



# APPNOTES

**Date:** November 25-29, 2019

**Series:** Grace Is Greater

**Psalm 103:1-5** The National World War II Memorial in Washington is an impressive tribute to those Americans who served and died during that war. The site features a reflecting pool, fountains, and 56 granite pillars. On the Memorial's Freedom Wall is the inscription: "Here we mark the price of freedom." If I exited my home each morning to face fountains and pillars in my backyard, as an elaborate reminder of God's grace, perhaps every moment of my days would sing with gratefulness and obedience. Instead, we have the simple request of the psalmist, "Forget not all his benefits." Perhaps we should erect in our hearts and minds a solid-as-granite commitment to remember and never forget His blood shed and His faithful love. In the moment-by-moment "remembering" of these blessings, our gratitude and determination to obey Him swell. For we worship at the foot of a cross inscribed in blood, "Here we mark the price of freedom." Forget Not!

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** The most expensive item most of us will buy is our house. Mortgage payments last for decades. Ownership involves attention and maintenance. As conscientious buyers, we care for our homes by repairing, painting, cleaning, so the purchase is a commitment to reorder our spending priorities. The most expensive thing God has ever done is purchase our salvation through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus, as payment for our sin. God is totally invested in and committed to those who accept that purchase. The bill of sale was sealed with the gift of God's Spirit. If you have accepted this costly gift, God owns you. We have a body and spirit to maintain, for we have been bought with a price. Rather than abuse or waste this inestimable gift, let gratitude for His graceful purchase permeate your life. Gratitude will shine the windows of your soul so the Owner's reflection can be seen in and through you.

**Acts 8:26-38** Two friends recently heard the good news of Jesus. One was overwhelmed with the grace of Christ and sought to be baptized immediately. She had given her sin and her life to Jesus. She wanted her world to know of this commitment, much like a bride proclaims love for her groom in a wedding ceremony. This friend's devotion and gratitude is whole-hearted, even though her family now rejects her. The second friend heard the same good news of Jesus. She declared acceptance of His sacrifice and her desire to follow Him, but she refused to demonstrate her commitment in baptism. The reason? Her mother would be angry. When the Ethiopian in today's scripture understood God's grace, he said, "What can stand in the way of my being baptized?" Nothing!—that was his conclusion as he waded into the water. What is standing between you and following Jesus? Can you say, "Nothing!" and wade on in?

**2 Corinthians 5:14-16** Real love has requirements. There's no such thing as "free" love. One requirement is that it must be an exchange—removing ME from my heart throne and putting the recipient of my love in that honored seat. Commitment to someone we love should visibly change our lives as their desires take precedence. We should ask, "How can I best serve the one I love?" Love requires and compels us to live for the other. Scripture says, "Christ's love compels us" to demonstrate our love by no longer living for ourselves but for Him who died and was raised for us. His graceful love is the compelling element to obedience. So are you *really* in love with Jesus or are you living for your selfish desires? Has "what Christ wants" become your #1 priority, or is your love just lip service? His grace should compel us to live His way.

**John 8:1-11** With over 200 residential treatment centers in the US, Adult and Teen Challenge USA has proven to be effective in addiction recovery. Studies of their process show that faith in God is the main reason their students are still sober after completing the program. The success element is what they call the "Jesus Factor." Recovery focuses on Christ, the power of the Holy Spirit, and God's Word. The program helps students form a personal relationship with Jesus. Release from condemnation for their sin and acceptance of God's love and grace is step one in recovery. What's your addiction? Shopping? Pornography? Gossip? Selfishness? Come to Jesus. His grace promises, "there is now no condemnation." You will receive power through His Spirit who dwells in you to live as God desires. Lean into and cooperate with His Spirit. The "Jesus Factor" will make the difference in your life.

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