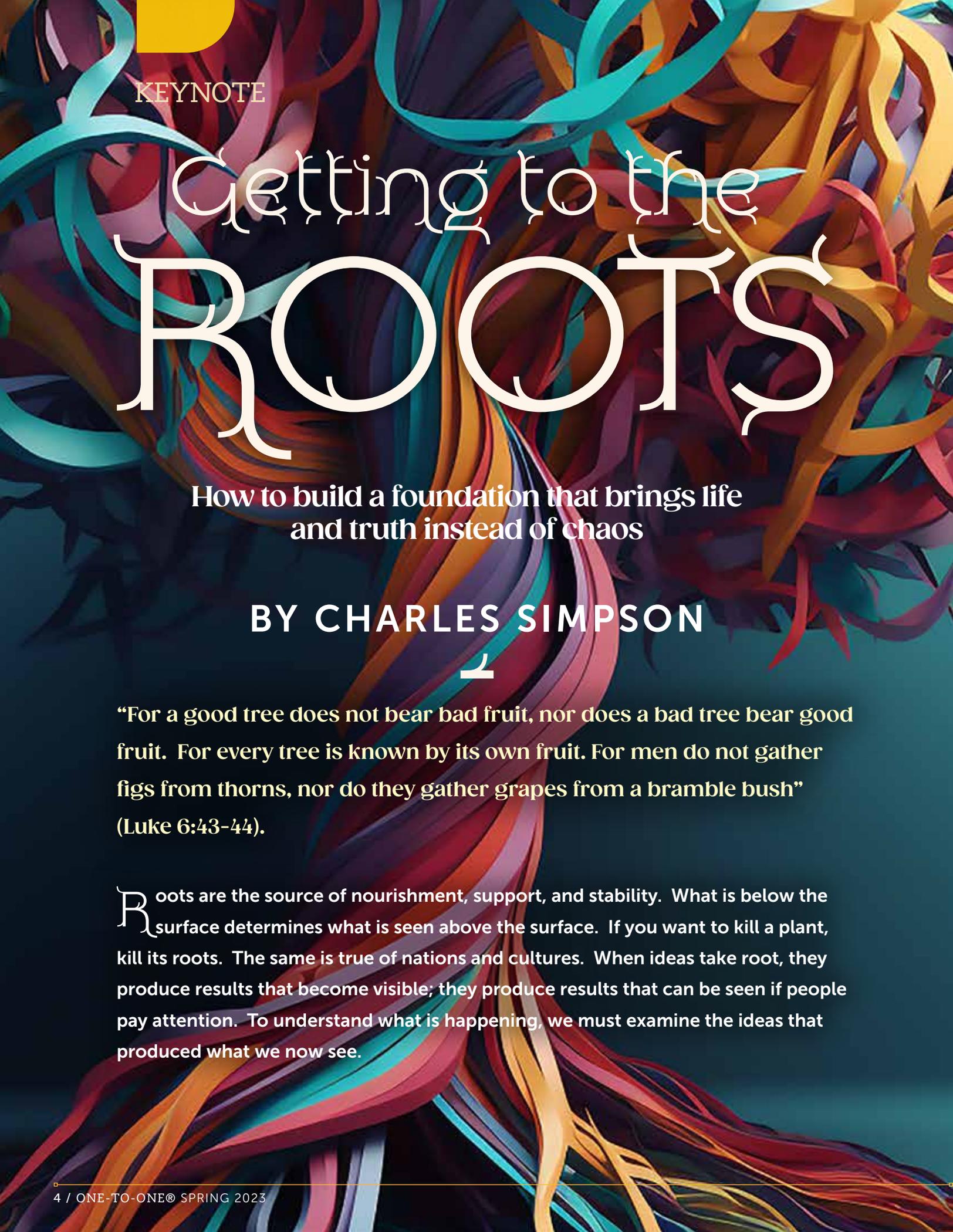
I love how author Philip Wijaya differentiates between mercy and grace:

“Mercy is the act of withholding deserved punishment, while grace is the act of endowing unmerited favor. In His mercy, God does not give us punishment we deserve, namely hell; while in His grace, God gives us the gift we do not deserve, namely heaven.”

We cannot strive for His grace; we cannot force it; we can only receive it by resting in Him by faith. The Apostle Paul reminds us in Ephesians 2:8-9, *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”*

By faith, let us come away with Him and learn His unforced rhythms of grace, which will carry us through these times of tumult and uncertainty. 121

STEPHEN SIMPSON is the Editor of *One-to-One Magazine* and the President of CSM. For information on speaking availability, please call (251) 633-7900.



KEYNOTE

Getting to the ROOTS

How to build a foundation that brings life
and truth instead of chaos

BY CHARLES SIMPSON



“For a good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor does a bad tree bear good fruit. For every tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they gather grapes from a bramble bush”
(Luke 6:43-44).

Roots are the source of nourishment, support, and stability. What is below the surface determines what is seen above the surface. If you want to kill a plant, kill its roots. The same is true of nations and cultures. When ideas take root, they produce results that become visible; they produce results that can be seen if people pay attention. To understand what is happening, we must examine the ideas that produced what we now see.

It concerns me that we talk a lot about the visible, but not so much about what produced it; that which is below the surface. In my view, we talk and debate about leaves, but not roots. My desire is to get to the roots. Ideas rooted in principles that have endured produce enduring fruit and results. Mere idealism has not.

What we learn from history is that we do NOT learn from history.

A friend of mine, who at that time was Billy Graham's pastor, gave me a statement that has stuck with me for 48 years: "My beautiful theory was murdered by a gang of ugly facts." So it has been for centuries; idealism and theories have been destroyed by ugly, sometimes brutal, facts. Yet, as it has been said, "What we learn from history is that we do not learn from history." What is more, many seek to destroy or alter history by removing accurate records and stories of it. Rather than building upon or improving history, they are doomed to repeat it.

When ideas implode or explode, they produce chaos. Chaos happens when a condominium tower collapses, lives are lost, and rubble is all around. Cracks appeared but were ignored or excused. Chaos is the result of a poor foundation, poor materials, or a bad idea. It's when structure, order, and stability are lost. Someone's dream has become everyone's nightmare. A lot of people bought into bad ideas and lost a lifetime investment, and even their lives. Then, there is the search for the cause. It would have been useful if cause was the search before building. There was corruption in the cause.

Chaos is the loss of meaning, purpose, direction, and cohesion. It is when things fly apart and the parts are shouting "blame" at each other, pointing fingers, and denying responsibility. Then there are suicides and even

mass murders, as in the Nazi genocide of the Jews, and other examples. The gravity of truth and reality have toppled the structure.

Yes, the gravity of truth, or the truth of gravity, outlasts ideas. Denial and deception are no match for gravity, as in the condominium example. Truth must be considered in the foundation. In fact, it *is* the foundation. Lying continues but lies do not. Lies produce utter chaos, and deception is at the root of chaos.

Chaos is not fit place for life. Genesis chapter one teaches that order was established before life was created. When order is replaced by chaos or oppression, life is endangered. Most of us prefer order, even in our home or in our business. When order is lost, insecurity, instability and even death result.

ROOTS OF ORDER

Order is rooted in unchanging principles—natural law. Methods will change but not the principles. Farming methods change, but the law of sowing and reaping will not. Natural law is based upon creation rules. Two plus two equals four everywhere, all the time. Natural law, as our founders in America understood it, nature's law, was never voted upon or amended by some legislators. It does not disappear when ignored or efforts to amend it are applied. It is the gold standard for currency and social interaction. "Floating standards" lead to chaos.

We live in an ordered universe and galaxy. As far as we know there are billions of galaxies. How did that happen? Was it some philosopher's or political leader's idea? Of course not. How can clocks be set by the sun or poles be detected by a compass? Order is nature's answer, and we depend upon it. Chaos in the heavens would produce chaos upon the earth immediately! We may try to improve the environment, but we do not want to play with the order.

Stable order must be rooted in the unchanging Divine. Humanity is totally incapable of establishing Divine order. We

can learn from it, enjoy it, be disappointed by ignoring it, but it remains. Our security and prosperity are rooted in the unchanging unseen God.

Psalm 33:12 says, *"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom He has chosen for His inheritance."*

Proverbs 14:34 tells us, *"Righteousness (right relationships) exalt a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people."* Order, favor, and prosperity are the results of a right relationship to God and one another. A man named Moses understood that and was taught that from God, Who wrote it in stone. It was affirmed by Jesus Christ. If those principles are at the root, then the fruit will be beautiful!

Now the question is, who will pass on that truth? Stewardship is a serious issue; a divine trust. When stewardship fails, and truth is removed from the public square, justice and peace follow God out the door.

STEWARDSHIP OF ORDER

God creates order and life, then family. Family became the custodian of truth and order. Adam was given specific instructions regarding responsibility and Eve was created to help him to fulfill what God had commanded. The one thing Adam was told by God not to do was to not eat from a certain tree in the Garden of Eden. Did Adam tell Eve? Whether he did or not, Eve was deceived by the serpent and Adam ate knowingly. We do know that God came calling for Adam afterwards. Of course, chaos followed, and paradise was lost.

It appears to me that Genesis, "beginnings," establishes certain "root principles." Among those principles are male responsibility. Eve was promised that she would be the mother of all living and her offspring would "bruise the serpent's heel." Our enemy, the Devil, hates men and women, and God's blessings over their lives. The enemy always seeks to attack our lives, identities, and purpose.

Some of the failures we see today in

our culture are rooted in the failure of men to obey God. "Blame" is another principle established in Eden. Adam blamed Eve and Eve blamed the serpent. So, evil and blame are beginning principles. Both principles have continued to affect us all. Obedience, truth, and order are foundational for us to experience any measure of peace and good fruit. These principles were given to the family before there ever was human government.

Chaos begins in a culture when families implode or explode. The family is "nuclear."



If Adam was given the primary responsibility for obeying God, where was he in the Garden when the serpent tempted Eve? He was running away and hiding. Adam abdicated his responsibility and chaos resulted.

As I write this, I am reaching out to a young woman who has an eleven-year-old son with an absent father. She has experienced a tragic

marriage, trauma, working, raising a son, and working hard alone. In addition, she is not a believer. Sadly, this is an all-too-common story.

The odds of her son going to prison, being involved in a gang, or taking drugs are very high statistically. Let's pray for her and her son, and all families facing this kind of fracturing. Let's stand with them, invest our time and love with them, and see salvation and healing come to them, in Jesus' name.

The exploding family sends the parts in every direction. Chaos begins in a culture when families implode or explode. Family is "nuclear." If a primary steward is absent, the treasure is exposed; trafficked, abused, or otherwise violated. Children are our treasure, but many are being abandoned, aborted, and abused—tragic for our future!

Fathers are called by God to feed, lead, protect and model maturity. Absent fathers can do none of that. The "crack" in our foundation starts there. Government is no substitute for fatherhood or motherhood! School boards are no substitute, either. Shifting our responsibilities to bureaucracy is like inviting the serpent to dinner.

The reason we call God our "Father in heaven" and hallow His name is because He is our Source, and if we obey Him, He is our feeder, leader, protector, and model. If we lose sight of His "star" then we are lost. No substitute idea of humanity can replace our source of life, ideas, and purpose. Humanistic roots bring chaotic fruits. Thank God, for fathers and mothers who are able to stand together, by God's grace; for fathers who are faithful to their wives and children, and lead with grace and wisdom in the Holy Spirit.

As we battle inflation, violence, and deception let's not overlook the battle for the family and our precious children! Roots for healing and peace for society can be found in homes where families love, listen, and serve the Lord together. Thank God that there are still many families who have not bowed their knees to man-made gods or sacrificed their children on the altar of some false ideology. But we are in a battle that is both ideological and especially spiritual in nature.

HOW DO WE FIGHT?

It is very important to remember to deal with roots

Getting to the Roots Continues of page 13

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Join Pastor Charles Simpson and local leaders for insights and encouragement!



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JUNE 28 - JULY 7
COSTA RICA

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AUG. 13 | DAPHNE, AL
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OCT. 20-22 | BETTENDORF, IA
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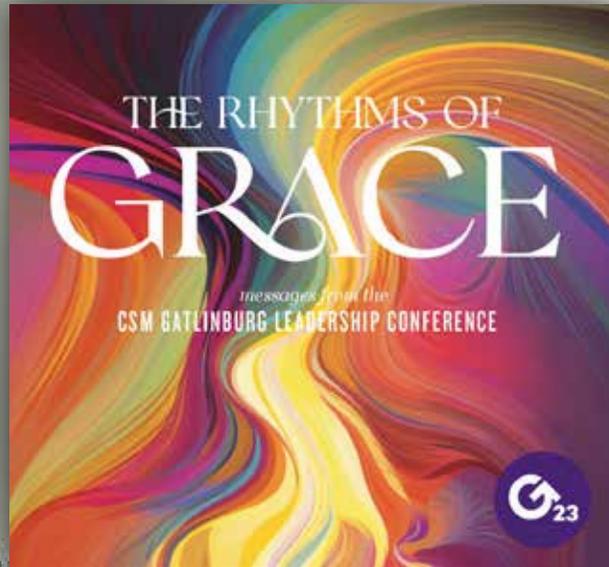
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GOOD NEWS

BY STEPHEN SIMPSON

The Gospel of the Grace of God

Are we living the message we are carrying?

Acts 20 is one of the most moving and poignant passages in the New Testament to me. The Apostle Paul had been ministering in Greece and now he is hurrying back to Jerusalem. His travels will take him near the city of Ephesus, to the seaport of Miletus. The people of Ephesus were near and dear to the heart of Paul; earlier in his travels, he had spent three years ministering, teaching, and establishing a church there.

So, Paul calls for the Ephesian elders to meet him down in Miletus. There, he senses prophetically that this will be the last time he sees them. These are his dearly beloved friends, and he has something important he wants to tell them as he bids them farewell.

“From Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called for the elders of the church. And when they had come to him, he said to them: ‘You know, from the first day that I came to Asia, in what manner I always lived among you, serving the Lord with all humility, with many tears and trials which happened to me by the plotting of the Jews; how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And see, now I go bound in the spirit to Jerusalem, not knowing the things that will happen to me there, except that the Holy Spirit testifies in every city, saying that chains and tribulations await me. But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the

gospel of the grace of God. And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more. Therefore, I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God” (Acts 20:17-27).

**They all wept
freely with great
sorrow knowing
they would not
see Paul again.
He was their true
companion in the
cause of Christ.**

When Paul had finished his instructions, he prayed with them, and they all wept freely and kissed his neck; they expressed great sorrow because they would not see him again. This scene gives us a wonderful picture of Paul’s relationship with the people he discipled. He wasn’t just a distant lecturer, but a true companion in the cause of Christ.

WHAT MATTERS MOST

In Acts 20:24, Paul explicitly says his mission is to

testify to the gospel of the grace of God. In *The Message*, it reads like this: *“What matters most to me is to finish what God started: the job the Master Jesus gave me of letting everyone I meet know all about this incredibly extravagant generosity of God.”*

Paul says, “I’ve gone through all these trials, yet none of it will deter me.” I am struck by the degree to which Paul was moved by grace. This is the Good News...Jesus called it the Gospel of the Kingdom of God. It is God’s powerful and gracious government in our lives which results in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. It is the message that God is rich in mercy and lovingkindness; the message that while we were yet sinners—unlovely and undeserving—Jesus died for us on the Cross and rose again on the third day, triumphing over death and hell on our behalf, and that He is even now praying for us and inviting us to receive His life. By His grace alone, we have the promise of abundant and eternal life!

Paul understood well the richness of God’s great and lavish gift of grace because Paul himself had received it. Before He encountered the mercy, grace, and forgiveness of Jesus Christ, Paul had been a murderer and a harsh persecutor of the Church. Before he encountered Jesus, Paul

Jesus stopped Paul in his tracks and knocked him off his high horse with the power of grace. Paul's life was permanently transformed.



had been cruel, arrogant, and violent. He was a man on the road to hell. What's worse is, he didn't even know it. Paul thought he was living right; he thought he was doing God's will.

But Jesus stopped Paul in his tracks and knocked him off his high horse with the power of grace. Paul's life was permanently transformed by grace. Paul was so consumed by the love of God—not only God's love for Him personally, but God's love for lost and hurting people—that he was now willing to give his life to declare that Gospel of grace. Salvation to all who believe!

Jesus died to share His grace with us; many of His disciples did also. At the end, even Paul did.

Whatever threats, whatever trials, whatever obstacles... these did not deter nor discourage these heroes from the

burning desire to extend the grace of God to all who would receive it.

LIVING BY GRACE

Not only were they willing to die for the sake of grace, but they also lived for it. One reason they lived *for* it is that they lived *by* it. These heroes in Scripture were passionate about seeing the Gospel of God's Grace extended across the earth, from generation to generation. Grace woke them up in the morning, caused them to journey to strange lands to visit strange people, leaving their comfort zones to sail the high seas and traverse dangerous lands, to preach and teach boldly and tirelessly; to give all they had, until they had nothing left, except to call on the name of the Lord for more strength, more resources, and more

wisdom in order that they might continue to proclaim the Gospel of Grace.

So overflowing with grace was Paul that he frequently opened his letters with the

**"Grace and peace"... are these words people in the world hear whenever they hear the words, "Gospel" or "Christian?"
If not, why not?"**

blessing, "*Grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Paul is declaring the purpose and spirit of his entire letter; that in the

declarations of God's nature, in the practical teachings and exhortations, in the rebukes and corrections, in the urgent challenges and hard sayings, and in the benedictions, the reader might receive grace and peace in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul is not just making nice or following tradition. These are not mere greeting card sentiments. Paul is prayerfully, powerfully, and sincerely passing on a spiritual blessing.

"Grace and peace" ... are these the words people in the world hear whenever they hear the words "Gospel" or "Christian?" If not, why not? Perhaps it's because Christians have sometimes done a poor job of extending the grace of God to the world, or even to one another. May we be renewed in His Spirit and filled with His grace, so that our testimony might be credible again to a world that is desperate to hear the Good News. 121

and not merely fruits. First Samuel 17:47 says, "***The battle is not with sword or spear; the battle is the Lord's.***" It is easy to get angry and resort to physical or human means, but that is a serious error. The battle is the Lord's; if we pray and obey, He can handle the rest. I'm sure that there are numerous actions that we can take but pray first and ask for the Holy Spirit's guidance; He leads the way back to truth.

"***Salvation is of the Lord***" is said many times in scripture. In Zechariah 4:6, we read, "***Not by might nor by power, but by My spirit; says the Lord of Hosts.***" If indeed the battle is the Lord's, then let's begin there. Know that our battle is first within us to obey the Lord; win that battle as we pray for the nations where God has planted us.

Rage and violence won't win in this battle.

I suggest studying Matthew 5-7, Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. The way He fought was not as we fight. He fought by example, obedience to the Holy Spirit, humility, mercy, peacemaking, and love, even for His enemies. He was willing to die in the Father's will, in order to save sinners like us. Rage and violence won't win in this battle. It begins with us pleasing the Father.

If He calls us to battle, don't forget that it is not with flesh and blood, and do not forget the whole armor of God (see Ephesians 6:10-18). Don't be spiritually naïve, we are dealing with the "Serpent," "the dragon," "an angel of light," and "seducer and destroyer. Our enemy hates babies and seeks to destroy them as well (see Revelation 12:1-12). He wants to stop the promise in our lives before we can begin to fulfill it.

I pray that we will enter the battle under God's guidance and deal with the spiritual roots of evil; but please don't do so with natural desire or ability. Do so in the grace of Holy Spirit and His wisdom. Deal with roots, and not mere fruits. Be careful how seriously you take the "news" but take the Word of God with all seriousness. And ask the Lord to help us model what we believe, even in persecution and adversity. Let's pray together. Stay together and stand together. Forget labels, find friends! And God bless you with courage, peace, and His favor! 121



CHARLES SIMPSON is Editor-in-Chief of *One-to-One Magazine*. He ministers extensively throughout the United States and among the nations.

STEPHEN SIMPSON is the Editor of *One-to-One Magazine* and the President of CSM. For information on speaking availability, please call (251) 633-7900.

STAFF UPDATE

Meet the CSM Publishing Team!



Susanne Simpson
Administrator

Since 1988, Susanne has served CSM in a variety of capacities including production management, customer service, bookkeeping, and administration. After receiving her degree in Fashion Merchandising in 1984, she worked with department stores and major designers before joining the CSM Staff. She serves as Administrator for CSM as well as Personal Administrator to Charles Simpson. She has also served in ministry to women, youth, children, young married couples, and mercy ministries outreach. Susanne is the wife of Stephen Simpson and mother of Victoria Grace Simpson.



Christina Villalobos
Customer Service

Christina has been part of the CSM team since 2002. After moving to Alabama from California, she studied Computer Science and Art in college, and worked in restaurants, call centers, daycare centers, and department stores. She has more than 30 years of customer service and project management experience. Christina served Covenant Church of Mobile in youth ministry from 1998-2021 and continues in ministry to women, singles, and small group Bible studies. She is currently writing a Bible study on the Beatitudes with her small group.



Victoria Grace Simpson
Social Media

Grace received her Bachelor of Science degree in International Studies in 2012 and her Bachelor of Science degree in Psychology in 2017, both from Spring Hill College. She studied and worked in Bologna, Italy through the Spring Hill Italy Center, and earned her Cambridge University ESL certificate in Verona, Italy. Grace worked with the Child Advocacy Center in Mobile and served the Hidden Treasures Costa Rica Children's Home in 2015. She is presently pursuing her Master's Degree in Psychology with Wake Forest University.



Abigail Brock Hii
Audio/Visual

In 2020, Abigail graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in Production Technology from the University of Mobile. She has worked as a freelance camera operator and video editor for Chick-Fil-A NEXT, Custom Media Solutions, Dorset Productions Unlimited, and Alabama School of the Arts (ASOTA). Abigail began working for CSM in January 2021. She also shoots wedding photography and videography, and is married to Andrew Hii, who is a Business Accounting major at the University of South Alabama.



Billy and Betty Duke
CSM Ambassadors

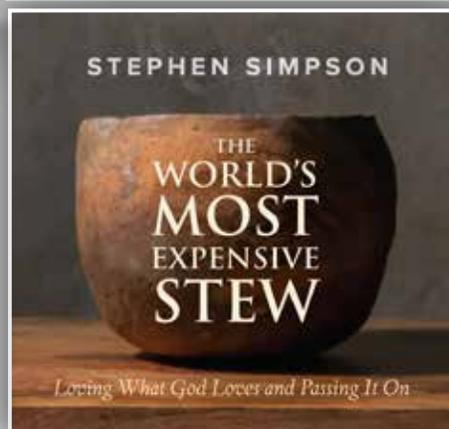
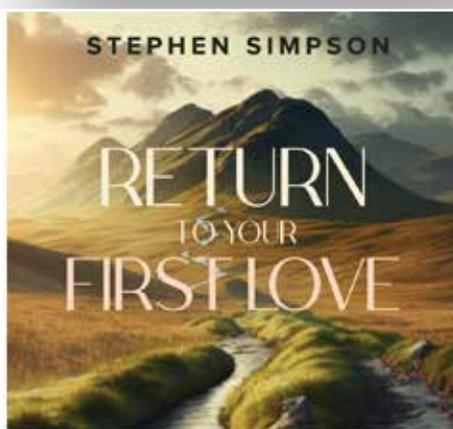
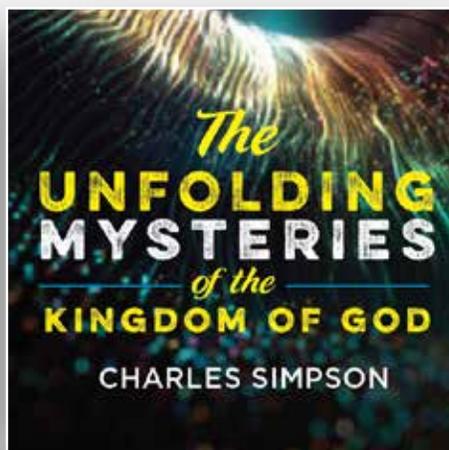
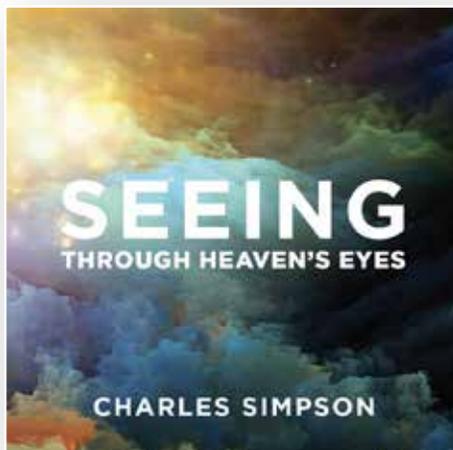
Billy and Betty Duke are loved by the CSM Family worldwide. Both have officially retired but remain active in service to God and are exceptionally valuable members of our team as intercessors, supporters, and encouragers. After many years working bi-vocationally in ministry and in the marketplace, Billy stepped into full-time pastoral ministry in 1977 with Covenant Church of Mobile, where he continues to serve. Betty worked for Johnson Chevrolet and Quality Printing before starting with CSM in 1995, serving as Secretary to Stephen Simpson and as CSM Gatlinburg Conference Coordinator. Billy and Betty have two children: Randall (now home with the Lord) and Rebecca Hinson (married to Buddy Hinson, three children (Chris, now home with the Lord), and one grandchild).



Alison Richardson,
Accounting Services

Alison serves many clients as an accounting professional and built a successful private practice in Mobile, AL. She worked at Integrity Media for many years and was in senior leadership. Alison is a beloved wife, mother, and friend, and has four adult children. She is active in her church and teaches Sunday School. Alison shared her testimony at the CSM Gatlinburg Conference in 2018 about God's grace, peace, and healing after being severely burned in an accident in 2017. [121](#)

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