

Worship services are being cancelled until further notice because of Covid-19. However, we will have worship services through the Internet Zoom platform every Sunday at 10:30 AM. The Zoom link for this service will be sent to you by email. The phone numbers for Zoom always remains the same but the Meeting ID and password number changes every week. If you need more information, please contact Mr. Vautour. See the bottom of the bulletin the contact information.

If you have friends or acquaintances who want to join in the worship service, please do not hesitate to share with them the Zoom links to join with us in the worship our great God.

For more information about special activities happening in GCI, please see the international website at [www.gci.org](http://www.gci.org). On the left-hand upper side of the screen, you will see 3 short lines. You simply need to click on it. A drop-down menu will appear. Click on "PARTICIPATE".

Please note that audio sermons are available and a PDF copy of sermons are available at [www.worshipim.ca](http://www.worshipim.ca) and video sermons are now available on YouTube – GRACE COMMUNION INTERNATIONAL-MONCTON (see link below)

If you have a prayer requests, other events you would like to announce and/or praise to our great God you would like to share, please try to contact Mr. Vautour by email, text or telephone no later than Saturday, in the morning.

For local prayer requests, please see <http://www.worshipim.ca/> and click on **Members Only**. It is password protected for confidentiality reason. If you do not have the password, please contact Mr. Vautour.

**Voice of the Martyrs** (<https://www.vomcanada.com/ng-2020-06-04b.htm>). Christians continue to be persecuted in many parts of the world. They need our prayers. You can receive a free publication through your email. If you are interested, please visit their website to subscribe.

Next Prayer Meeting (through ZOOM) is scheduled for Thursday August 13 at 7:30 p.m.

For prayer requests please see local website [www.worshipim.ca](http://www.worshipim.ca) under "For Members Only". If you do not know the password, please contact Mr. Vautour

**Offerings:** you can send your offering directly to the following address: **Grace Communion International- Canada, Suite 203A, 2121 Airport Dr., Saskatoon, SK 7SL 6W5**. If you prefer, you can also call **1-306-653-2705**. Thank you for your continued generous giving to God by giving to this part of God's church, his body.

**From Mr. Bill Hall – GCI Canadian Director** "We will continue to process the donations we receive in Saskatoon. Members are urged to mail them directly to our office for the time-being. They can also donate via phone using a credit card, or via Canada Helps using the donate button on our website [www.gcicanada.ca](http://www.gcicanada.ca) We are waving the provision that all donations given via Canada Helps go toward national expenses for the time being. We will credit all donations received via Canada Helps to a member's local congregation, if we can identify where they attend."

### **Love Avenue in Latin America (July 22, 2020)**

*Over the last two months, my wife and I have been keeping in contact with our members in Latin America to provide support to various countries there. The stay-at-home orders in many Latin American countries are affecting the population harshly. As you can imagine, folks generally struggle for the everyday necessities, and amid Covid-19, the struggles have multiplied. My home congregation in Sun Valley, CA, along with our Santa Fe Springs congregation, has been supporting and encouraging members in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and Peru, including providing basic necessities for hundreds of families.*

*We have partnered with our local congregations in El Salvador, Honduras, and Piura, Peru. They have engaged the Love Avenue with tangible acts of love and have joined Jesus in bringing hope to many. Our Piura congregation that is pastored by Ruth Nieves has fully embraced the Love Avenue and is engaging their community missionally. She understands the opportunity that has been presented to her church and they are stepping out in faith. The letter below is a report that she sent me from their engagement in their community.*

**Greetings and thanks from our GCI Piura congregation, Peru.**

I am writing to inform you that we have finished the mission that was entrusted to us and that it has been a beautiful privilege to serve the Lord Jesus. We are very grateful to be able to participate with him in his work, bringing hope to many families who are in great need.



We give glory to our God who through you and the encouragement and support from our sister churches in Southern California allowed us to provide 30 food baskets to various families in our community. We have been able to see closely what God is doing. He has made our congregation walk down the love avenue listening to the different testimonies of people who were surprised because they did not have anything to eat and suddenly help appeared.



The Lord Jesus showed us the sad conditions that many people are living through in this pandemic. He also allowed us to prepare 25 dinners for people who spend the whole day outside the hospital near our community and who sleep on the street waiting for results of their relatives who are battling Covid-19.



I would like to share with you all the details of this precious journey, which has been for the glory and honor of our God, but I know there is no time, and I end by telling you that all this is just the beginning of great things. Through your support, more hearts locally have been moved to want to support and join in the work of God. We have wept with those who weep, and we will not remain with our arms crossed, as we have witnessed so much need and thirst for God.



Everything is in the hands of God and we thank him because he answered our prayers. Initially, we did not know how to help with the poverty and need that has been intensified by the pandemic. We are now able to supply this need for a roof and protection against the cold. We even have members who, due to the pandemic, have taken refuge in our tents and become chefs to those in need in the community. Best regards, Ruth Nieves



**Ordinary Time?**

*(from GCI Equiper July 31, 2020)*

*In the GCI Worship calendar, we are now under what is called "Ordinary Time"—the time between Pentecost and Christ the King Sunday. It's a time that celebrates the mystery of the church and the mystery of Christ living in us.*

The word ordinary can sound boring, simple, and non-energetic, yet most of our days would fall under the category of ordinary time. We don't celebrate birthdays, anniversaries and special events every day; most of our year is spent living a rather ordinary life—however that looks to each person. This doesn't imply the rest of the year is less important, less effective, or less essential. It is during this "ordinary time" that our work is done, our projects are completed, our day-to-day life is lived. This is the key to our Christian walk during Ordinary Time.

Let me back up a bit, and then explore "Ordinary Time" in the GCI Worship Calendar. Ordinary time begins with the beginning of the church at Pentecost and ends with celebrating the anticipation of Christ's return on Christ the King Sunday. Both of these events would be considered far from ordinary. During Pentecost God showed up in a powerful way through wind and fire and the miracle of tongues. We can only imagine the powerful return of Christ. Other events during this time include Trinity Sunday—where the church gives special attention to the doctrine of the triune God, and All Saints Day—a special day some congregations hold honoring those who have been called home the previous year. Ordinary Time takes up more than half the year—a long time between the major events in Christ's life and the church. But ordinary doesn't mean less meaningful. Ordinary time reminds us that God doesn't just show up in extraordinary ways. God is always present, always working in and through us. And though we may call it ordinary time, with Christ, nothing is ever ordinary. But imagine if it was.

What would the church be like if we really were 24/7 365 day participants with Jesus? What if “ordinary” for a church would consist of that church being a light of Jesus’ love for others all the time, and well known for doing so? What if it would be viewed as unnatural (not ordinary) for a congregation to not have an open door policy, or for a congregation to not have provisions for the poor, or for a church building to not be the gathering place for a community? How cool would it be if we changed what ordinary looks like for the church? How amazing will it be when a GCI healthy church is considered the norm—a new ordinary? Too high an aspiration? I don’t believe so.

I think we also need to look at ordinary time on a personal level. How would my life change if I was so in tune with Jesus’ heart that I wasn’t surprised every time God did something miraculous. Perhaps I wouldn’t call something a miracle because seeing God’s involvement was normal—ordinary? What if my day-to-day life, my work, my projects were all centered around my relationship with Jesus—or more importantly—his relationship with me? What if sharing the love and life of Jesus with others was my ordinary? And this, I believe, is one of our aspirations for Ordinary Time in our GCI Worship Calendar.

The heart of ordinary time is sharing the love and life of Christ with others—it is participating in the mission and ministry of God. It is the time “we reveal his light, we exhibit his life and we embody his love.”<sup>[1]</sup> This can be said in many ways—it is walking the walk, putting ministry and mission to practice, being the church, being deployed, being the hands and feet of Jesus, being Christ to others, living and sharing the gospel.

At Pentecost, the disciples received the Holy Spirit and were sent out. This was not a one-time event. Jesus lives in us through the Holy Spirit and sends us out to “lose our life for his sake.” He calls us to walk with him to the point it is ordinary. “That all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me” (John 17:21).

He calls us to be his ambassadors of reconciliation. Every believer is called to love others as Jesus loves us—to give ourselves to others, to enter their place, to share God’s love and life and make disciples. “Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me” (John 17:5). Ordinary Time is given to us to reflect on all that Jesus does, is doing, and will do and how being in relationship with him impacts us and others. This is a time of discipleship—focusing on who we are called to be and what we are called to do. It is a time of focusing on the mystery of Christ in us, our hope of glory.

Jesus poured himself out in love, and we know what it is like to be a recipient of that love. We know what it is like to live in the good news! We know what it is like to be forgiven, adopted, loved and included. We are reminded of who Jesus is, what he has done and what he is doing through the rest of the worship year.

During Ordinary Time, we focus on how to share the truth of his love with others every day. We want others to be in relationship with Jesus to the point that knowing Jesus’ love becomes ordinary—and yet always extraordinary. Looking forward to a new ordinary, Rick Shallenberger

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### Cheap grace?

By Mr. Joseph Tkach – (part 3 in series – from gci.org)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Perhaps you’ve heard it said that grace “is not unlimited” or that it “has its requirements.” Some even accuse those who emphasize God’s love and forgiveness as promoting what they disparagingly refer to as “cheap grace.” On one occasion my good friend, GCI Pastor Tim Brassell was accused of preaching “cheap grace.” I love his reply: “No, it’s not *cheap* grace I’m preaching. It’s far better than that—it’s *free!*”

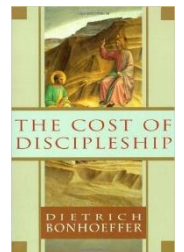
It was theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer, in his book ***The Cost of Discipleship***, who popularized the term *cheap grace*. He used it in making the point that God’s grace, which is unearned, is experienced as a person embraces and then lives out the new life that is theirs in Christ. Apart from that life of discipleship, what a person experiences will be less than God’s fullness—it will be an experience of “cheap grace.”

#### The lordship salvation controversy

Unfortunately, Bonhoeffer’s teachings concerning grace (including his use of the term *cheap grace*), along with his teaching concerning salvation and discipleship, have often been misunderstood and misapplied. A case in point is the decades-old debate known as the ***lordship salvation controversy***. A leading voice in that debate, a well-known five-point Calvinist, often asserts that those who claim that a personal profession of faith in Christ is all that is required to be saved are guilty of advocating “cheap grace.” He then argues that to be saved, one must make a profession of faith (accepting Jesus as Savior) *and* produce a certain level of good works (obey Jesus as Lord).

Though both sides in this debate make valid points, I think both make errors that would be avoided if they would start their discussions not with the human response to God, but with the response of Jesus to God. By starting there they would see Jesus for who he truly is—both Lord and Savior. They would proceed by understanding that, as a gift of grace, we are being led by the Spirit to share more and more in Jesus’ own response to the Father on our behalf.

From this Christ-centered, Trinitarian vantage point they would view good works not as what earns salvation (or as something that is superfluous), but as what we are created to do in our union with Christ (***Ephesians 2:10***). They



would also view salvation as being entirely unearned, resulting not from works (including our personal profession of faith) but from the works and faith of Jesus on our behalf (**Ephesians 2:8-9; Galatians 2:20 KJV**). They would then conclude that there is nothing they can do to save themselves or to add to (or to maintain) their salvation. As noted by the great preacher Charles Spurgeon, *"If we have to put one stitch into the garment of our salvation, we shall ruin the whole thing."*

### **Grace is Jesus' work for us in all its aspects**

As we've noted in this series on grace, we ought to have much more faith in Jesus' works (his faithfulness) than in our own. It does not devalue the gospel to teach and believe that our salvation is not the result of our works, but is accomplished entirely by God through his grace. As noted by Karl Barth, *"No one can be saved in virtue of what he can do. Everyone can be saved in virtue of what God can do."*

The Bible teaches that anyone who believes in Jesus "has eternal life" (**John 3:16, 36; 5:24**) and "will be saved" (**Romans 10:9**). And there are verses that admonish us to follow Jesus, living out our new life in him. Any approach to God and his grace that separates Jesus as Savior and Jesus as Lord is wrong-headed. Jesus is *one whole, undivided reality* who is both Savior and Lord. As Savior, he is Lord. As Lord, he is Savior. Attempting to dissect that reality into two separate categories is not helpful nor is it productive. Doing so creates a two-class Christianity that opens the way for people to exert their judgment upon who is and isn't a believer in Jesus. It also tends to separate our being from our doing.

A bifurcating of Jesus and his salvation is grounded in a *transactional* view of salvation that separates justification from sanctification. But salvation, which is entirely of grace in all its parts, is about a *relationship* with God that leads to life transformation. The grace of God that saves us accomplishes our justification and our sanctification in that Jesus himself, by the Spirit, is both our righteousness and our sanctification (**1 Corinthians 1:30**).

The Giver of salvation is, himself, the Gift. United to Jesus, by the Spirit, we share in all that is his. The New Testament sums it up by calling us a "new creation" in Christ (**2 Corinthians 5:17**). There is nothing cheap about this grace because there is nothing cheap about Jesus and the life we share with him. Indeed, that relationship results in repentance, in leaving the old person behind, and in walking in newness of life. God, in love, desires the perfection of his beloved and has provided for that in Jesus. Anything less would not be loving. As Calvin used to say, "Our whole salvation is complete in Christ."

### **A misunderstanding of grace and works**

When the focus is on the exact nature of our response and understanding, and on the production of good works, some will mistakenly believe that an ongoing contribution of good works is necessary to maintain our salvation. The fear is that a focus on the grace of God through faith alone will result in the granting of license to sin (a topic I addressed [last week](#)). The silliness of that idea is that grace does not ignore the consequences of sin. Also, such wrong-headed thinking separates grace from the very being of Jesus, as if grace is a commodity for transaction that can be doled out in bits and pieces, separated from Christ. In effect, the focus on good works ends up promoting disbelief that Jesus did everything required to save us. It wrongly affirms that Jesus only *began* the work of our salvation and now it is up to us to behave in a certain way in order to *maintain* it.

Christians who fully embrace God's freely-given grace do not believe it gives them license to sin—just the opposite. Paul was accused of preaching too much grace so that *"sin may abound."* But that accusation did not cause him to change his message. Instead, he charged his accusers with distorting his message and went on to clarify that grace is not about making exceptions to rules. Rather, faith in God and his grace works itself out in love (**Galatians 5:6 ESV**). Paul said that the aim of his ministry was to bring about the "obedience that comes from faith" (**Romans 1:5 ESV; Romans 16:26 ESV**).

### **Salvation is by grace: Christ's work from start to finish**

We have a certifiable debt of gratitude to God, who sent his Son in the power of the Spirit to save us, not condemn us. We understand that no amount of good works can make us righteous or holy, because if it did, there would be no need of a savior. Whether one's emphasis is on the obedience of faith or the faith of obedience, we must never undervalue our need for Jesus as our Savior. He has judged and condemned all sin and has forgiven us for eternity—a gift we receive as we believe and trust in him.

It is Jesus' own faith and works—his faithfulness—that saves us from start to finish. He imputes to us his righteousness (our justification) and by the Holy Spirit he shares with us his holy life (our sanctification). We receive both gifts of grace in the same way: by trusting in Jesus. What Christ has done for us, the Holy Spirit works out within us. We are directed to believe that *"He who began a good work in you will bring it to completion"* (**Philippians 1:6**). If anyone does not participate in what Jesus is doing in them, then their profession of faith is empty. Instead of receiving God's grace, they are resisting it by presuming upon it. Certainly we want to avoid that mistake, but let's also avoid embracing the false idea that our works somehow maintain our salvation.

Eternally grateful for the fullness of God's grace,  
Joseph Tkach

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**GCI principle website and Moncton Websites**—a) [www.gci.org](http://www.gci.org) , b) [www.worshipim.ca](http://www.worshipim.ca) , c)

<https://www.facebook.com/GCIMoncton> ; d) Grace Communion International-Moncton

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCgKazyWhmKmdZy69vJcFfPg>

*For a wealth of helpful articles about God, grace and his plan for salvation, who we are, etc., please see the GCI.org website.*

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