Rich and Distinguishing Grace

1. In songs of sublime adoration and praise, Ye pilgrims for Zion who press, Break forth and extol the great Ancient of days, His rich and distinguishing grace.	**3.** Oh had He not pitied the state you were in, Your bosoms His love had ne'er felt; You all would have lived, would have died too in sin, And sunk with the load of your guilt.	**5.** 'Twas all of Thy grace we were bro't to obey, While others were suffered to go, The road which by nature we chose as our way, Which leads to the regions of woe.
2. His love from eternity fixed upon you, Broke forth and discovered its flame, When each with the cords of His kindness He drew, And brought you to love His great name.	**4.** What was there in you that could merit esteem, Or give the Creator delight? 'Twas "even so, Father," you ever must sing, "Because it seemed good in Thy sight."	**6.** Then give all the glory to His Holy name, To Him all the glory belongs, Be yours the high pleasure to sound forth His fame, And crown Him in each of your songs.

Introduction:

1. The precious words in the song above do not have a known author, but they are pure gospel truth about grace.
2. Verse 1 calls for sublime adoration and praise for the rich and distinguishing grace of the Ancient of Days.
3. Verse 2 identifies the beginning of grace in eternity and shows that it did the work of drawing us to Christ.
4. Verse 3 indicates that had He not provided the infinite remedy for our situation, there was absolutely no hope.
5. Verse 4 admits our total dependence on His own will for redemption, since there was nothing good in us.
6. Verse 5 shows the discrimination of grace in saving us from the same lifestyle of those going down to hell.
7. Verse 6 draws the obvious conclusion that we owe all the glory for salvation to Him in appreciative pleasure.

What is Grace?

A. Grace is what you need to get out of your mess – eternal condemnation and everlasting punishment.
B. Grace is kindness done toward you by another, when you deserve their punishment and rejection.
C. Grace is not unmerited favor as many presume; it is demerited favor, for you have merited hell!
D. Grace is not unmerited favor as many presume; you are not neutral before God, but His enemy!
E. Grace is a free gift without any sense of duty or obligation to show you mercy by it (Romans 4:4).
F. Grace is seeing you have earned the wages of death, but paying the gift of eternal life (Rom 6:23).
G. Grace is so contrary to works that the definitions of the words are mutually exclusive (Rom 11:5-6).
H. Grace is so contrary to works that any additions to it of human obligations frustrate it (Gal 2:21).
I. Adding anything to the grace of God in salvation by Christ is to fall from proper grace (Gal 5:4).
J. The heart of the elect should be grounded on grace, rejecting the meats of false doctrines (Heb 13:9).

How is it Rich?

A. It is so rich that the most eloquent writer in Scripture could not find the numbers for it (Ps 71:15).
B. Gentiles and Jews are saved by the same means, the rich grace of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 15:11).
C. Luke instructed Theophilus that the believers in Corinth even had their faith by grace (Acts 18:27).
D. It is so rich that justification is free by the redemption that is in the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans 3:24).
E. Grace is the certain means to get life to all the seed, and we only give evidence by faith (Rom 4:16).
F. The power of grace in the person of God's Son is much richer than death by Adam (Romans 5:15).
G. The number of offences involved is much richer in Christ's gift than Adam's death (Romans 5:16).
H. If the punishment of Adam's sin had power, the gift of abundant grace is much richer (Rom 5:17).
I. God gave the law by Moses to show us our sinfulness, but grace is much richer than sin (Rom 5:20).
J. It is so rich that it reins by great power to give eternal life, as sin once reigned for death (Rom 5:21).
K. It is so rich our dear brother Paul knew He was without hope if grace did not save (Rom 7:24-25).
L. Paul brought news of the abundant grace of God to many for the greater glory of God (II Cor 4:15).
M. Grace is rich by the inestimable reversal of fortune of Jesus Christ to reverse our fortune (II Cor 8:9).
N. God's grace brings everlasting consolation and good hope, which are riches indeed (II Thess 2:16).
O. Justification from sin in order to have eternal life is by grace, which shows its richness (Titus 3:7).
P. You were doomed to die, but Jesus Christ by the grace of God tasted death for you (Hebrews 2:9).

How is it Distinguishing?

A. Out of the whole world, Noah found grace in the eyes of God to be saved from the Flood (Gen 6:8).
B. God's grace is very distinguishing: He shows it to those of His own choice (Ex 33:19; Rom 9:15).
C. We were chosen to eternal life before the world began by the riches of grace in Christ (Eph 1:3-7).
D. We were regenerated, unlike others, for perpetual praise of His rich grace in Christ (Eph 2:1-7).
E. It distinguished you from others by God's purpose for you before the world began (II Timothy 1:9).
F. While there are many other texts that could be used here, we limited ourselves to those with "grace."

Conclusion:

1. Can you "Break forth!" and extol the great Ancient of Days for his rich and distinguishing grace? See song!
2. Coupled with this morning's sermon, "Praise and Thanksgiving," we must lift our hearts and voices loud!
3. We now come to the Lord's Supper, where the rich and distinguishing grace is symbolically made obvious.