Chapter - V

CONCEPT OF DIVINE GRACE IN CHRISTIANITY

Section - 1

Grace in the Old Testament

This chapter deals with an overall view of the concept of Divine Grace in Christianity. The main thrust here is to look into the concept, which is pervaded all throughout the Bible. The present study confined mainly to Bible, which is considered as the Holy Scripture of Christianity and the Church History. The Bible, which is a library of many books are divided mainly into two sections, namely the old and New Testaments. While the Old Testament speaks rarely of the concept of Divine Grace, the New Testament is very lavish in using the same concept. The main exponent of the 'Divine Grace', in the New Testament is Saint Paul who wrote most of the books.
Before we enter in to the Biblical idea of Grace, the multifaceted meaning of the word must be noted. First of all *Grace* is in essence, a lovely thing. The Greek word for Grace is *Charis*, which means charming. It contains all the physical beauty such as attractiveness, loveliness, winsomeness etc. Also it means an idea of a gift which is given out of the sheer generosity of the giver and not something we deserve.

Grace in the Christian sense is Gods unmerited, free, spontaneous love for sinful man, revealed in the *avatāra* Jesus and efficacious through the vicarious death and resurrection of Him. Hence grace is very significant and lies in the heart of Christian faith. The most distinctive feature of Christianity is that ‘*all is of grace and grace is for all.*’ As a theological term it may attempt to pinpoint the activity of God here and now or it may disclose nothing less than the reality underlying all of religion and faith. Grace is a divine activity in human history and in human lives. Christian theologians have
filled volumes and volumes with definition and classification of Grace.

What is the nature of Grace in Christian Tradition? For the answer we have to have glance at the Old Testament first. There is no term in Old Testament exactly equivalent to the Christian term grace (Charis) in the sense of gratuitous gift sprung from the divine love in Christ and transforming the lives of those who come within His predilection. “But no language excels the Hebrew of the Old Testament in its power to speak profoundly and tenderly of the free and unlimited love of God.”¹ The Old Testament speaks of God as gracious towards helpless humanity and often at the same time declares that he is merciful, full of compassion, slow to anger, plenteous in mercy, and he will abundantly pardon. The Old Testament is written in Hebrew language and the Hebrew near equivalents for the word grace are chen which expresses the goodwill of the powerful (God) shown in His gratuitous favour for the privileged chosen ones; and hesed which means mercy or
attachment as exists between kindred or friends connoting fittingness and reciprocity. Related are also rahamim which connotes motherly tenderness, emet which means truth or fidelity and sedeq (justice) which makes for peace in the people. The gracious love of God to man was the real foundation of the Old Testament religion. Old Testament teaches that every creation live by the grace of god. "Grace in the ultimate context within which all the created objects, persons and events have their being". The favour of God is his own freedom. It can only be bestowed; not earned. This is evident in the conversation between God and the prophet Moses. "I will be gracious unto whom I will be gracious and show Mercy". "The mercy of God is typified mainly through the election of a special people, covenant relationship with them, the great deliverance from Egyptian Slavery and the restoration from Babylonian Captivity. Prophet Hosea describes the Grace of God using the analogy of husband-wife relationship while the loving husband restores his estranged wife out of his sheer mercy. When the prophets indict the people, they refer to God's loving guidance and
protection in the part. God in his generosity forgives sinners who have no claim against him. God's love is sovereign and He will some day gather His people from among their foes. Yet there is also a remote idea that God shows his mercy only to the righteous one. The Psalmist says, "For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive and plenteous in mercy into all them that call upon Thee." This does not show that the righteous has themselves an intrinsic claim to God's Grace. But it is God's nature to bless the faithful and all those who call upon his holy name. The idea of Grace more than any other idea binds the two testaments together into a complete whole. For the Bible is the story of the saving act of God which is of the Grace of God. The Old Testament use of the word grace is intertwined with the New Testament idea that Charis is Jesus Christ, i.e., grace objectified.

**Grace in the New Testament**

The New Testament writers coined a new word – *charis* – in order to express the full meaning of *hesed* of the Old Testament. This means the undeserved,
everlasting Love of God towards sinful mankind. In the New Testament, *charis* has a special Christian sense, i.e., God's self-disclosure in Jesus Christ and the self giving of himself to the whole *Cosmos*. By the 'Grace of God', the New Testament means God's unmerited love which takes the initiative in freely giving and forgiving, in receiving sinners and seeking the lost, in restoring the fallen and the unworthy, and in giving comfort and strength to the affiliated and oppressed. The Grace of God has been revealed in the person and work of Jesus Christ, that it is rightly called in the New Testament as 'The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. God has taken initiative in intervening the human history, without considering the merits or demerits of human being, thus became the objective ground and content of *charis* in every instance of its Biblical use.
Grace in the Non-Pauline writings of the New Testament

Grace in the Gospels

The Gospel or good news as a whole in the expression of divine grace through the divine intervention of God in Jesus Christ. In the synoptic gospels, the word charis is found only in the gospel of Luke, who uses the word eight times. The gospel writer doesn't possess its distinctive New Testament value and meaning. For example it is used of God's favour to Mary. Jesus never uses the term except to mean thanks but the idea is inherent in His message. The explicit use of this concept is found in the fourth gospel – The gospel of John – where the term occurs four times in prologue.

In the gospel of John, the Christ event is identified as act of grace as in Pauline epistles. The being and action of God was revealed and actualized in incarnation where Jesus Christ is the God ordained means by which
the grace reaches men. The quintessence of god's glory is revealed as Grace in the Johanine writings. The life and light, which Jesus brings, should be understood as gifts of grace.

The Grace of God in Jesus Christ is revealed in His teachings, preaching's and actions. Seeking the least, last and lost, healing of the sick and dying, bringing life to dead ones are examples of God's Grace.

The parables of Jesus, for example, Lost-sheep, Prodigal son and workers in the Vineyard² etc. are the revelation of Grace of God.

The name Emmanuel⁹ (God with us) connotes the free and spontaneous love of God bestowed upon human beings out of his redemptive purpose. The redemptive purpose of God that is embodied in Jesus Christ – whose life, death and resurrection is identified as Pure Grace of God. The parables which speak of the reward clearly shows that mere faithfulness is not the criteria for God's reward, but it is after all a matter of sheer grace. Our
faithful actions and service rendered are considered as mere duty\textsuperscript{10} and reward is bestowed upon us out of God's bounty. In short, the gospels explain that the incarnated Messiah – Jesus - is the embodiment of divine grace.

\textit{Acts of the Apostles}

Now let us look into another important Book of the New Testament namely, Acts of the Apostles. As the name indicates, this book deals with the mighty works of the disciples of Jesus, and the spreading of the message of grace. Out of the fifty-one non-Pauline usage of the word, \textit{charis} is found expression in seventeen times in the book of Acts. The application of the word varies in various occasions. Sometimes it may mean the Old Testament sense of mere favour and in another occasion God's salvific act in human history out of his unmerited grace. The inclusion of men of all caste and creed within the \textit{shekinah} (Radiance) of God's redeeming act found expression in the book of Acts. The disciple's actions were accompanied by special grace of exalted Christ and hence it was a great success. The success of the apostolic
mission was based on the free flowing and powerful Grace of God. The enabling factor to have faith in and communion of believe was grace according to the Acts writer. The miracles and wonder works explained in this portion are pictured as God's Grace only. People astonished while Peter healing the lame man in front of the Jerusalem temple. Then he says:

"Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this, or why do you stare at us, as though by our own power or piety we had made him walk?........ And his name, by faith in his name has made this man strong whom you see and know; and the faith which is through Jesus has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all."  

Grace in Other Biblical Books

The epistle to Hebrews speaks of Christ's tasting death for everyone 'by the Grace of God.' Hence grace is descriptive of god's loving concern and readiness to aid all who turn to him in need. The usage – throne of Grace is probably a periphrasis for God himself, from whom grace comes to our aid in times of need. "Since then we have a great high priest Jesus, the son of God..... Let us then
with confidence draw near to the throne of Grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

Though the author of the Book of James uses the word *grace* twice, there is not much theological significance in it. He says "But he gives more grace; therefore it says God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble. Submit yourselves therefore to God." (4:6, 7).

The first epistle of Peter frequently uses the word *charis* (Grace) than in any other non-Pauline writings. However the usage mostly resembles with the Pauline understanding of the word as self-disclosure of God. In this letter *Grace* is combined with *Peace*, which is related to Gods’ action in Christ. The second letter of Peter exhorts ‘grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord’ and saviour Jesus Christ which mean grow in Christian character and goodness. The book of *Jude* condemns those who pervert the Grace of God into lasciviousness, taking undue advantage of God’s forgiveness. The book of *Revelation* uses the Word Grace twice in prologue and
epilogue. 'Grace', the pivot of Biblical message intends to represent the fact of Christ – is the quint essence of all the New Testament Books.

**Grace in the Pauline Letters**

A study of the Pauline writings throws more light to the understanding of this concept. St. Paul, the author of major portions of the Bible (Fourteen Books) can be rightly called the efficient exponent of Divine Grace in the Bible. Of all the writings, the key phrase – *charis*, which is central and crucial in his thinking. *Charis* is explained in detail (hundred and one times) in connection with the Salvation History. It is Paul alone who developed thoroughly the concept 'Grace Alone' (*Sola Fide*). For Paul *charis* is both as the objective activity of God in Christ and as the subjective indwelling power in believers. The *modus operandi* of Redemptive activity of God was vested in grace actualized by Jesus Christ.

Every epistle begins and ends by the word *Grace* which is to be seen as the unique religious experience of
the author. To Paul grace was central because he could never forget what grace had done for him and daily he was seeing what grace could do for all men who would receive it. In Paul’s letters we see that the Grace of God and the grace of Jesus Christ is one and the same. Jesus Christ is the incarnate Grace of God or he is Gods Grace to human kind. According to Paul the mind of Jesus and the mind of God are one and the same. The love, which Jesus demonstrated is the love of God. Grace is the Grace of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ. The idea of grace is the idea of God’s forgiveness of man as a free gift which man could never have deserved or earned. Grace is the generosity of God for us and the sacrifice of the love of God. While explaining the idea of Grace, Paul contrasts between debt and Grace, works and Grace, Law and grace, merit and grace etc in various epistles. If work (merit) determines the relationship of God and man, then grace is no longer grace. Even the remote idea of achievement is ruled out here. We are “justified by His grace as a gift through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus.” The redemptive act of God through the death of
Jesus Christ on the cross is viewed as typical of God's Grace. Paul finds adequacy, inexhaustible abundance and certain infinity in the Grace of God. The epistles of Romans and Galatians argue that grace needs no supplement, but is all-sufficient. Any addition further is to deny the all sufficiency of grace. Paul goes on to say that divine grace had done what all his own works were powerless to do; The Grace of God not only save, but also implants a desire for salvation in men and women. Since Jesus Christ is pre-existent, naturally His grace also is eternal. Therefore Paul argues that God is the God of Grace, yesterday, today and forever. The calling and commissioning of Paul as an apostle is by the will of God. The greatest discovery of Paul is that Grace is Christ and Christ is Grace. The very existence of Paul is strongly founded on the cornerstone of grace; because he heard the voice of God speaking to him "My Grace is sufficient for you," in the midst of his trials and temptations. Grace is held responsible for any nobility in His life. The obligation of Grace is explained in II Corinthians 6.1 while warning the new converts in
Corinth, not to receive the Grace of God in vain. The original Greek phrase *eis kenon* literally mean for *emptiness*. Salvation through divine grace is obligatory (no legal obligation) i.e., we should be worthy of that Grace. For Paul everything about Jesus speaks of the Grace of God.

Though the current uses of the term *charis* in secular Greek find their place within the framework of New Testament, the meaning of undeserved generosity (favour) predominates. This meaning of the word readily lent itself to the deeper Christian significance which came to be attached to it. In the epistles of Paul, it is applied exclusively to God's undeserved kindness toward mankind in general through the descent of Jesus, both in his *avatāra*, death and resurrected life. From this grace, bestowed to man forgiveness, Peace with God, Salvation, Courage for obedience to God and gifts for service in His Vineyard.
**Section - 2**

**Historical Developments in the Theology of Grace**

Centuries following the New Testament time, witnessed many distortions in the doctrine of Divine Grace. Theologians of East and West deviated in many ways while explaining the theology of 'Grace'. The doctrine of Grace went astray in the Western Church when theology deviated from Paul's Central themes: the freedom, the abundance, the faith correlation, the effectiveness and the unity of grace. One can better understand the concept by listening to some of the major disagreements between the two branches of Christendom, namely, Roman Catholic and Protestant.

The Roman Catholic concept of Grace is based on the conviction that salvation is nothing less than the divinization of the soul the enjoyment throughout eternity of the beatitude God himself enjoys. To achieve this end, it is necessary that the soul be elevated to a higher order of being. An infusion of supernatural powers and virtues
is required, the exercise of which will merit for man the splendor of the final beatific vision sanctifying grace is that elevating, supernatural power. Adam and Eve possessed it before the fall but lost it with that aboriginal calamity, although they did not lose their natural powers of reason and will. Redemption is the restoration of that supernatural power and the virtues it infuses, and it is made possible by the satisfaction made to God's justice by Jesus Christ and the participation of the believer in his mystical body, the church through which the lost sanctifying grace is once more given.

Over the centuries, Roman Catholic theologians have created a host of theological distinctions to deal with the questions and issues that naturally arose concerning this scheme. Is the first movement of the will toward faith an effect of grace or simply a free, autonomous human act? If it is an effect of grace, then are those that are not so not prompted by grace abandoned intentionally by God? If they are abandoned, in what sense are they really responsible for not being saved? Actual grace and
sanctifying grace, prevenient grace and subsequent grace, sufficient grace and efficacious grace - these and numerous other concepts, which many Protestant theologians seem unaware of, enabled the Roman Catholic to order and defend its beliefs with great subtlety. These distinctions, however, all rest on the view that grace is a supernatural power that, without destroying the freedom of the will, infuses the supernatural virtues of faith, hope, and charity into the soul, virtues that are rewarded with the final vision for which life is destined. It follows also that grace may be given and received in degrees, and that the successful use of what one has merits and increase in Grace.

Martin Luther only gradually realized that his conception of justification by faith alone was irreconcilable with the basic Roman Catholic premise. Protestant theologians commonly say that the difference between Luther and Rome was that grace, for the latter, was an impersonal substance or medicine while, for the former, it was the attribute of God, his graciousness.
This is somewhat misleading. It would be better to say that 'Grace' for Luther, is what God is. It is God resolving to be for man, to be present to him despite his rebelliousness. Grace is not a divine attitude that could as easily be replaced by another one, like wrath. It is rather, God acting out of his deepest being. On the other hand, Luther and the other Reformers insisted that God’s turning to man was a free act and in no way merited. This gratuitous character of grace was especially stressed by noting that man had lost the image of God by virtue of his sin. Luther rejected the Roman Catholic distinction between the natural and supernatural endowments of man argued, therefore, that man had even destroyed his free will. The result was an inevitable acceptance of predestination and the rejection of the idea of merit. But the important aspect of Luther’s teaching was that grace was primarily the forgiveness of sins that removed the barrier of personal communion between God and man. This teaching was ultimately irreconcilable with the Roman Catholic idea of grace as an infused power imparting certain virtues to the soul. For if grace denotes
God's forgiveness, then there are no degrees of grace. Either one is forgiven or one is not. One may make distinction among the effects or gifts of grace, but one cannot divide grace itself. Also, the notion of grace given virtues meriting further grace was unacceptable, just as the notion of a grace for special occasions no longer seemed intelligible. Furthermore, the notion of a prevenient actual grace leading to justification implied, thought Luther, that there could be grace that was not itself justifying. This was an unacceptable idea to him.

Finally, Luther's conception necessarily involves the rejection of the sacrament as the instrumental cause of grace. The preaching of the word of God is the "cause" of faith and it need not be limited to the sacraments.

The subsequent development of Protestantism, apart from Protestant scholasticism may be partially interpreted as the unfolding of the logic of these views of grace modified by the impact of science and biblical criticism. Liberal Protestantism thought it necessary to give up the ideas of a historical fall, original sin, and a vicarious
Atonement as well as the idea of a radical forgiveness of sins that seemed to be their correlate. Nevertheless, the basic Protestant idea that grace could only be understood in personal terms lived on in the liberal emphasis on the love of God and the rejection of the idea of infused grace. But if creation and fall were not believed to be historical events and God is regarded as essentially merciful, then why is grace necessarily and exclusively linked to the one event of Jesus of Nazareth? The liberal Protestant could see no reason for stressing the exclusiveness of grace in Jesus of Nazareth and, therefore, he increasingly interpreted Christ as the highest example or illustration of Grace.

The so-called neo-orthodox or neo-Reformed theologians reacted against the theology of liberal Protestantism, especially its conception of man and its soteriology. Although the neo-Reformed theologians believed it impossible to return to the belief in a literal historical paradise and fall, they did believe that the myth of original sin contained more truth than the liberal idea
of inevitable progress and man's inherent goodness. Consequently, the idea of grace became crucial for the new theology. The problem was how to conceive of this grace and its relation to nature. Neo-Reformed theologians differed on this point. Some reserved the word grace for God's personal presence in certain historical events, of which the Bible is the record; grace is thus radically different from the creative powers of nature. Others, like Paul Tillich tended to think of grace as the power of being that preserves all being from nothingness and that is peculiarly transparent in certain ecstatic events called Revelations. Tillich, then, makes a distinction between grace in creation, grace in salvation, and providential grace, which combines elements of each. Tillich's view once more suggests degrees of grace. Nevertheless, all forms of neo-Reformed theology reject the Roman Catholic view of the sacraments as the instrumental cause of grace and, therefore, the idea of grace as an infused substance.
Authentic marks of Grace

Against the background of this long history of controversy and confusion can we give a meaning to Grace, which will be true to the New Testament sense? There are five indispensable features of grace, which can be seen as marks of authenticity, namely, essence, operation, goal, unity and scope.

(a) Essence:

The essence of Grace can be explained simply that Grace is God Himself in His good will toward men. It is inseparable from God, i.e., God's personal attitude toward man, his action and influence upon him. Grace can be called synonym for God's love. The great divergences in Christian teaching about Grace have sprung from the tendency to isolate Giver from Receiver, i.e., to consider Grace either as a property or activity of God, or as a gift, which He has conferred upon man.
The Modus operandi of Grace is consonant with its personal and divine nature. Since God's action precedes man's awareness of and response to it, it can be called prevenient grace. God took the initiative in loving us while we were still his enemies. God's gracious presence is prior to faith, which will evoke the response of faith from the believer. Grace calls for faith but does not compel it. Love and compulsion are incompatible. Hence, Grace is not only prevenient, but personal also. Since Grace is personal, it is also free. It is given freely, not earned by merit. The goodness of God is extended without any pre-requisites. Hence we can say Grace is Gracious. Grace is free in the sense that it is unrestricted. There is no longer Jew or Gentile. In Christ, love operates beyond the barriers of caste, creed or sex. Grace is free in the sense that it is unpredictable or we can say Grace is not only gracious but gratuitous also. Since it is God's Grace
also. Since it is God’s Grace and not ours, it comes to us on His terms not by the yardstick of men.

(c) **Goal**

The Goal of Grace is in tune with the essence and operation of grace. Grace is favour, kindness, generosity, love and bestowal of personal relationship. Grace will be bestowed till one experiences the fullest amplification of personal relationship, which is to perceive God face to face.

(d) **Unity**

There is only one grace, i.e., divine favour. The unity of God implies that there can be no conflict between the different forms of the divine activity towards the world and the human race. Christians have sometimes spoken of God’s action as though His love and His wrath, His mercy and His judgement were opposed to each other. Every work of God must be seen as God’s Grace and the main thrust behind is - the power of love. Every
affirmation about God naturally becomes an affirmation about His love. God’s love (Grace) is not sentimental but purifying and renewing. The judgement of God is instrumental to salvation. If God were not the ultimate critic of the evil I do, he would be involved in that very evil and would himself need to be saved. For God can be my saviour only because He is my judge.

(e) **Scope**

The all pervasiveness of Grace can be summed up in such a way that we literally move and have our being in God’s Grace. Grace became a synonym for our thanksgiving because it is nothing but grace by which we have been created. God’s abundant grace is also revealed in election and covenant relationship. God entering into a covenant with His creatures may be looked as incompatible to the Godliness of God; but Christ, the incarnation of God, the father also enters into a new covenant relationship through His sacrificial death which can
be counted as the climax of God’s Grace. The nature of God is love that which brought Him down from heaven in order to save the sinners. In St. Paul’s version ‘God was in Christ’ and Christ died for the ungodly.

Grace can be explained in terms of Holy Spirit also. In the book of Hebrews, Holy Spirit is called ‘the Spirit of Grace’, i.e., to say, it is through Holy Spirit that the Grace of Christ is mediated to men. The Spirit of Jesus is the life giving presence, power and activity of God in the world. In the New Testament it is evident that the operation of the Spirit are directed to the ministry of Christ’s reconciling work to the entire world.

‘Faith’ itself is considered as a gift of grace in the New Testament. Prevenient Grace, not activated by man’s willing, evokes this faith. Faith is the hand which lay hold of the sonship which is freely offered to man in Christ. Hence, the saying Sola Fide (faith alone). Faith is also known as the lively, reckless confidence in the Grace of God.
Grace of justification is that the repentant sinner utterly trusts the promises of God are graciously brought into a right relationship with him.

The forgiveness of sin is pictured as Grace of God in New Testament. Sinners were forgiven by the mercy of God who is the sinless.

The Grace of Lord Jesus Christ unites the estranged humanity with God. While the relationship between Man and God, Man and Man was cut off, God in Jesus Christ came to this cosmos to patch up the relationship. The process of reconciliation is being enacted by the descend of the Lord.

A new heaven and a new earth is the ultimate goal behind the atonement Christ has accomplished. The earth is groaning to be in perfect harmony with the creator. Final consummation also should be understood as the Grace of God, in the light of Bible message.
Our finite mind can apprehend only a little of the vast ocean of Grace. The day will come when the mystery is fully revealed to us.

**AVATĀR CHRISTU**

Christology is that part of Christian doctrine concerned with the Revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Traditionally this has been expressed in the doctrine of Incarnation – the doctrine of the union of the divine and human natures in the one PERSON. Properly speaking there is no doctrine of the *Avatāra* as such in the Bible. Yet there are number of symbols drawn from the Jewish and Hellenistic traditions to show that God had acted uniquely and decisively in the Christ event. According to the Bible, God sent Jesus Christ in order to identify with the common man and lead him to salvation. Many prophets of the Bible had prophesied the down coming of God. Jesus Christ was very God of very God, but he was also very man of very man. He Himself warned us “No man knows the Son, but the Father.”

Apostle Paul also declared, “Without controversy great is the mystery of
godliness. God was manifest in the flesh."²⁷ Jesus Christ was not a Divine man, nor a humanized God; He was the God-man. Jesus Christ is forever God, and forever Man. When the Beloved of the Father became incarnate, He did not cease to be God, nor did He lay aside any of His Divine attributes, though He did strip Himself of the glory which He had with the Father before the world was. But in the incarnation, the Word became Flesh and tabernacled among men. He ceased not to be all that He was previously, but He took to Himself that which He had not before – perfect Humanity. The Deity and Humanity of the saviour were each contemplated in Messianic prediction. Prophecy represented the coming one some times as Divine, some times as Human. He was the Branch’ of the Lord²⁸, He was the wonderful counsellor, the mighty God the Father of the ages, the Prince of Peace.²⁹ The One who was to come forth out of Bethlehem and be Ruler in Israel, was one whose going forth had been from the days of Eternity.³⁰ It was none less than Jehovah Himself who was to come suddenly to the temple.³¹ Yet on the other hand He was the women’s
seed.\textsuperscript{32}, a prophet like unto Moses.\textsuperscript{33} a lineal descendent of David.\textsuperscript{34} He was Jehovah's servant.\textsuperscript{35} He was the Man of sorrows.\textsuperscript{36} And it is in the New Testament we see these two different sets of prophesy harmonized.

The one born at Bethlehem was the Divine Word. The Word became Flesh. He became what He was not before. He who was in the form of God and thought it not robbery to be equal with God "made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men"\textsuperscript{37} The Babe of Bethlehem was \textit{Immanuel} – God with us – He was more than a manifestation of God, He was God manifest in the flesh. He was both Son of God and Son of Man. Not two separate personalities, but one person possessing two natures – the Divine and the human.

While here on earth Jesus Christ gave full proof of His Deity. He Spoke with Divine wisdom, He acted in Divine Holiness, He exhibited divine power and He displayed Divine love and mercy (Divine Grace). He read men's minds, moved men's hearts, and compelled men's
wills. When He was pleased to exert His power all nature was subject to His bidding. A word from Him and disease fled, a storm was stilled, the devil left Him, the dead were raised to life. So truly was He God manifesting in the flesh, He could say, "he that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father."

So too while He tabernacled among men the Lord Jesus Christ gave full proof of His humanity — sinless humanity. He entered the world as a helpless babe in swaddling clothes. As a child, we are told, He increased in wisdom and stature. As a boy we find Him asking questions. As a man He was "wearied" in body. He was an hungered. He slept. He marvelled. He wept. He prayed, He rejoiced, He groaned. That evidenced his humanity.

The incarnated Christ used a title for Himself — The Son of Man — which shows His true Manhood, as distinguished from the sons of men, whose humanity is fallen. The uniqueness of this title is that His Disciples never used it in speaking to or of Him. This shows the
humility of the Lord, limiting Himself to become one with the common man; thus pours his abundant Grace upon humanity. Jesus said, Son of Man came not to be served, but to serve and to become a ransom for many. In service, He proved to be the servant of the servants girded with a loincloth and washed the feet of His disciples – and asked them to follow the servanthood. The Gospel writers witness that the one who came to save sinners, suffered brutally and nailed on the Cross. But through the vicarious death Jesus exhibited the magnificent love (Agape) which excels all other love. The Bible portrays that Jesus' death on the Cross-is an expiatory sacrifice – a sacrifice for the sins of the world.

In short, Lord’s coming to this world as an ordinary human being is an act of steadfast love and the salvific act wrought through the death and resurrection of Jesus bestows upon us human beings, sufficient Grace. What is our response to this great sacrifice? What He expects from us is 'walking humbly before the Lord and surrendering fully at His Lotus feet'.
Notes and References


3. Book of Exodus. 33:19

4. Psalm. 86:5


7. "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as of the only begotten of the Father full of grace and truth' – John 1:14. "For the Law was given Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." Jn:1:17

8. Lost sheep - Luke. 15:4-7
   Prodigal Son – Luke 15:11-32
   Laborers in the Vineyard. Mathew. 20:1-16


11. ‘Stephen, the man so full of grace and truth (faith and power) did spectacular miracles among the people’ – Acts: 6:8.

12. ‘Jesus’ name has healed this man. Faith in Jesus name faith given us from God (Grace) has caused this perfect healing. Acts 3:16.
13. “of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you.”, Peter 1:10. “God of all Grace called us into his eternal glory’ 1 Pet. 5:10.

14. II Peter 3:18

15. Galatians 2:20-21

16. Mode of operation

17. ‘Persecutor became apostle. Only grace could explain this transformation’ – St. Paul.

18. “The Grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ” – I Corinthians 1:4 (en Christo Iesou)

19. II Corinthians 6.1, Ephesians. 3.7

    Grace & Works - Romans 11:6
    Merit & Grace - Ephesians

21. Romans 3:24

22. II Corinthians 9:14, Romans 5:20, Ephesians 2:7

23. Galatians were called into the Grace of Christ
    Galatians 1:6, there is a remnant according to the election of Grace Romans 11:5.

24. II Corinthians 1:1

25. II Corinthians 12:9

26. Gospel of Mathew 11.27

27. I Timothy 3:16

28. Isaiah 4:2
29. Isaiah 9:6
30. Micah 5:2
31. Malachi 3:1
32. Genesis 3:15
33. Deuteronomy – 18:18
34. 2 Samuel 7: 12,13
35. Isaiah 42:1
36. Isaiah 53:3
37. Philippians 2:6,7
40. Luke 2:46
41. John 4:6
42. Mathew 4:2
43. Mark 4:38
44. Mark 6:6
45. John 11.35
46. Mark 1.35
47. Luke 10.21
48. John 11.33
Chapter VI

EPILOGUE