

Timothy ... will remind you of my way of life in Christ Jesus, which agrees with what I teach everywhere in every church.

Paul - 1 Corinthians 4:17 (NIV)

In Christ

Or don't you know that all of those who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death...burial...and resurrection.

Paul - Romans 6:3-5 (NIV)

David Kuykendall Ministries

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Obeys the five commands listed below and experience your life "in Christ." Experience the abundant life through living by grace. Notice that each command is either to believe something or to choose to do something.

THE FIVE COMMANDS

Believe

Romans 6:11

Reckon (believe) yourselves to be dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord

Choose

Romans 6:12

Do not let sin reign in your mortal body that you should obey it in its lusts

Choose

Romans 6:13a

Do not present your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin

Choose/Believe

Romans 6:13b

Present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead.

Choose

Romans 6:13c

[Present] your members as instruments of righteousness to God.

We can and should obey each of these commands because Romans 6:3-5 teaches that all believers have been baptized into Jesus and as a result all believers have been baptized into his death, burial, and resurrection.

AT PEACE THROUGH GRACE

Paul Cardarella

Paul Cardarella is retired from AT&T where he served as Vice President of Labor Relations. He is a faithful lay worker in his church and has been living and teaching the life of grace for almost twelve years.

On a calm night in Mexico City, my wife and I were enjoying a normal, quiet evening, talking about our respective activities of the day. Little did we know we were about to receive a phone call from back home that would change our lives forever. And that call did come! There was no stopping it. We found out a close loved one, our newly-born granddaughter, was in grave medical danger. All of the worldly things that had held far too high a priority in our lives suddenly meant nothing.

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We considered ourselves Christians. We went to church every Sunday at an English speaking non-denominational church. We participated in Bible study, but on that fateful night, we felt woefully inadequate to deal with our situation. We numbly went about making flight reservations to get back to Dallas the next morning.

On the flight we barely spoke. We really did not know what to expect when we arrived at the hospital. Suddenly, my wife turned to me and said, "I have got to get in touch with David Kuykendall when we get there." David is Vicki's cousin who was a retired Baptist minister. I barely remembered David. He had given the eulogy at the funeral of Vicki's mom. That was the only time I had ever seen him. Vicki's bold comment out of the blue about contacting him seemed to be a powerful message that seemed right to me though I didn't really understand.

Once we arrived at the hospital, we found that our granddaughter's condition was indeed serious. There was little doubt that her condition would have lifelong impacts. She would never be able to do the things our entire family had envisioned this beautiful child doing. Just the ability to run and play with other children was in grave doubt.

David and his wife, Janie, met us at the hospital. He came across to me as a true man of God. I couldn't see into his heart, but I knew in my heart that I was with a man who cared about Vicki and me. His wife, Janie, had the sweetest spirit of anyone I had ever known. So, we began a spiritual journey with David and Janie Kuykendall.

Meanwhile, our worst fears were confirmed regarding our granddaughter. We could barely breathe, but deep within me I knew she was going to be our greatest blessing! Already I had changed my view of life, and those feelings were only going to grow over time.

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Ultimately, we adopted our granddaughter and with the help of her daddy, our son. We began to nurture and love her. It was an act of pure love on a daily basis. She was a beautiful child and though she could not speak, she communicated in many ways, not the least of which was the most gorgeous smile we had ever seen.

My wife is a woman of deep faith. However, I could not say the same for myself. I had been raised in a church that had hard and fast rules. I did not feel I could live up to them, and as I observed some of our church

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leaders in their every day lives, I did not feel they were living up to them either. I became very cynical about the rules of the church at an early age. I despised hypocrisy, and I found it to be an excellent excuse for my cynicism. My wife was patient with me. She was more patient than I probably deserved, but looking back I think she knew God had a plan for me.

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We began Bible study with David and Janie. I was more open to the Lord than I had ever been. I began to understand the Lord will many times allow suffering to happen to us in order to bring us closer to Him. If that was His plan, it was working well with me. Other than the deaths of my parents and my wife's parents, we had never known such pain and adversity, but first I had to get my thinking straight.

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David had been engaged for some time in a lifelong study he referred to as "living by grace". He taught us out of the Book of Romans that as Christians we were dead to sin and alive to God. He taught us how to experience our death to sin and being alive to God as taught in Romans 6:11-13. He taught us that living the Christian life was not being dedicated but being available.

Initially, I found nothing he said that I disagreed with. Much of it was similar to my reading of the Bible. The comments were just words, and though I was more open to new concepts and study than ever, there was still a bit of skepticism. In the past I had been able to walk away from Bible study feeling I had done the right thing, and then put it aside until our next study.

With David, it was different. I kept mulling over in my mind many of the concepts and Scriptures we had discussed though I was not completely cogent or comfortable with all we were reading or discussing. However, there was beginning to be a foundation built.

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Little by little the foundation was growing. For the first time in my life I was beginning to feel like a legitimate child of God. The more we studied the more I realized God had chosen me and was offering me His grace. It would never be granted based on anything I could ever do. It was a gift. I had to accept it.

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Hypocrisy is a reality of life because we are all sinners. Even with God's grace we will continue to sin. However, as we stop attempting to be in control of our lives and make ourselves available to Him, He will work through us in our daily lives to bring us closer and closer to His will. The weight of the world began to lift from my shoulders. I stopped worrying and felt less and less anxiety. All I had to do was to experience my spiritual crucifixion, burial and resurrection.

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Many of the concepts and much of the Scripture we studied with David and Janie appeared quiet complex at first. Staying in the word and practicing what we discussed began to simplify the process for me. In fact, I said to David one day after months of study and contemplation, "David, this is so simple it goes right over people's heads." A few weeks later David came back to me and said he thought I might be onto something!

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Well, this story began twelve years ago. We have had our ups and downs since then. Life is tough, and as simple as it may have seemed to me to live a life of grace, I'm not always successful. I'm getting better everyday, though. My family is fine. Amie is the light of our lives and has been a blessing to many people inside and outside our family. Recently, some people took it upon themselves to fund a scholarship to Dallas Baptist University in her name. Someone will have the opportunity to accomplish what Amie never will. Now Tell me God's hand is not at work. I am at peace with my Lord. He has chosen me and I am available to Him. With all of my sins and shortcomings, He still loves me.

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