**Grace & Faith Fellowship Mission Message**

 **(Being Able To Give An Account of God’s Great Grace)**

(Intro: Discuss the uniqueness of every local church (body of believers) and emphasizes the need that we have for one another-i.e. Systems of the body-No One System is more important than the other-we need each other).

Grace and Faith Fellowship’s vision is to see believers well equipped to defend The Faith through their words and their lifestyles.

Mission Statement: To share the Full Gospel of Grace that reveals the love of Christ and transforms lives.

We believe that grace is the undeserved favor of God that empowers us to experience salvation and all of its benefits. We access this grace by faith in the finished works of Jesus. God’s grace and our faith work hand-in-hand.

We call it the Full Gospel of Grace because we examine the scriptures fully to grow in our understanding of the true nature of God (as One that is always loving, desiring the whole man to prosper) and to grow in understanding of our identity in Christ in light of this great grace.

**Main Text**

1 Peter 3:13-15 AMP

Now who is there to hurt you if you become enthusiastic for what is good? [14] But even if you should suffer for the sake of righteousness [though it is not certain that you will], you are still blessed [happy, to be admired and favored by God]. DO NOT BE AFRAID OF THEIR INTIMIDATING THREATS, NOR BE TROUBLED or DISTURBED [by their opposition]. [15] **But in your hearts set Christ apart [as holy—acknowledging Him, giving Him first place in your lives] as Lord. Always be ready to give a [logical] defense to anyone who asks you to account for the hope and confident assurance [elicited by faith] that is within you, yet [do it] with gentleness and respect.**

**Three Ways We Keep Ourselves Prepared To Give An Account For Our Hope & Confident Assurance**

**Point One: Remember God’s Mercy Toward You**

*Ephesians 2:1-8 NLT*

*Once you were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins. [2] You used to live in sin, just like the rest of the world, obeying the devil—the commander of the powers in the unseen world. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. [3] All of us used to live that way, following the passionate desires and inclinations of our sinful nature. By our very nature we were subject to God’s anger, just like everyone else. [4] But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so much, [5] that even though we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God’s grace that you have been saved!) [6] For he raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus. [7] So God can point to us in all future ages as examples of the incredible wealth of his grace and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us who are united with Christ Jesus. [8] God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can’t take credit for this; it is a gift from God.*

(Think of a man that has been sentenced to death and then is pardoned unexpectedly, how thankful would that man be?)

**Reflecting on God’s Mercy leads to a thankful heart and thankful heart will lead to a bold testimony.**

**Point Two: Remember The Goodness God Has Shown & Promised You**

*Psalm 103:1-5 NLT*

*Let all that I am praise the LORD; with my whole heart, I will praise his holy name. [2] Let all that I am praise the LORD; may I never forget the good things he does for me. [3] He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases. [4] He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies. [5] He fills my life with good things. My youth is renewed like the eagle’s!*

(Illustration of Anticipating & Receiving Gifts from your Christmas List-What Type of attitude did you have?-how easy is it to tell others about what you were promised and received)

Whenever we receive something we need or want there is a sense of gratitude and security that we can enjoy, which states the atmosphere for a bold witness for Christ.

**Point Three: Remember God’s Love For You**

*Romans 8:29-39 NLT*

*For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, so that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. [30] And having chosen them, he called them to come to him. And having called them, he gave them right standing with himself. And having given them right standing, he gave them his glory. [31] What shall we say about such wonderful things as these? If God is for us, who can ever be against us? [32] Since he did not spare even his own Son but gave him up for us all, won’t he also give us everything else? [33] Who dares accuse us whom God has chosen for his own? No one—for God himself has given us right standing with himself. [34] Who then will condemn us? No one—for Christ Jesus died for us and was raised to life for us, and he is sitting in the place of honor at God’s right hand, pleading for us. [35] Can anything ever separate us from Christ’s love? Does it mean he no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity, or are persecuted, or hungry, or destitute, or in danger, or threatened with death? [36] (As the Scriptures say, “For your sake we are killed every day; we are being slaughtered like sheep.” )* ***[37] No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us. [38] And I am convinced that nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love.*** *[39] No power in the sky above or in the earth below—indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

**Reminding ourselves that every breath that we take is a gift of love from our Lord helps us to maintain a heart ruled by His peace. A peaceful heart sets the stage for a good witness.**

**Summary: The Keys To Being Prepared To Give An Account For Our Hope & Confident Assurance**

***Remembering God’s Mercy Toward You, Remembering The Goodness God Has Shown & Promised You, Remembering The Love God Has For You***