

DOCTRINE OF SURPASSING GRACE (SG₃)

- I. Definition and preliminary considerations:
- A. SG₃ refers to the special blessings and rewards for the believer in Ph₃ (the eternal state/phase 3) that are above and beyond the normal (universal) blessings bestowed upon all believers.
 - B. The normal/universal blessings of which all believers will be partakers of include:
 - 1. Resurrection bodies like that of Christ. 1Joh.3:2
 - 2. Being minus the STA/OSN. Eph.5:27
 - 3. The total absence of pain, crying, sorrow, tears and death. Rev.21:4
 - C. Some believers will not receive SG₃, but only the normal blessings of heaven. 1Cor.3:15 *“If any man’s work is burned up, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, yet so as through fire.”* 2Tim.2:12,13; vs.12a *“If we endure, we shall also reign with Him;”* (For the believer in time, who maintains a linear action of “enduring/ὑπομένω – p.a.i. ‘keeps on enduring/standing one’s ground/holding out/continuing firm/persevering’” in the CWL, they can expect to rule and reign with Christ.) vs.12b *“If we deny Him, He also will deny us;”* (He denies reward. That it is not salvation that He denies is clarified in vs.13.) vs.13 *“If we are faithless, He remains faithful; for He cannot deny Himself.”* (Believers are in Christ, and there is no one or no thing that can “snatch them” from Him [Joh.10:28,29; cp. Rom.8:38-39].)
 - D. Each believer will be rewarded based on his/her total accumulated divine good production in time (Phase 2/Ph₂), no matter how significant or insignificant their work (see Doc. of Divine Good). Heb.10:35 *“Therefore, do not throw away your confidence, which has a great reward/μισθαποδοσία/what is due for service rendered/payment of wages/recompense.”* 2Cor.5:10 *“For we (ref. to Paul and saints of Corinth, therefore to all believers) must all appear before the judgment seat/βῆμα (Bema) of Christ, that each one may be recompensed/κομίζω/ receive back/get for oneself/obtain (sub. mood indicates potential and a possibility of no reward) for his deeds in the body (works of the believer in Ph₂), according to what he has done, whether good/ἀγαθός/Divine good production/works done in FHS or bad/φάυλος/worthless/human good, works done under the STA and therefore evil and without Divine sanction”. Mat.10:42 *“And whoever in the name of a disciple gives to one of these little/humble ones even a cup of cold water to drink, truly I say to you he shall not lose his reward.”**
 - E. There will be therefore, class distinctions in heaven based on one’s Ph₂ input into the POG and commensurate reward(s) received. 2Cor.8:9 *“For*

you know (knowledge of BD) the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich (His Deity), yet for your sake (ref. Corinthian believers) He became poor (ref. condescension of God the Son into union with the humanity of Christ under kenosis), that you through His poverty might become rich (sub. mood indicates a potential for all believers)."

- F.** Every aspect of God's plan is based on the principle of grace as opposed to works. Rom.3:27
 - G.** God is not and will never be indebted to anyone; you can't out-give God.
 - H.** God has chosen the principle of faith to access His grace riches. Rom.5:1-2
 - I.** Once one believes and accesses the grace of God Ph₁, he should embark on a course of works with the aim of pleasing God. Col.1:10; 1Thess.4:1
 - J.** It must be observed that these Ph₂ works issue from the source of faith, which is in accordance/harmony with the principle of grace. Rom.4:16; 1Thess.1:2-3
 - K.** Therefore, it is because we walk according to faith (2Cor.5:7) that the works = reward system still remains a system of grace.
- II.** The nomenclature/acronym is taken from Eph.2:7, "*That in the ages to come (ref. Millennial and eternal state) He might show the surpassing/τὸ ὑπερβάλλον/excelling/transcending/exceeding/degree beyond comparison riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.*"
- III.** Vocabulary and synonyms for SG₃.
- A.** ἡ ἐλπίς – The hope, expectation or confidence. This word views SG₃ as a future reality that provides motivation to apply in time and ties it in with MPR and BD. Col.1:5; Eph.1:18; Heb.10:23-25
 - B.** θησαυρούς – Treasures or valuables. This word emphasizes the true value of SG₃. Mat.6:19-21; Luk.12:33-34
 - C.** μισθός – Reward, recompense, wages, what one is paid for work or what one earns. This word emphasizes that adherence to and application of BD is necessary for one to obtain SG₃. 1Cor.3:8,14; Heb.11:26; Rev.22:12
 - D.** ἡ κληρονομία – The inheritance or that property received upon the bequest/endowment of another. This word emphasizes that SG₃ is grace that God has personally determined that we should have based on our relationship with Him. Eph.1:14; 1Pet.1:4
 - E.** δόξα – Glory, splendor, majesty, excellence or a reflection of one's station or person. This noun emphasizes the source of SG₃, its significance/importance to believers and ties it into God's essence and all that it manifests or reveals. Rom.8:17-18; 2Cor.4:16-18
 - F.** ἡ ἐπαγγελία – The promises or assurances. This word points out that the veracity of God is on the line in the matter of SG₃. Heb.11:13,39

- G.** The phrase “eternal life” is used as an expression for SG₃. The phrase focuses on the fact that as life is made more enjoyable by possessions of certain accoutrements, so those who possess “riches” will enjoy heaven to a greater degree. 1Tim.6:12, 17-19; As pictured in the potential available to those who “drink of the living water” in Joh.4:10,14. cp. Joh.4:36 that salvation is the beginning of eternal life providing potential for future “fruit/Divine good production”.
- H.** The phrase “a better resurrection” is synonymous for SG₃ and demonstrates that indeed there is more available for believers than just the normal blessings of heaven. Heb.11:35
- I.** The phrase “gold, silver and precious stones” of 1Cor.3:12 by interpretation refers to the value of BD, which equates into SG₃ and emphasizes:
- A.** It is only by the strict dictates and standards of BD that application will be rewarded (cp.vs.14).
 - B.** The application of BD (in FHS) provides the exchange/monetary means necessary for translation into SG₃.
 - C.** The alternative is application based on human good (out of FHS), traditions of men, human viewpoint thinking and approach, which is analogized as “wood, hay and straw”.
 - D.** These applications have no value for trade in the kingdom of God.
 - E.** In fact, applications apart from the standards of BD will be eternally condemned and separated (vs.15 “burned up/κατακαίω; used in reference to unbelievers in condemnation to eternal damnation Mat.3:12; 13:30, 40; Luk.3:17) with no future benefit/advantage/gain/profit for the believer one iota.
- IV.** Since Jesus Christ is the heir of all things (Joh.3:35; 13:3), it is His reward and inheritance that we share. Heb.1:2 cp. Rev.22:12
- V.** The Judgment Seat of Christ (The Bema Seat) is the basis for the administration of SG₃ (The Award Ceremony) to the Royal Family of the Church Age dispensation. 2Cor.5:10 cp. 1Cor.3:11-15; Rev.22:12
- A.** At the rapture (pre-tribulation), the Church universal will be assembled at a meeting with the Lord. 1Thes. 4:13-17
 - B.** The Bema seat consisted of a raised platform at which the winning participants in the ancient games received their rewards.
 - C.** At this time, every believer will have his/her Ph₂ evaluated and will be rewarded accordingly. 2Cor.5:10 cp. 1Cor.3:10-15
 - D.** Christ states explicitly that He is bringing His reward with Him when He returns both at the rapture and 2nd Advent. Isa.40:10; Rev.22:12
 - E.** Some believers will not have any rewards and will be ashamed at this ceremony. 1Joh.2:28

- F.** Super happiness is described for those believers who successfully complete their course. 1Pet.4:13; Jud.24
- VI.** SG₃ and the Millennium.
- A.** Old Testament saints are rewarded at the 2nd Advent. Dan.12:13 cp. Isa.40:10
 - B.** The twelve apostles will rule over the twelve tribes of restored Israel. Mat.19:28
 - C.** Faithful members of the Royal Family will rule over the nations. Rev.2:26,27 vs.26 *“And he who overcomes (SAJG/Ph₁), and he who keeps/guards My deeds/works until/to the end (MAJG and requires the believer to complete their course), to him I will give authority over the nations;”* vs.27 *“And he (ref. mature believer who holds to the end) shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father.”*
 - D.** Each will have varying authority as seen in the parable of the minas. Luk.19:11-27 especially vss.17-19
- VII.** Divine good production, which equates into SG₃ must have the necessary components to qualify for reward.
- A.** The believer must be in fellowship (FHS) and the STA isolated. Joh.15:4,6; 1Tim.1:5
 - B.** He must be receiving the correct teaching. Rom.6:17; 2Joh.8
 - C.** They must assemble regularly to hear and understand the issues involved. Heb.10:25
 - D.** They must personally believe the doctrine. Jam.1:21
 - E.** They must apply the doctrine. Jam.1:22; Heb.6:7-8
 - F.** They must have the correct motivation. Mat.6:1
 - G.** Failure to believe and apply the doctrine is tantamount to a denial of the truth and Christ denies us reward. 2Tim.2:11-12
 - H.** Any work generated by the energy of the flesh/STA is rejected for reward. 2Cor.5:10
 - I.** If a believer departs from the truth of the straight and narrow, he will be cast forth as a branch (Joh.15:6), but God will acknowledge and bestow upon him/her any rewards accumulated prior to reversionism. Heb.6:10
- VIII.** The ultimate or supreme reward of SG₃.
- A.** There is laid aside and reserved an ultimate/maximum reward for believers who complete their course; that is they pursue MPR to the end of their Ph₂.
 - B.** The Christian way of life (CWL) is viewed as a personalized course that each of us can identify through BD.
 - C.** Those who pursue BD and persevere to the end making the MAJG, will receive this reward.

- D.** This reward is illustrated under the terms:
- 1.** The “prize” (1Cor.9:24-27):
 - a.** The background for this analogy is the Isthmus games, close to Corinth.
 - b.** All believers are candidates as all are running in the “race”. vs.24
 - c.** Of believers in time, those who actually complete their course are a minority compared to the whole of believers as “one receives the prize”.
 - d.** There are specific rules that one must follow, which rules are represented by BD, if the believer is to “win”.
 - e.** It demands the consistent exercise of isolation of the STA with a consistency of application of BD. vss.25a,26-27
 - f.** The believer can become “disqualified” at any time during his/her Ph₂ “run” by failing to follow the rules, isolating their STAs, maintaining MPR (all aspects of “staying in training”) and “throwing in the towel”.
 - g.** Paul stipulates that even the Apostles were not “above” these guidelines of “running the race”.
 - h.** He equates the “prize” with the “wreath”. vs.25b
 - 2.** The “wreaths/στέφανός” commonly translated and known as “crown” (though not διάδημα) are described by the following terms.
 - a.** “Your crown”, emphasizing your contribution to God’s plan. Rev.3:11
 - 1)** In the scheme of things and time in God’s plan, our perseverance in the POG is short compared to the everlasting effects it will bring.
 - 2)** Relationships in time are of extreme importance as others can cause you to loose your crown.
 - b.** The “crown of life” emphasizing the full enjoyment of heaven available to those who desire it. Rev.2:10
 - 1)** It indicates one’s stand and triumph over Satan and evil in the A/C.
 - 2)** It requires faithfulness to BD in the midst of suffering and testing in order to obtain this reward.
 - c.** The “crown of righteousness” emphasizing that righteous activity is necessary. 2Tim.4:8
 - 1)** The reward is already in place and waiting for those who do complete their course.
 - 2)** The award will be placed upon believers based on perfect righteous judgment and indicates the critiquing is per BD.
 - 3)** It is only given to those who have applied Divine love with respect to the commandments of BD

given by Jesus Christ, with whom they are in total agreement.

- d. The “crown of glory” emphasizing that this reward, like all other SG₃, comes from the essence of God. 1Pet.5:4
 - 1) While the context centers on P-Ts and communicators, it is equally applicable to any “proving to be examples to other believers” vs.3.
 - 2) Christ will personally bestow this reward on the believer.
 - 3) It will provide an “illumination of sorts” of the believer, never to be dimmed.
 - 4) It will be some type of reflection of God’s essence.
- e. An “imperishable/incorruptible crown”, emphasizing that this reward will never tarnish or lose its luster. 1Cor.9:25
 - 1) The wreath is not subject to decay or death.
 - 2) It will live on always as part of the believer in immortality.
- f. The “crown of exultation/boasting” emphasizing that this reward will in and of itself will be a “sanctified boast” of the believer’s accomplishment. 1Thess.2:19
 - 1) Again, the context of this verse centers on the communicator in light of those allotted to his charge.
 - 2) The only practical way that a sanctified “boasting” could occur is dependent upon the believers “completing their course”.
 - 3) This crown reflects the unity of those who run the race correctly and demands a combination of both a +V adjusted “shepherd” and +V “sheep” in order to attain the reward.
 - 4) It points out that those “sheep” that do make the adjustments are a reflection of the teaching they received in their local church.
 - 5) It infers the supreme importance of the local church as necessary criteria in order to claim the “prize”.
 - 6) It personalizes the crown based on each believer fulfilling his/her niche and in the geographical will that God prescribed for him or her in time.
 - 7) As the principle of “what a man sows, shall he reap” (what goes around comes around) is indeed true, this crown illustrates the reciprocating action of +V as God has brought them together during their existence in history.
 - 8) As +V believers who claim the crown are proof of the content of teaching, so is the fact that the +V

- adjusted communicator who holds to the end, is proof that +V exists in his geographical area.
- 9) The premise being expressed is that if there is not a +V adjusted communicator overseeing the congregation, then there is not the type of +V in that geographical area that will attain to the crown.
 - 10) Even in the most extreme cases of a +V adjusted communicator coupled with a majority of -V believers (ex. Moses and Exodus; Noah), there are those who do make the adjustments.
 - 11) This is the reason for emphasis of the communicator in this verse, to denote that in order for a believer to claim the “prize”, they must attach themselves to a +V adjusted “teacher”.
 - 12) The confidence and supreme happiness that accompanies the securing of the crown will be based on the combination God provided for +V in time i.e., an adjusted P-T and at least one other +V adjusted believer who will do it right.
 - 13) Otherwise there is no “*hope or joy or crown of exultation*”.
- g. While there is debate as to whether the wreaths/crowns are separate rewards individually (each reference to a crown denotes a separate crown and some are for P-T’s with others for the layman) or one crown described in numerous ways, 2Tim.4:8 is a proof text that there is no distinction between the crown in view as applied to either the Shepherd or the sheep.
3. Rulership and authority accompany and tie directly into receiving of the crown. Rev.2:26-27
 - a. It is promised that those who endure to the end will receive a station and position of rulership and authority over others in Ph₃.
 - b. Since it requires the believer to win the “prize” in order to secure a position of high standing in God’s kingdom, one can deduce that all rulers in the millenium and eternal state will be identifiable by their “crown”.
 - c. This implies that while there may be even those with a mass of SG₃ wealth, without the “prize” their position and niche in Ph₃ will not be on the most prestigious/celebrated/honored level.
 4. In addition, the “*morning star*” will be given to those in these positions. Rev.2:28

- IX.** A description of SG₃.
- A.** No one has seen an increment of SG₃, so physical description is impossible.
 - B.** It totally surpasses anything this present world has to offer. 1Cor.2:9
 - C.** It is that which the essence of God is capable of providing for the believer who pleases God. Heb.11:5-6
 - D.** Peter provides a four-fold description in 1Pet.1:4
 - 1.** Imperishable: Not capable or liable to be reduced to a worse state; not subject to the law of deterioration and not subject to the aging process.
 - 2.** undefiled: Not able to be stained, polluted or contaminated, not able to be deformed or broken or reduced to anything less than its perfect state.
 - 3.** Will not fade away: Will never lose its newness, glamour or luster and will always provide stimulation.
 - 4.** Reserved in heaven: Attended carefully, guarded by God Himself. This guarantees that SG₃ is not subject to being misplaced, lost or overlooked, since God's essence is responsible for preserving it.
 - E.** It is reward that God knows will completely satisfy the believer for eternity and is truly beyond human conception.
 - F.** It will be totally compatible with our new resurrection bodies in a perfect eternal state.
 - G.** Though the prize is described as a "wreath", understand it is of such a nature that it can not be truly appreciated in our frame of thinking and that the language used is only to provide insight as to its impact for eternal posterity.
- X.** Some specific areas that maximize SG₃.
- A.** Enduring persecution. Mat.5:11-12
 - B.** Prayer. Mat.6:6
 - C.** Giving. Mat.6:19-24
 - D.** Applying BD to your testing. 1Pet.1:6-7
 - E.** Enduring the physical and health tests of life. 2Cor.4:16-17
 - F.** Enduring the sufferings of Christ. Mat.19:29; 1Pet.4:13
 - G.** Application under your spiritual gift. 1Pet.4:10-11
 - H.** Hospitality. Mat.10:41
 - I.** Doing your job as to the Lord. Col.3:22-24
 - J.** Applying towards authorities in the local church. 1Tim.5:17
- XI.** Things that negate SG₃.
- A.** Wrong motives.
 - 1.** Seeking to please men. Col.3:22
 - 2.** Approbation. Mat.6:1-2,5
 - B.** Unchecked STA activity. 1Cor.6:9-10; Gal.5:19-21

- C. Not being in fellowship. Joh.15:4
 - D. Not completing your course disqualifies you from the “prize”. Rev.2:10
 - E. Lack of diligence with regard to doctrine. 2Joh.8
 - F. Failure to separate from apostasy. 2Joh.10-11
 - G. Tampering with the Word of God. Rev.22:19
- XII.** Some other areas of blessings for believers associated with Ph₃.
- A. The earth. Mat.5:5
 - B. The tree of life. Rev.2:7; 22:14
 - C. Hidden manna. Rev.2:17
 - D. A white stone and new name. Rev.2:17
 - E. Special clothing. Rev.3:5
 - F. Honor from Christ Himself before the Father. Rev.3:5
 - G. Vindication from your detractors. Rev.3:9
 - H. A position of honor. Rev.3:12,21
 - I. Will inherit a life in the new creation. Rev.21:7
- XIII.** The great believers of history were motivated to apply BD in their niche based on their understanding of this doctrine.
- A. Abraham. Heb.11:8-10
 - B. Moses turned down the throne of the greatest empire of his time. Heb.11:24-26
 - C. The unnamed believers of Heb.11:35
 - D. Even Jesus Christ our Savior endured for the “*joy/+H set before Him*”. Heb.12:2
 - E. Our knowledge of the doctrine of SG₃ should be our motivation to emulate their example. Heb.12:1-2
 - F. The adjusted believer is to be preoccupied with the accumulation of SG₃.
 1. 2Cor.4:18 “*while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal*”.
 2. Col.3:1-2; vs.1 “*If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above (SG₃), where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. vs.2 Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.*”
 3. Rom.8:18 “*For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.*”
 4. The believer should never have an attitude to apply just for the sake of applying, but it is always to be with zeal of knowing that God desires to honor your “work” and bestow upon you “reward” for a job “well done”.
- XIV.** SG₃ or lack of it will determine the believer’s reaction to Jesus Christ at his coming.

- A. Surpassing joy and celebration awaits those who receive **full** SG₃.
1. 1Pet.4:13 *“but to the degree that you share the sufferings of Christ, keep on rejoicing; so that also at the revelation of His glory, you may rejoice with exultation.”*
 2. Jud.24 *“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy.”*
- B. However, shame and unprecedented embarrassment awaits the believers who fail to attain to **full** SG₃. 1Joh.2:28 *“And now, little children, abide in Him (FHS), so that when He appears, we may have confidence and not shrink away from Him in shame at His coming.”*
- XV. It is the Holy Spirit that is the pledge/earnest of our inheritance. Eph.1:14
- XVI. The adjusted P-T desires those under his charge to fully appreciate and understand this doctrine. Eph.1:17-18

*“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable,
always abounding in the work of the Lord,
knowing that your toil is not in vain
in the Lord.”*
1Cor.15:58