

CHRISTIAN MORALITY: The Way to Happiness

Theology for the Laity Course
St. Louis Bertrand Parish – Fall 2021

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CLASS 3: Grace

"I do not do the good that I want, but I do the evil that I do not want." (Rom 7:19)

"For one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, it is a sin." (Jas 4:17)

- LAW & GRACE
 - By the gift of the LAW, God *instructs us* that we might *know* our true good.
 - By the gift of GRACE, God *helps us* that we might *do* the good.

- THE DIVINE LAW
 - Two Parts of the Divine Law: *The Old Law* and *The New Law*
 - They are distinguished as *imperfect* from *perfect* (e.g., a boy, a man).
 - The Old Law was the *beginning* of God's Divine Instruction.
 - That Divine Instruction only comes to *perfection* in Christ's promulgation of the New Law.

 - **The New Law is chiefly the grace of the Holy Spirit.** It is, in the first place, a law that is *inscribed in our hearts*, and only secondarily, a *written law*.
 - *"Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel... This is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, says the Lord: I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts." (Jer 31:31,33)*
 - *"I will give you a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my own spirit within you so that you may walk in my statutes, observe my commandments, and keep them." (Ezek 36:26-27)*

- WHY DO WE NEED GRACE?
 - **To heal us** from the effects of sin: *Ignorance, Malice, Weakness, Concupiscence*
 - **To elevate us** and make us capable of divine life (our supernatural end)

 - KINDS OF GRACE
 - SANCTIFYING GRACE (Habitual Grace) / ACTUAL GRACE
 - *Sanctifying Grace*: the habit of the soul that makes us holy
 - *Actual Grace*: “moments” of grace given to move us to action
 - SANCTIFYING GRACE: Operative Grace / Cooperative Grace
 - *Operative Grace*: what God does in us *without* us
 - *Cooperative Grace*: what God does in us *with* us
 - SANCTIFYING GRACE / GRATUITOUS GRACE
 - *Sanctifying Grace*: grace that makes us pleasing to God
 - *Gratuitous Grace*: special gifts given for the benefit of others

 - THE EFFECTS OF GRACE
 - To heal the soul
 - To will the good
 - To efficaciously carry out the good
 - To persevere in doing the good
 - To attain glory

 - THE MEDIATION OF GRACE
 - Through Jesus Christ
 - Through the Church
 - Through the Sacraments
 - Gifts of Actual Gift and Gratuitous Grace – freely given

 - THOMISTIC THEOLOGY OF GRACE
 - **“Grace does not destroy nature, but perfects it.”** (*ST Ia, q. 1, a. 8, ad 2*)
 - Grace truly transforms us from within, by healing us and elevating us.
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- RESOURCE FOR FURTHER STUDY
 - Fr. Brian Mullady, O.P., *Grace Explained: How to Receive and Retain God’s Most Potent Gift* (Irondale, AL: EWTN Publishing, 2021)