



a division of Flower Girl Greetings, LLC
writings by Beth Ann Phifer

Living in God's Undeserved Love (Hesed)

A Devotional Scripture Study
September 2020

Last October 15th 2019, I woke up to this message. In 2020, it became a Scripture Study on the Shale Fragments website called *The Tabernacle Hesed Moon, Living in God's Undeserved Love*. Now, almost a year later, I have been asked to share this message at a conference, so I am sharing this more ordered version with you.

What is hesed?

Hesed is the Hebrew word for God's love. No single English word exists to adequately convey its full meaning. **Hesed** is defined as the passionate, lavish, undeserved, eternal, promised loyalty of the Sovereign Creator God for His creation. He expresses **hesed** through covenant and by faithfulness, kindness, mercy, grace, sacrifice, forgiveness, and compassion.

God fully expressed **hesed** toward us in Jesus Christ when He took upon Himself the penalty for our sin at the cross, paying our debt. Because He rose from the dead with power, we can receive His life and pour out His living **hesed** to others.

Volumes have been written about this word **hesed**. Scripture uses words such as *lovingkindness* and *mercy* to attempt to convey its meaning. Although our minds cannot fully grasp God's vast love, we can receive it and rest in it. The **hesed** of God is our eternal hope, our comfort, our security, our message, our life, and our joy!

The thwarting voice

After we have been born again into God's family through Jesus (See [John 1:12-13](#) and [John 3:3](#)), we will hear a thwarting voice that tells us that we must earn God's love. We know this is the voice of the enemy and that we must reject it every time we hear it, but often we do not recognize the form this voice takes. We must be aware and on guard so that we can live in freedom.

4 truths about hesed

If we really believe these four truths, we will walk in freedom.

1. I do not and never will deserve God's **hesed**. ([Romans 5:1-11](#))
2. I cannot earn God's **hesed**. I can only receive it. ([Titus 3:4-7](#))
3. He delights to lavish His **hesed** on the undeserving and receptive. ([Titus 3:6](#); [Ephesians 1:1-14](#))
4. Obedience is not our ticket to heaven; it is rather the expression of the Holy Spirit in us loving God in return. ([Romans 12:1](#); [Ephesians 2:4-9](#))

If you have questions about these four truths, I hope to answer them in the next section.

5 freedoms we experience when we believe these 4 truths

1. **We will be free to let God examine our lives without fear.**

We will be able to receive information from our Father about our faults and sins so that He can correct, transform, and free us in His love. When we believe that we are completely undeserving of His love, we can face our sin with hope and without fear. *“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves punishment; and the one who fears is not perfected in love.”* (1 John 4:18; also see Psalm 139:23-24)

Many people **avoid** examining their lives before the Lord, or **suppress** the truth about their sin, or **deny** their wrongdoing out of fear of punishment or shame. But as God’s children, we are free to **acknowledge** and **embrace** our sins knowing that we will be washed, renewed, healed, freed, and empowered in God’s never-ending ocean of love and forgiveness. Although we grieve over our sin, at the same time, we rest in the finished work of Jesus.

2. **We will be free from depending on ourselves.**

We will be free from the burden of thinking our entrance into heaven or God’s favor depends on us when it only depends on what Jesus did for us on the cross. (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)

Do you find yourself thinking that a certain deed will earn God’s favor? If your deed flows from the Holy Spirit, He is delighted, but His favor rests on what Jesus already did for you.

Do you find yourself thinking that God cannot possibly love you anymore because of a habit you have not overcome? It is true that God longs for us to overcome and has given us everything we need to obey, including the enabling power of the Holy Spirit, but His favor and love rests on what Jesus has already done for you.

Remember, **our obedience is simply an act of love toward the One Who has already so marvelously covered our sins.** Obedience invites us into a two-way love dance with our Bridegroom.

3. **We will be free to ask our Father for what we wish.** Throughout the Gospel accounts, we are encouraged to ask. Often, we don’t ask God for things because we know we don’t deserve them or we feel unworthy. But the Father invites us to ask, even though we are undeserving. Although He doesn’t give us everything we ask for, He still wants us to ask. We can start our prayers with, “I don’t deserve to ask you for _____, so based on Your **hesed**, I am going to ask. God does not answer prayer or give gifts because we behave, but because of His love. The more we believe this, our obedience will flow. (John 15:7,16; 16:23-27)
4. **We will be free to praise God with authentic, full, unburdened hearts,** because we will finally **get** that His love is completely free. This is why we sing! We will overflow with praise to Him for His incredible, unconditional love! *Let us give thanks to the Lord for He is good, for His lovingkindness, His **hesed** is everlasting!* (Psalm 118:1)
5. **We will be free to let Him lead as we simply abide.**
I would like to give you two verses and then expound. (John 15:16; 1 Peter 1:3)

Jesus said, *You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should remain that whatever you ask of the Father in My name, He may give to you.*

And the Apostle Paul said, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who according to His great **hesed** has caused us to be born again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead...

Brothers and Sisters, **He** birthed you into His kingdom, **He** chose you, and **He** appointed you for **His** purposes.

The original Greek word for *appoint* is *tith'emi* meaning *to place*. In His **hesed**, Jesus **chooses** us, **places** us, and **gives** each one of us gifts to impact this time in which He has placed us. The only way we will know our place and be prepared for the uncertainty that lies ahead is by **abiding in Him**, because He is the Only One Who knows how events will unfold.

I want to encourage you that if you are in a place that doesn't make sense or that doesn't seem to fit in with what you had envisioned, be sure that it will serve His purpose for your life. (Now I am not saying to stay in an abusive or dangerous situation. God's purpose will be to bring you out and He will use that for good.)

I read a story years ago about a woman whose small boat was caught in the ocean currents off the Philippine coast. No matter how hard she rowed, the ocean surges, like huge underground mammoths, swelled and heaved her in their own direction, until at last some fishermen rescued her.

As I look back on my life, I see that it has moved with the vast, **hesed** ocean surge of God's loving purpose. In the beginning of my new life with Jesus 40 years ago, I had dreams to be a missionary in Nepal or start an orphanage overseas. None of these things happened. It is not that these plans would not still happen, but it seems I am in a very-different place than my former dreams.

So, how did I end up where I am now teaching the Bible using art? I abided in Jesus. And He placed me in the ocean surges of *His* purpose. I never could have imagined His appointment ahead of time. I see now that every job, boring or grand, every boss, good or bad, singleness until I was 45, and every other placement, whether He asked me to stay or leave, was His appointment preparing and moving me deeper into His purposes.

So, I speak Joshua 1:9 over you, **Be strong and courageous, do not tremble or be dismayed for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go!** As you abide in His **hesed**, He will lead you and place you and take you where you should go.

Do you remember when Jesus came walking on the water as His disciples crossed the sea in the darkness? He said to them **"It is I. Do not be afraid."** The Scripture then says, **"Therefore, they were willing to receive Him into the boat, and immediately the boat was at the land to which they were going."** (John 6:20-21)

Brothers and sisters, receive Jesus, abide in His **hesed**, and He will guide you to your destination and into your destiny. In fact, He is Your Destination. How would you live your life if you knew that you were already Home?