



Dear Fellow Eagles,

Once again, apologies for missing our 'date' last Monday, due to illness. I hope everyone else has kept virus/illness free in the interim.

It is time for this 'Eagles' Wings' group to draw to a close, and so the next email will be the final one, though the Eagles' Wings webpage will remain available for a while longer (<https://www.rhythmsofgraceuk.org/eagles-wings-9691.html>) .

In these two letters, I want to go back to the topic raised at the beginning of keeping spiritually healthy outside of a traditional church structure, and add a few more thoughts...

### **WALK IN GRACE**

One of the essential foundations for a vibrant Christian walk is an understanding of Grace. The apostles' letters abound with references to this topic, and they repeatedly encourage believers to continue to receive more and more from the Lord.

*Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord. His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. [2 Peter 1:2,3]*

Most of us learned that grace is the 'unmerited favour of God' when we originally came to the cross, received forgiveness and were born again. However, so many Christians think (or are taught) that they then have to live the Christian life—and please God—by their own efforts. The truth is, there is nothing we can ever do (before or after becoming Christians) to earn or merit God's favour and love. Nothing we can do will ever make God love us more than He does at this moment, and nothing will ever make Him love us less. That completely undeserved favour is summed up not only what Jesus did for us individually on the cross, but also in the gift of the Holy Spirit to take up residence in us. The power of this divine grace and mercy is something we are to live in on a daily basis.

Like Paul, we may have to deflect the criticism that an emphasis on grace leads to a licence to sin, a sloppy spirituality in which 'anything goes'; however, like Paul, we can be confident that in reality the opposite is true [Romans 6]. The Lord's unwarranted blessing means that we have received everything we need for living right. And a true response to grace is one of love and gratitude, and a deep desire to honour the One who has poured so much out on us. A healthy spiritual life is not about ticking 'Christian checkboxes' but is about learning to live in the good of the Father's amazing provision.

You can read more about this in the [Foundations Section](#) of Rhythms of Grace.

## **BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT**

One of the most amazing features of the Lord's provision is the Holy Spirit. Just think—not only has He taken care of all our mistakes and failures, God has come Himself to live in us to enable us to live a life 'worthy of our calling'! And like the early disciples, we need to be filled to overflowing with the Spirit. If you haven't already done so, read the web pages about Him and receive the wonderful gift of His presence—and then continue to be filled daily. The Spirit has come to us as Friend, Teacher, Comforter, Healer and Counsellor—to name just a few things; it is impossible to live the Christian life without Him.

## **KEEP SHORT ACCOUNTS**

So many Christians are troubled by their sense of shortfall. Although our inner inclination to sin was taken care of, once and for all, through Jesus' death on the Cross, and the Holy Spirit has come to enable us to live a new life, old habits take time to be replaced, and the result can be a pervading sense of guilt and shame.

The good news of course, is that we don't have to live with this, and it's a good practice to keep 'short accounts' with the Lord, by confessing our shortfall as the Spirit nudges us throughout the day, or at bedtime, so we start each new day afresh.

It's good to remember God's promise to forgive and cleanse:

*If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness [1 John 1:9].*

And it is the Accuser, not the Spirit of God who brings us low with condemnation. The webpage, ['Missing the Mark: Overcoming Guilt and Shame'](#) deals with this issue in a bit more detail.

Too many Christians cede responsibility for their spiritual health to other people, especially church leaders and 'platform ministries'. The result is a multitude of people who have not passed infancy—even after decades in 'The Way'. While we can be truly grateful for the gifts God has given into our lives through the ministries of other people, we are all accountable for our own journeys; I hope some of these thoughts will help you on yours.

The next and final email will be on 2<sup>nd</sup> August.

God bless you this week.

*Kate W at Rhythms of Grace*