

From the Pit to the Door: One Year of Grace

Psalm 40:1-5

Scripture for Today

""Psalm 40:1-5

I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. 2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. 3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD. 4 Blessed is that man that maketh the LORD his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn aside to lies. 5 Many, O LORD my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered.""

Introduction – One Year of Grace, Not Greatness

One year ago, True Words Baptist Church was born—not by the will of man, but by the grace of God. We started small. We started humble. We started with our families. My Dad and Mom. Nathan's Dad and Mom who we miss greatly. She was here before we opened. She supported us. We lost her but we continue, and we will see her again.

Our kids were here with us. Nathan's sister was here. Nathan's sister-in-law was here. The kids were here. We had support to open this church. We had Vision Valley Baptist Church and Pastor Tim DeVries with us. We had the support of an established and seasoned church who loves this community here. God was with us. And we opened last year on October 13th, 2024.

We started *right*: on the Word of God, the Gospel of Christ, and the courage to preach truth without compromise. Please hear me today: We will not compromise on the word of God. We will stand with God's words.

How is a church built? And look, this is important. Please hear me today because you need to know this right now so the rest of the sermon makes sense. A church is built by the Lord Jesus Christ. It's actually easy to build a church. We simply rely on Jesus. He chooses the people. He brings the people. We simply do the work He asked us to do. We go out and we give people the choice to be a part of this or not. We work hard. Jesus builds the church. You get a choice.

All of you here right now have that choice. We want you to be a part of this church. Jesus is the head of this church. I am just an overseer here. Jesus wants you to be a part of this. I want you to be a part of this. This is a young church. This can be YOUR CHURCH. And look, this will 100% be a great church. Why? Because of Jesus Christ. He's the head of this church. And we're going to keep it that way. Jesus loves you, and I'm going to love you the way Jesus loves you—and do the best that I can do. I can't do as good of a job as Jesus Christ, but I ask Him for help.

Today, we celebrate—not how great *we* are, but how great *He* has been. We need God's grace. We are not so great all the time. God is great all the time. The same God who brought us out of the pit, **YOU AND I** He pulled up out of the dark pit, is the same God, the Almighty Creator of all things, who opened this door in Louisville in the Park Hill neighborhood.

And I want you to hear this today. He expects this church to remain what He made it: **a door of grace**. And look, I am serious here right now. Understand what I mean. We go out and work hard for the Lord Jesus Christ. We get people to visit here. And I want you to always have grace and mercy for the people. Not everyone is the same.

The front door of this church is a door of grace. Understand me here. A door of grace means God made a way for broken people to come home. Anyone can walk through that door, no matter where they've been or what they've done, because the price has already been paid by Jesus Christ on the cross.

Point 1. Remember the Pit You Came From

Watch what David says here in Psalm Chapter 40:

""Psalm 40:1-2

I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. 2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings.""

People who are here right now cried out to the Lord. **HE HEARD THEIR CRY**. Jesus brought them here. You didn't do it. I didn't do it. Jesus did it. For example, our new pastor here Nathan said last week that he cried out to the Lord and God heard him. That's one reason this church is here.

God did it because Nathan cried out for it. I am here because I cried out to God for it. Together, God heard our cry. I am sure my Dad and Mom and Nathan's Dad and Mom cried out for Nathan and I to come back to Kentucky. We were out there wandering around. And we made it back here for this church to begin.

In my life, I've been down in the pit. I've went the wrong way. I've made some horrible decisions. Sitting at a table reading the Bible one day I got upset, smacked the table, frustrated, and cried out to God to please show me the way. "I want to know the truth." I was lost. God heard my cry.

Without Him, I would still be lost. Without Him, you would still be lost. This church here is a light that will guide your path. Each week, it's important to be here or you might get lost out there.

That's our testimony, and that's the story of this church. We need to remember where we came from. We weren't born holy; we were pulled out of filth. Every single one of us was stuck in something—sin, pride, addiction, bitterness, or religion itself.

And when we forget the pit, we start acting like we built the rock. We start thinking we're something. We start lifting ourselves up. Hey, don't forget the pit that you Jesus picked you up out of—do not forget it. I want to show you a story from the Bible. And I want you to always remember this story. Don't forget this.

""Luke 7:37-38

And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, 38 And stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment.""

A humble woman but a sinner. I'm a sinner too. You're a sinner too. Learn this lesson here today and this will help you so much in your life.

""Luke 7:39

Now when the Pharisee which had bidden him saw it, he spake within himself, saying, This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him: for she is a sinner.""

Simon the Pharisee looked down on her. He thought, "If Jesus knew what kind of woman this is, He wouldn't let her touch Him." Hey, please hear me. DO NOT DO THIS HERE. Don't look on someone that comes in the front door of this church, that's a door of grace that Jesus opened to them, and judge them unrighteously. Understand me. If you won't hear me today, hear what Jesus said. Watch this.

""Luke 7:40

And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon, I have somewhat to say unto thee. And he saith, Master, say on.""

Jesus said, "Hey Simon, I've got something to say to you." When the Lord of all Creation says this to you: "Hey, I've got something to say to you." You should listen.

""Luke 7:41-43

There was a certain creditor which had two debtors: the one owed five hundred pence, and the other fifty. 42 And when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. Tell me therefore, which of them will love him most? 43 Simon answered and said, I suppose that he, to whom he forgave most. And he said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged.""

This time Jesus tells Simon he has rightly judged. Just prior to this Simon the Pharisee didn't judge right. He looked at a woman and thought bad of her. "She's a sinner." Learn the lesson here.

Jesus said:

""Luke 7:47-48

Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. 48 And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven.""

She came from a pit of sin, but she found the door of grace. Simon had religion but no compassion. She had a mess but found mercy. Hey, everyone in here came from a different place in life. You haven't lived their life and they haven't lived yours. Don't look down on someone.

Let's say a child is running around and being loud. Hey, you don't know what that child has been through. Have some grace. Have some mercy. Help that child. Help that man. Help that woman. Don't look at them with an evil heart. Look upon them with a good heart.

Lesson: God honors the repentant sinner more than the respectable hypocrite.

Point 2. Keep the Door Open for Those Still in the Pit

Watch what Jesus says:

""John 10:9

I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture.""

The church is not the door. Jesus is the Door. We are simply *keepers of His house*—not bouncers at the gate. That front door is owned by Jesus.

When people walk into this church—tired, drunk, high, or trembling—they are walking toward the Door. They are coming for help. And we need to do our best to help. Now, look, I don't mean to enable them to continue in those things. I don't want anyone to continue in alcohol or drugs of any type including marijuana. It is not good for you. I don't care what this world says. "Well, it's good for this or that." No, it's not. It's messing up your brain and your body.

When people come for help, let's not be the ones slamming the door in their face. Now, look, I've had to stop some from coming here because they aren't trying to do better. I have them many months. One man wouldn't stop drinking. He showed up many times drunken. He lied to me over and over again.

Please don't lie to me. Some come trying to take others down with them. That, I cannot allow. But if someone is truly trying to get help and trying to fix things, we do not turn them away. I can't make someone change their ways. It's their choice. Make good choices. But we will never turn people away who are trying to do right.

""Mark 10:13-14

And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them,

Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God."

Even the disciples thought they were protecting Jesus' time, but they were blocking His mission. The Bible says He was *much displeased*—that's a strong phrase. He wasn't mad at the children—He was mad at the gatekeepers. Remember that. Not everyone is going to fit what you want them to be.

That goes for all of us. I might not be what every visitor wants me to be. But I'm trying. Give me some grace. Have mercy on me. I'm trying. Let's work together.

Lesson: Jesus never rebuked a sinner for coming too close, but He did rebuke believers for keeping them away. Remember these lessons.

Point 3. Beware the Spirit That Shuts the Kingdom

""**Matthew 23:13**

But woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in.""

The Pharisees didn't just refuse the Gospel—they made it harder for others to get in. They were the "spiritual inspectors," always checking appearances instead of hearts.

That's why Jesus said, "Woe unto you." Not "woe unto the drunkard" or "woe unto the thief"—but "woe unto you hypocrites" who block grace. None of us deserve the kingdom of heaven. Not one of us. Jesus deserves it. He paid for it. He gives that free gift to us. We aren't so great. None of us. So don't look upon someone and shut the kingdom of heaven for them.

Lesson: The Pharisee spirit still lives today—whispering in pews, judging visitors unrighteously, and acting like the church belongs to them. But this church belongs to the Lord. We have to always keep that in mind or Jesus Himself will take us down.

Point 4. Don't Be the Older Brother

""**Luke 15:28–30**

And he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out, and intreated him. 29 And he answering said to his father, Lo, these many years do I serve thee, neither transgressed I at any time thy commandment: and yet thou never gavest me a kid, that I might make merry with my friends. 30 But as soon as this thy son was come, which hath devoured thy living with harlots, thou hast killed for him the fatted calf.""

The older brother wasn't a prodigal—but he was proud. He never left the house—but his heart was far from home. He should be happy his brother got away from the evil.

The father rejoiced when the lost son came back—but the older brother pouted. For example, I am happy when someone comes back here after they've been gone for some time. I don't care what they've done. Now is the time to get things right. Let's get this right. "Forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before."

That older brother refused to celebrate grace because he thought obedience made him better. This is what happens in churches many times. Many think they obey God better than others so they look down on others. STOP THESE THINGS.

Lesson: Some people would rather have a quiet church full of perfect people than a noisy one full of forgiven people. But Jesus said heaven rejoices over one sinner that repents.

5. One Year of Grace—Keep the Door Open

""Revelation 3:8

I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.""

Jesus told the church at Philadelphia that He had set before them *an open door*. No man can shut it—but that doesn't mean we can't block it with our attitudes.

God opened a door in Louisville when this church was founded.

And He expects us to keep that door wide open for anyone who wants to meet Jesus Christ. Understand this. We can't close the door at any time. We work hard to go out there, preach the Gospel, get people baptized, and teach people all things as commanded by Jesus Christ.

Don't stop that from happening by coming in here with a bad attitude. Don't talk trash to visitors. Don't look upon people and talk bad about them because they don't act exactly how you act. We WILL NOT be that kind of church. Make sure you hear me.

I will make sure we do not become that kind of church. Now, I will protect the people here because I am a pastor that is here to protect the people: the men, the women, the young men, the young women, and all the children. So I will be watching. Nathan will be watching. My Dad will be watching. Goddard will be watching. Chris will be watching. Josh will be watching. Chris will be watching. Zack will be watching. The women will be watching.

So don't come here to hurt anyone. Come here to set good examples for everyone. Come here with a good heart—a caring, kind, and loving heart. Not a judgmental hypocritical heart.

For example, I have a right to judge righteously. If a man continues to come here drunk, I cannot allow that to continue after he's been saved, baptized, and coming here for 7 months. I would be breaking the commandments of the Bible. I cannot do that. Another example, I cannot allow fornication to continue after someone is saved and knows the truth. That has to be fixed.

It's my job to make sure it's not continuing. There's a time limit on things. I cannot allow certain things to continue because I am commanded in the Bible to not allow that to continue.

Please, I ask you with all my heart to get things fixed in your life. I want you here. I want you doing the work of God. But I can't compromise. I won't shut the door on you, but if you continue in sin, you shut the door yourself. Please don't shut that door.

Point 6. The Work God Began—He Will Finish

""Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.""

This first anniversary isn't the end—it's just the beginning. God isn't finished with True Words Baptist Church. He brought us out of the pit, set us on the Rock, gave us a new Song, and opened a Door.

Now we must guard that door with grace—not with suspicion, not with pride, not with fear. We guard that door with grace, mercy, and truth. Help us in that. Don't make it harder on us. Don't upset visitors with unrighteous judgment. We didn't do that to you. Don't do that to visitors.

Conclusion – The Door of Grace Still Stands Open

Remember the pit you came from. Remember the grace that lifted you. Remember the Rock you're standing on. Remember the new Song in your mouth.

""Psalm 40:1-3

I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. 2 He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. 3 And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God: many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.""

And remember—Jesus is still the Door. And He always will be the Door.

Let every soul who walks through those doors feel the presence of the same grace that saved you. Don't be lifted up with pride! Let them hear your song of redemption, not your sigh of judgment. Let them meet Jesus through you.

As we celebrate one year of God's work, let's rededicate ourselves to His mission. Go out there and preach the Gospel, get people baptized, and teach them all things here in church.

Let's repent of pride. Let's remove walls and open doors. Let's love the unlovable, reach the unreachable, and welcome the unwanted—Because one year ago, that's exactly what Jesus did for us.

Sunday Morning

12 October 2025

""Ephesians 2:13

But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.""

Let's pray.