

# Marvels of Grace

by Svend Christensen

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*The sermon highlights the models of spiritual power and the trophies of grace in Colossians chapter 4, emphasizing the importance of being faithful and beloved, and using our homes for hospitality and the Lord's work.*

**Duration:** 39:13

**Scripture:** Luke 7:22, Acts 9:17

**Topics:** "Christian Unity", "Spiritual Revival"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of studying and understanding the truth of God's word. He encourages listeners to be witnesses for Jesus and to seek revival in their lives. The speaker also highlights the need to keep our focus on Jesus and to remain in the love of God. He then goes on to discuss the salutations and greetings mentioned in the book of Colossians, emphasizing the importance of unity and fellowship among believers. The sermon concludes with a reminder to delight in doing God's will and to be obedient to His requests.

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## Transcript

Good morning again. Let's turn to the disciples of the Colossians, please. With us is several young folks here.

We're going to go to the last chapter, and we'll finish the inter-between tonight, Lord willing. Colossians chapter four. Remember last night we spoke on the mediums of spiritual power from the negative standpoint to put off, and the positive standpoint to put on.

Tonight, we'll take up the means of spiritual power, and the measurement, and the must of spiritual power. But this morning, we want to take up the models of spiritual power, or the trophies of grace, as we have in chapter four, which I'll read in verse seven, please. Verse seven, All my state shall ticketed declare unto you, who is a beloved brother, and a faithful minister, and a fellow servant in the Lord, whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that he might know your state, and comfort your heart, with an evenness as faithful and beloved brother, who is one of you.

They shall make known unto you all things which are done here. How as stark as my fellow prisoner greeted you, and mocked and said this unto Barnabas concerning whom you receive commandment, if he come unto you, receive him. And Jesus, who is called justice throughout the circumcision, these only are

my fellow workers unto the kingdom of God, who have been a comfort unto me.

Epaphras, who is one of you, as servant of Christ, greeted you, always laboring fervently for you in prayer, that he may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God. For I bear him witness for record, that he is a great seal for you, and them that are in Laodicea, and them in Hiopolis. Look the beloved position, and he must greet you.

Greet the brethren who are in Laodicea, and Memphis, and the church which is in his house. And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of Laodicea, and that ye also read the epistle from Laodicea, and say to Archippus, Take heed to the ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfil it. The salutation by the hand of me Paul, remember my bonds.

Grace be with you. Amen. May the Lord bless to us this reading from his holy word.

I want to talk a little bit about these different people mentioned here. There's 12 of them. 12 different mentions here, marvels of God's grace, and then I want to especially speak a little more on about two of these as we know more about them.

One is Benesimus, and the last one is the man that wrote the letter Paul. But first, let's look at these as they come in these verses. Tychicus, he's first mentioned back in the book of Acts, by the way.

In Acts chapter 20, he was a traveling companion of Paul the Apostle, and all down through these years of Paul's persecution and all that he went through, Tychicus stood with him, and by him. He was a faithful friend to him, a member of Paul's party, and he was also mentioned right at the end of Paul's journey when Paul was in prison. The last epistle he refers to Tychicus.

Thank God for friends that will stay friends down through the years. Not everybody can claim friends of a long, long standing. Old friends, that is.

But Tychicus was a man through thick and thin he stood by Paul the Apostle. What a blessed thing to have that quality that we are faithful friends down through the years. It doesn't matter if things go against friends, we're still their friends.

That's the type of a man Tychicus was. As well as Paul's lovely description of this man, he describes him here in this verse in a threefold way. First, he says he's a beloved brother, speaks of affection, and then that beloved brother.

I thought I'd been able to say that by the willie down through the years. Beloved brother. This is wonderful, isn't it? To have beloved brethren in the Lord.

He's a beloved brother. Can your brethren say that about you? Are you a little bit contentious sometimes? Sometimes a little hard to get along with? Or your beloved brother? But he says something else about him too. Faithful minister.

That's a nice thing to say from approbation about this man. Faithful brother. That's a great combination, and that's a rare combination.

Beloved, yet faithful. Some of us, we're beloved, but sometimes at the expense of truth we're not faithful. Here's a man that's both faithful and beloved.

Faithful to the Lord, faithful in his word, and yet beloved. Yet loving about him. Sometimes some of us, we try to be so loving that we don't like to offend anybody, and other men are so faithful that they just hurt anybody.

But to get this balance, here's a balance. Beloved and faithful. That's a lovely combination.

It's rare, oh whether let's strive to both be beloved and to be faithful, but then he also takes him into his association. Fellow-servant. All of his attributes, all of his techniques, as right in there as his beloved servant.

A few other things about him, just in passing in verse eight. He was a willing whom I've sent. He was willing to go unto you for the same purpose that he might know your state.

Paul had confidence in him. He was faithful, as we've already seen, and then also he had discernment, and he might know your state. Not every Christian can be constituted to discern, but this man certainly could have discernment.

And then something else that he had, comfort to your heart. He had love, he had compassion. He could come then, could be a real comfort to them.

Thank God for men like this quickly, because there are men that are faithful yet beloved, beloved and faithful. Step back, and yet will come and know people's state, Christian state, and be a comfort to them. These are the type of brethren that's nice to have around.

By the grace of God, let us be the type of a Christian. Then the next one, on these events, he too is called beloved and faithful. He also has that rare combination, and that's remarkable.

All the grace of God. I'm going to talk to you a little more about them even at the end of the message. This runaway slave, this thief, arrested by the Lord, and now by the work of divine grace and divine power, he's no longer like he used to be.

He's no longer unprofitable, but now he's beloved and faithful. That's what the grace of God can do to any sinner. I don't care how bad you are, dear friend, or how far down the ladder of sin you may have gone, the grace of God can reach you, like it did with Anesimus, and brought him back, made him a new man, beloved and faithful.

Now, these two such ones, they were the bearers of the epistle. They were the two prophets that carried the epistle to the Colossians. Now, the next not that I'll mention here from verses 10 to 14, are his associates that he sends greetings to these believers at Colossae.

All right, the next one he mentions is Ars Tacitus, and of course he's mentioned back in Acts. I'd just like me to turn to one verse in Acts 19 verse 29 to see what it says about Ars Tacitus. This is where there's a great upward epithet, great persecution there, because the Christianity was having such an effect on the whole of Asia Minor that the silversmiths were losing out in business in making these silver signs.

What power the gospel had! There's this worship of a soul widespread all over Asia Minor. At any first when he worshiped at the hand of the Ephesian, these men were now suffering. They were in danger of their living.

The gospel was having such a power that people were turning away from all these idols because they were now serving the true and living God, and the whole city was filled with confusion and having called Gaius, and here he is, Ars Tacitus. Men of Macedonia, all companions in travel, they rushed with one accord into the theater. So, Ars Tacitus, he was one that knew something about suffering, and he's also one that stayed with all so faithful.

He was a Hebrew Christian of Macedonia, who sat on a micro, by the way, and no doubt he was an aristocrat. He was one of the wealthy ones. So, God can not only save a poor slave, but he can save a rich man, an influential man.

The grace of God greased his men and changed them all, so he became a wonderful Christian and a companion of all that stood with him, even in persecution. He didn't go back. He didn't see him alone.

The next one we read about is Mark, Marcus. Mark is the son of Barnabas, sometimes his cousin. But, anyway, related to Barnabas, that great man of God's name in consolation, this Mark, he found out as a young man the Lord's work, and the way he got a little higher in the missionary journey, as he was going with Paul and Barnabas, somehow he could hold thicker.

The way was too hard, he wouldn't back home on them. Later on, when they wanted to go on again, Barnabas wanted to take him, but Paul didn't. You know, that's when there was a division among Paul and Barnabas.

I don't think the division was wrong, it was the attitude of the division that was wrong. No, that was of the Lord that went two different ways, and there was quite so much accomplished. Two teams went up instead of one.

But, later on, Barnabas, that faithful man that was so good to help Saul on his first day, he also was a help to this Barnabas, no doubt. And, later on, Paul could speak so highly of Mark. He's profitable now.

Blame Mark! And, he became a companion to Peter, as we read also about in Peter's epistle. And, later on, God used him to write the gospel of Mark. If there's someone here this morning, and you are away from the Lord, you're cold and hot, you're turned aside, listen, you can come back.

He's faithful and just to forgive us. If you confess your sin, he's faithful and just, and he cleanses you from all the vices, you can come back to him, and your life has been sort of useless for a few years, maybe a few months, a few years, you've sort of been on the shelf, you haven't been active, you haven't been faithful to the Lord, you can come back. You may be unprofitable now, but he'll make you profitable, he'll make you useful, he'll make you so he can use you, and isn't it wonderful that we'll have always, through all eternity, I believe we'll have the scriptures, the word of God, and one of his Mark, the gospel according to Mark.

That's the grace of God, and the power of God. Do you know this wonderful Lord? He didn't have all the longsuffering, he didn't just put Mark out of the way because he failed once. The Lord is longsuffering, he's forgiving, friends.

If you fail him, just confess it, and he will restore you, and renew you, and strengthen you, and give you the power to go on with him. And then there's the man called Jesus here, justice, all but a name. Jesus, the same name as our Savior, which means Jehovah's Savior.

Thou shalt call his name Jesus, the dead of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he shall save his people from their sins. Not in their sins, but from their sins. If any man be in Christ, he is a new creation.

All things pass away, all things become new. And it's certainly unjustified the way it was given to somebody, usually because of integrity. We read about that in Acts 1:23, about a certain man who was named Justice because of his integrity, which is a name because of high character.

And this shouldn't be true of a Christian when you know the Lord Jesus Christ. You know him, and you take just one thing as his integrity, honesty, just men that are above reproach. Nothing shady in business, anything else above reproach.

All about just men like this justice mentioned here. Not much said about this particular man, but Paul says then at the end of these verses that these five had been a real comfort unto me. The end of verse 11.

These only are my fellow workers under the kingdom of God who have been a comfort unto me. Yet even the great Paul, the apostle, needed comfort. We all do, at one time or another.

And there's this man in the now like this, when he was in prison, but he had friends that were there to comfort and help him, and so on. Then, there's one another lovely man is Tapwith in verse 12. Remember, we talked a little bit about him in chapter one.

Lord, I wonder man, the gospel back from Ephesus to Colossae, and that's how the Colossae church or assembly became established through this man Tapwith. But, he's the man I said, he's the fellow I call the man with a shepherd heart. Here's a man with a shepherd heart.

Both the God or churches and assemblies were full of these men like Tapwith. Now, it's as if he's one of them. He's a servant of Christ, says Paul.

Lovely combination. Paul wasn't afraid to commend people. There's a difference between popping people up and commending them and encouraging them.

Sometimes we're so afraid among us to try to commend somebody, encourage them a little bit, you might pop them up, you know. But, we're not so slow to chop them down sometimes. Not so slow to humble them, give them a good piece of our mind, as we call it.

That's not what we should be majoring at, but like Paul attempts this greeting from a pastor. He greeted you always waving fervently for you in prayer. He's a man that really loved his people.

While he was there with Paul at the vision, he was praying for them, fervently. But, while he's long cold, formal prayer that just says words with no meaning or no art, he prays fervently. His prayer was very harsh.

He was in deep, he was in deep earnest. You know, we could take some lessons from this wonderful brother of Tapwith. He always waving fervently.

There's a labor to him. It wasn't just getting up and saying, night, please. It's a nice word.

This man really labored in prayer. That you may stand perfect. You're concerned about their maturity, that they be complete in all the will of God.

He says, I bear witness that you're a great shield for you. Oh, what concern, what love he had for these beloved Colossian Christians, and for them at Laodicea, and there's in Hiopolis. There was the three cities together for six months apart.

All these three of them, Tapwith has a shepherd's heart for them. He is concerned that they might go up into Christ, become mature, that they will be for God, and be a testimony for him. That was his shepherd's heart.

They call themselves shepherds among us. That's a great heart for God's people, and a concern for their well-being at Tapwith. Then, the next one he mentioned is Luke, and again, this is a beloved book, man, the beloved physician.

Luke's as a beloved physician, I'm sure, among all the ones that he had. I don't suppose there's any that are more precious to Paul than Luke. Paul, Luke was also his servant companion at Latter-part of the book of Acts.

He said, we are Paul's company. He wrote, you know, the gospel of Luke, and he wrote the book of Acts, but he was also one that stayed right with him to the end as we read in 2nd Timothy. You might turn, please, to 2nd Timothy 4 verse 11.

2nd Timothy chapter 4 and verse 11. Only Luke is with me. Now, this is Paul's last impression right here in 2nd Timothy.

Only Luke is with me. Take Mark and bring him with thee, for he's profitable to thee, and to the ministry. That's what it speaks about Mark, but also Luke there.

Luke, that beloved physician, stayed true and with Paul all the way along. This is another man mentioned right after Luke. Demas, Demas freaks you.

He mentioned again in Philemon, but then in 2nd Timothy, we have read on there, he would read this, Demas hath forsaken thee, having loved this present evil world. Christians, you may go on with God faithfully. You may be associated with great men of God like Demas was, that no guarantee that you won't go back into the things of the world again.

Let him that taketh his hand take heed, lest he fall. Demas hath forsaken thee, having loved this present world. Any Christian can cool off and get away.

Keep yourselves in the love of God, says God's word to us. Pray without ceasing, study the truth of the truth, that if you really pay and study and bear witness, O Lord Jesus, and you meet with more people than you did this morning, and in around the Lord himself, in resembling him, I pray you'll not have to guess where Demas was. All hearts are so wicked, we need to ever looking up unto Jesus, keeping ourselves in the love of God.

Rise upon Christ. Then, the next section from verse 15 to 18, it's called a salutation. There's a particular friend there.

Just greet the brethren that I'm glad to see. Now, he's never met them, or he might have met them, but he'd never been there. If he met them, it's because he met them in other places where he had been, and then he may have.

We just greet those brethren. Oh, again, here's testimony of the grace of God. These folks taking out of heathenism, trained by the power of many children of God, here through faith in the Lord Jesus.

Now, carrying on a testimony for God, the brethren are glad to see him. And then Memphis, and the church which is in his house. That's a nice thing, and you read only in the New Testament four times where the churches gather in the house.

In the early church, they didn't have buildings like we do now. They met in halls. They went into the synagogue to preach the gospel of the people.

They went into the market place, and they opened to preach the word, but when they met together, they met in halls. You remember Quill and Vesila, they have the church in their house in two different places, Ephesus and also in Rome. After whom? He and Memphis have the church in his house.

I think Philemon, he has the church in his house, too, at Colossae. So, they met in the hall. It's nice to have your home open.

Many a work has started in a home, and God's people have opened their home and got other people in. We've seen a lot of folks staged in homes, too, where we have college meetings. It's good to have our homes open.

I believe, dear Christians like Memphis, we ought to use our homes over everything for the Lord. It's His. One of the greatest tools God has given us today is our homes, and it's a wonderful thing to invite people to our homes.

They come with us at 11 o'clock on Sunday, and they come home and have dinner with us. It's one way to get people to hear the word. Use your home.

Give it to hospitality. Memphis, use his home. And then there's Achilles.

Say, heed to the ministry. He was a young man that was apt to be probably looking on the lazy side. He accepted that then, too, and the ancient apocryphal is part of him.

You say, heed to the ministry which you have received of the Lord. General Lee, one time back in the Civil War, sent word to Stonewall Jackson that he'd love to see another urgent matter at the Jackson's convenience. Jackson responded.

He came through terrible roads and weather to get to General Lee, and when he walked in, General Lee was very surprised to see him. General Jackson said, General Lee's requests are my command. So should be with the Lord's request to us.

We shouldn't have to be parted. We should just delight to do God's will like our Lord Jesus. Now then, after that, while I have left, I want to speak of these two people, Onesimus and Paul.

Paul is the latter, and he finds Onesimus. The second one that you read about there in verse 10. When Onesimus had faith in the love of God, he was not always faithful in the love of God.

Onesimus had been in the house of Philemon. He had been his servant and his slave, and like many other young men, he had a wicked heart. All of us do.

He had a coveted heart, and then he stole something from his master, and fled with it. Went down to the big metropolis of Rome. You don't have a big time with us to see all the light, do you? And I suggest to you maybe his nickname was Ness, and that time he was bad Ness.

He was a bad Ness. And so all of us, apart from the grace of God, we are bad Ness, right to the heart, to the core. God's word says about all of us that not a sound thing about us, from that top of our head to the soles of our feet, we're full of corruption and sores.

And because Ness, he did this sin, was because he was a sinner at heart. That's why he stole. For the wonderful, the grace of God was after him.

The grace of God ever pursues every person. Down he got into Rome, and I probably got into trouble down there. I don't know what happened.

He probably could have got into trouble with bad Ness, and got thrown into prison. Well, in prison was Paul the apostle, and Ness no doubt told him all about his experience, and there he was down there in darkness, in a dark prison cell. And I tell you, friend, we will not say we are in darkness, but Paul told about the Lord Jesus.

You know, Ness, the Lord Jesus died for sinners like you, and for me. You know, I used to be the chief of sinners, Paul could tell us. I was the chief of sinners.

There's no one worse than me, and the Lord Jesus had mercy on me. He saved me by his grace. He'll save you from your sin, Ness.

He'll cleanse you from your sin. He'll draw it out as far as Jesus from the west. You mean to say, even though I've stolen, and I've done so much evil against my masters that were so good to me, why, that Philemon is such a wonderful man, I'll let him, Paul, that you trust the Lord Jesus? And he did, he must have, and bad Ness became good Ness now.

He became a new Ness, no longer the old Ness, but he is a new Ness now. If any man be in Christ, he's a new creation. All things pass away, all things become new, and now you have new Ness.

His past all blooded out, his sins forgiven, and then if he gets out of jail, Paul gives him this letter, along with a letter to Philemon, and the letter, along with his friend here that we spoke about first, take it just together to carry the letter back, for here's a wonderful testimony. A runaway slave such a sinner, God reached him, saved him even in jail, and maybe God has brought you here today just for that purpose, that he might reach you just like he reached Ness. Maybe you've been kind of run away from God, kind of run away from other influences that would mention God, and so on, and here you are unexpectedly maybe in a service like this today.

God wants to reach you, he wants to save you, he wants to make it a new person out of you. He'd like to do that, and then there's Paul. Oh my, what a testimony! Paul, notice how he ends it, that's how he says, and by the hand of me, Paul.

But, he was not always Paul, he was Paul of Carthage. The prime persecutor of the church, he hated the Lord Jesus, he hated the Christians, and he went all out of his way to imprison and to put to death men and women, children, because of their faith and their stand for Christ. One day, when he was just outside the city of Damascus, you read about it in Acts 9, you read about it in Acts 22 and Acts 26, that's outside

Damascus, as he was getting close to that city, all of a sudden, what was he doing there? 150 miles away from home, either on foot or on horseback, as he was all the way down there to Damascus to put the Christians behind bars, all of a sudden he was struck to the ground.

I wonder if we might not just turn to Acts 22? I think it gives us just a description of any portion that tells about it, as Paul gives his testimony here in Acts 22. Verse 6, And it came to pass that on my journey, and that would come me under the mask of that moon, suddenly there shone around me a great light round about me, and I fell into the calm, and heard a voice saying unto me, Saul, Saul, why have thou persecuted unto me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? And he said unto me, I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom thou persecuted. Now, listen, he's coming, and he tells us here at noon, at the time he was saved, he knew the very moment of the very hour that he was saved at noon.

As I was on my way to the persecutor Christian of this great light, it was quite in the noonday time, and he says, I fell to the ground. I want to tell you, dear friends, that this haughty, proud, thirsty, cold, Saul of Tarsus, he had to be taken right down, and that's the only way anyone could see, unless you get right down low, and realize you're sitting on your loft, you're condemned. He saw the light.

God, what says to us, when we get down, and he saw a vacant eye, Jesus, he called him Lord. But when you receive the Lord Jesus Christ, and the light of the glorious light of the gospel shines into our hearts, what a wonderful light that is, when it lightens up your soul, and Saul, he was, he was questioned by this voice that he heard, saying, Saul, Saul, and I may mention to you, he called him by name. He knew him.

He knows you. He knows you. He calls you by name.

Whatever your name is, he's calling you. Certainly, he did from the beginning with Adam. Adam, where art thou? Saul, Saul, he was seeking him.

He's seeking you today, and he says, why? He said to him, why persecutest thou me? Now, you may not have been persecuting the Lord Jesus like Saul of Tarsus was, but why, why have you not received Christ? Why are you so uninterested in the things of the Lord? Why are you ignoring the love of God? Why are you spurning his invitations to you? Why are you leaving him out of your life? Why? You have no reason, my friend. It's Satan that's trying to blind your eyes. He's trying to give you the glittering light.

If you go on looking at the glittering light long enough, you, like Oedipus, will end up where he ended up. So, I thank God that even though this man had hated in part the Lord Jesus and his people, the Lord still loved him. Isn't the grace of God wonderful? Even though you might have spurned his love, and tried to evade him, trying to spurn any opportunity, and misbehaving Christians that were kind to you, and tried to reach you, he still loves you.

He's still seeking you. Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me, Paul? Paul, I love you. I died for you.

I'm the misfire. And that day, on that road to Damascus, he met the Lord Jesus, and I said, first then, what shall I do, Lord? At the first then, I'm dying now. What should I do? He wanted to bleed me out.

That would be the greatest desire of any person, when they receive the Lord Jesus Christ, is to find out what do you want me to do? I want you to look down at verse 14, please. Verse 12, And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews who dwelt there, came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, we see thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him, and he said, The God of all fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see the just one, and

shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.

That day, and of old, this man saw the just, he found out God's will. He saw the just one, he heard the voice. And I tell you, he was never the same again, never the same again.

And the marvelous thing is, God used human instruments, too. He used Ananias, he used Stephen. Look at verse 20, And when the blood of thy mother Stephen was shed, I was standing by, and consenting unto his death, and kept the raiment of them that slew him.

That time when Paul stood by, consenting to Stephen's death, and he saw the face of Stephen look like an angel, and he prayed that his souls would say, Lord Jesus, may not this hinder their charge. Oddly, that the time went, Paul was really convinced, and that he honored him. So, he met the Lord Jesus on the road, and the very face of Stephen saw what he looked up into heaven, and said, I see Jesus.

That's the same face Saul saw, and it changed him. And as hard persecutor now became, as loving apostle of the Gentiles, and also that lost his own people, old as my heart, to cry and pray at the call for anything in it that they might be saved, he was said, do not take the life of the Gentiles. What could change a man like this? Only the Lord, and the power of the gospel.

Would you like to be changed today? Can you say with Paul, I know in whom I have believed, and I'm persuaded that he's able to keep that which I've committed unto him since that day. Can you really say that? If you cannot say that, then you need to know him. You need to know the same Lord that all these men that we looked at this morning, each one of the marvels of grace, take again, save.

On these men, a simple slave, save. Mark, save. Justice, save.

Luke, save. His half-wit, save. Gladys, he and Gwendolyn, save.

Lyndon, save. Egyptus, save. Paul, save.

Jesus, save. Now, let's take our handbook and turn to the 226. This is the only way to be saved, friends.

Just as I am without one plea, but that thy blood was shed for me, that thou bidst me come to thee, O Lamb of God, I come.

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