



Faith in Action

Costly Grace

New Foreword by ERIC METAXAS

DIETRICH
BONHOEFFER

✠ THE COST OF ✠
DISCIPLESHIP



Cheap Grace

- “Cheap grace is the grace we bestow on ourselves. Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession...Cheap grace is grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ, living and incarnate.” — *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

➤ Cheap grace produces false godliness.

- ^{NIV} **2 Timothy 3:1** But mark this: There will be terrible times in the last days. ² People will be ...⁵ having a form of godliness but denying its power. Have nothing to do with them.

Costly Grace

- “Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life. It is costly because it condemns sin, and grace because it justifies the sinner. Above all, it is costly because it cost God the life of his Son: ‘Ye were bought at a price’, and what has cost God much cannot be cheap for us. Above all, it is grace because God did not reckon his Son too dear a price to pay for our life, but delivered him up for us. Costly grace is the Incarnation of God.” — *Dietrich Bonhoeffer*

➤ Costly grace produces genuine godliness.

- ^{NAS} **Romans 6:1** What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? ² May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?

Foundation of Cheap Grace

- ^{NAS} **Ephesians 2:8** For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹ not as a result of works, that no one should boast.
- ^{NAS} **Romans 8:1** There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.
- ^{NAS} **Psalms 103:12** As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.
- ^{NAS} **Isaiah 43:25** "I, even I, am the one who wipes out your transgressions for My own sake; And I will not remember your sins.

➤ *Cheap grace theology comes from a distorted understanding of Biblical promises of forgiveness.*

Warnings Against Cheap Grace

- ^{NAS} **Romans 2:4** Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?
- ^{NAS} **Romans 6:1** What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? ² May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?
- ^{NIV} **Galatians 5:13** You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.
- ^{ESV} **1 Peter 2:16** Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.



Cheap Grace: A Case Study

David's Sin

- ^{NAS} **1 Chronicles 21:1** Then Satan stood up against Israel and moved David to number Israel. ² So David said to Joab and to the princes of the people, "Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan, and bring me word that I may know their number." ³ And Joab said, "May the LORD add to His people a hundred times as many as they are! But, my lord the king, are they not all my lord's servants? Why does my lord seek this thing? Why should he be a cause of guilt to Israel?" ⁴ Nevertheless, the king's word prevailed against Joab. Therefore, Joab departed and went throughout all Israel, and came to Jerusalem.

➤ *9 months and 20 days, 2 Samuel 24:8*

The Problem: Pride

- ^{NAS} **1 Chronicles 21:2** So David said to Joab and to the princes of the people, "Go, number Israel from Beersheba even to Dan, and bring me word that I may know their number."
- ^{ESV} **Acts 12:21** On an appointed day Herod put on his royal robes, took his seat upon the throne, and delivered an oration to them. ²² And the people were shouting, "The voice of a god, and not of a man!" ²³ Immediately an angel of the Lord struck him down, because he did not give God the glory, and he was eaten by worms and breathed his last.
- ^{NAS} **Daniel 4:29** "Twelve months later he was walking on the roof of the royal palace of Babylon. ³⁰ "The king reflected and said, 'Is this not Babylon the great, which I myself have built as a royal residence by the might of my power and for the glory of my majesty...³³ "Immediately the word concerning Nebuchadnezzar was fulfilled; and he was driven away from mankind and began eating grass like cattle, and his body was drenched with the dew of heaven, until his hair had grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws.

Cheap Grace in Action

- ^{ESV} **1 Chronicles 21:7** But God was displeased with this thing, and he struck Israel. ⁸ And David said to God, "I have sinned greatly in that I have done this thing. But now, please take away the iniquity of your servant, for I have acted very foolishly."

Choice of Discipline

- ^{NAS} **1 Chronicles 21:9** And the LORD spoke to Gad, David's seer, saying, ¹⁰ "Go and speak to David, saying, 'Thus says the LORD, "I offer you three things; choose for yourself one of them, that I may do it to you.'"" ¹¹ So Gad came to David and said to him, "Thus says the LORD, 'Take for yourself ¹² either three years of famine, or three months to be swept away before your foes, while the sword of your enemies overtakes you, or else three days of the sword of the LORD, even pestilence in the land, and the angel of the LORD destroying throughout all the territory of Israel.' Now, therefore, consider what answer I shall return to Him who sent me." ¹³ And David said to Gad, "I am in great distress; please let me fall into the hand of the LORD, for His mercies are very great. But do not let me fall into the hand of man."

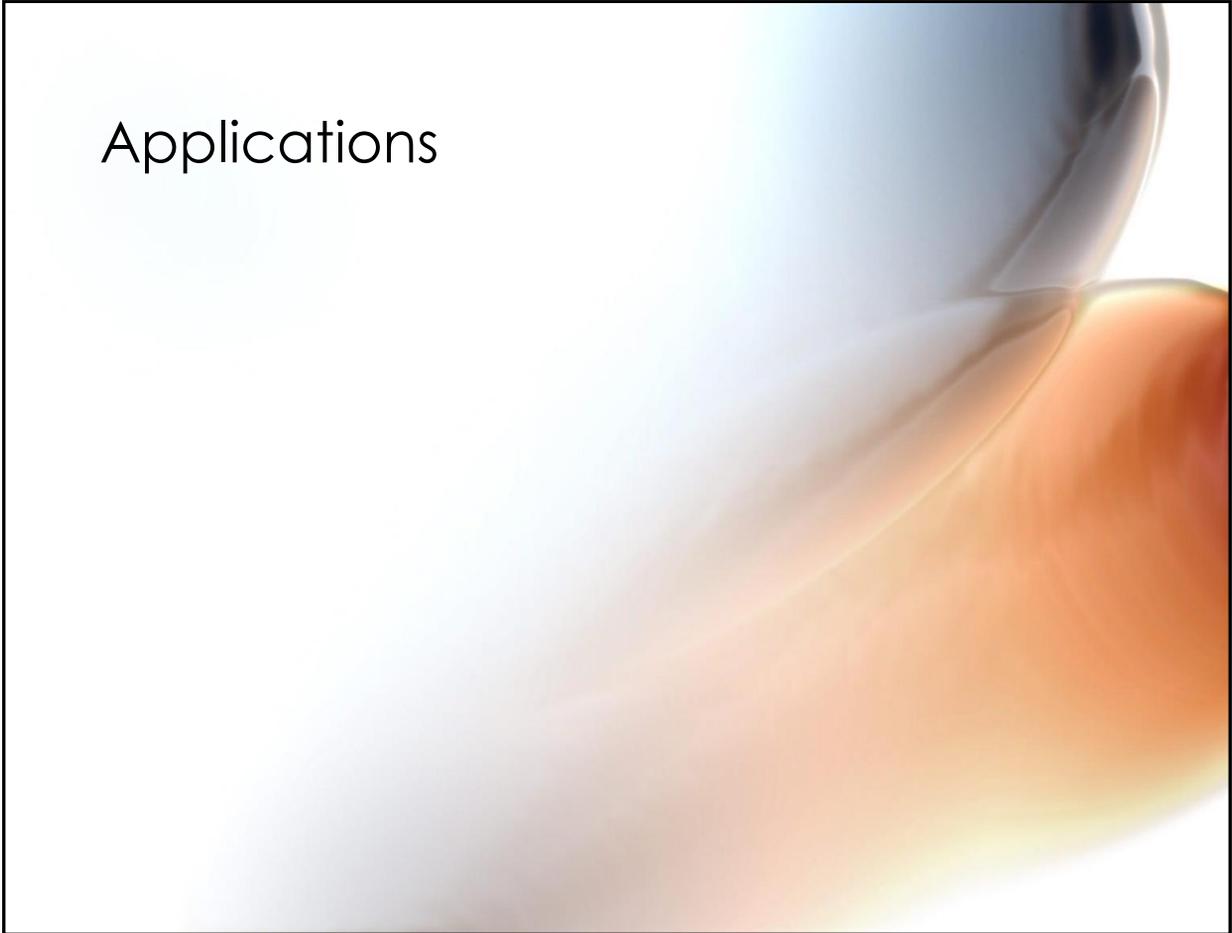
Discipline Delivered

- ^{NAS} **1 Chronicles 21:14** So the LORD sent a pestilence on Israel; 70,000 men of Israel fell. ¹⁵ And God sent an angel to Jerusalem to destroy it; but as he was about to destroy it, the LORD saw and was sorry over the calamity, and said to the destroying angel, "It is enough; now relax your hand." And the angel of the LORD was standing by the threshing floor of Ornan the Jebusite. ¹⁶ Then David lifted up his eyes and saw the angel of the LORD standing between earth and heaven, with his drawn sword in his hand stretched out over Jerusalem. Then David and the elders, covered with sackcloth, fell on their faces.
 - Bad News: three days of the sword of the Lord was a bad choice.
 - Good News: the mercies of the Lord indeed are great.

Genuine Repentance

- ^{ESV} **1 Chronicles 21:17** And David said to God, "Was it not I who gave command to number the people? It is I who have sinned and done great evil. But these sheep, what have they done? Please let your hand, O LORD my God, be against me and against my father's house. But do not let the plague be on your people."
- ^{NAS} **Romans 2:4** Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?
- ^{ESV} **Romans 11:22** Note then the kindness and the severity of God: severity toward those who have fallen, but God's kindness to you, provided you continue in his kindness. Otherwise you too will be cut off.

Applications



The Dangers of Sin

- ^{NAS} **James 1:14** But each one is tempted when he is carried away and enticed by his own lust. ¹⁵ Then when lust has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and when sin is accomplished, it brings forth death. ¹⁶ Do not be deceived, my beloved brethren.

➤ *There is a slippery slope to sin.*

- ^{NIV} **Genesis 4:7** If you do what is right, will you not be accepted? But if you do not do what is right, sin is crouching at your door; it desires to have you, but you must master it."

➤ *Sin perpetually lies in ambush.*

The Discipline of God

- ^{NAS} **Hebrews 12:4** You have not yet resisted to the point of shedding blood in your striving against sin; ⁵ and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, Nor faint when you are reprov'd by Him; ⁶ For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives." ⁷ It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline? ⁸ But if you are without discipline, of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons. ⁹ Furthermore, we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them; shall we not much rather be subject to the Father of spirits, and live? ¹⁰ For they disciplined us for a short time as seemed best to them, but He disciplines us for our good, that we may share His holiness. ¹¹ All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

The Mercy of God

- ^{NAS} **1 Corinthians 10:13** No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it.
- ^{NAS} **Lamentations 3:22** The LORD's mercies indeed never cease, For His compassions never fail. ²³ They are new every morning; Great is Thy faithfulness. ²⁴ "The LORD is my portion," says my soul, "Therefore I have hope in Him."
- ^{KJV} **Psalm 118:1** O give thanks unto the LORD; for he is good: because his mercy endureth for ever.

Conclusion

Grace is Costly

- ^{NAS} **Romans 6:8** Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, ⁹ knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, is never to die again; death no longer is master over Him. ¹⁰ For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ Even so consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. ¹² Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey its lusts, ¹³ and do not go on presenting the members of your body to sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves to God as those alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

The Joy of Costly Grace

- ^{NAS} **Hebrews 12:1** Therefore, since we have so great a cloud of witnesses surrounding us, let us also lay aside every encumbrance, and the sin which so easily entangles us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ² fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³ For consider Him who has endured such hostility by sinners against Himself, so that you may not grow weary and lose heart.
- ^{ESV} **Romans 14:17** For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.