

Summary:

1. Antecedent grace initiates the believer's grace response. However, it requires grace orientation for the believer to respond to God's grace initiative.
2. The divine initiative occurs in two spheres of divine function: (1) Antecedent grace which occurred in eternity past and (2) eschatological grace which occurs in the experiences of the individual believer: dying, resurrection, and eternal grace.
3. Grace orientation is the fourth problem-solving device and the policy of the integrity of God or the love of God.
4. Grace orientation cannot efficiently function unless the believer understands prevenient or antecedent grace. God initiates His policy of grace, the believer responds with grace orientation.
5. When grace orientation properly responds to the grace initiative of God, the believer is functioning under the filling of the Holy Spirit, an advancing inventory of doctrinal ideas in the *kardía*, and adherence to the protocol plan of God.
6. All three of these responses pay homage to the antecedent grace of God. The filling of the Spirit is designed to maximize God's grace policy by providing divine thought to the positive believer's soul.
7. The ever-enlarging inventory in the soul is the product of the teaching ministry of the Holy Spirit provided in grace.
8. The way that the divine system is graciously regulated is by the believer's willing adherence to the protocol plan of God which is stated as follows:

A rigid, long-established code [New Testament canon], prescribing complete deference to superior rank and authority [of the integrity of God and plenipotentiary of man], followed by strict adherence to due order of precedence [doctrinal orientation for application], coupled with precisely correct procedure [the filling of the Holy Spirit].

9. Precedence for the Church Age believer is based on the grace policy associated with the Incarnation of Christ, His person, His work, and His resurrection.

10. Antecedent or Prevenient grace is based on the divine solutions for human sin accomplished by Jesus Christ in His true humanity.

John 1:14 Now the Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We saw His glory—the glory of the one and only [**uniquely born**], full of grace and truth, who came from the Father. (NET)

11. This brings us back to our study of James 1:10 which is a continuation of verse 9. Here is our translation so far:

James 1:9 But the poor believer must keep on celebrating [**IM #6: present active imperative of the verb** *καυχάομαι* (*kaucháomai*)] in the sphere of exaltation in his high status of royal family of God. (EXT)

James 1:10 ... and the rich man *is to glory* in his humiliation, because like flowering grass he will pass away. (NASB)

1. We have already established that the poor man in verse 9 and the rich man in verse 10 are believers. Their mental attitudes regarding differences in their social and economic conditions are removed since each lives his spiritual life focused on prevenient or antecedent grace.
2. The subject changes in verse 10 as we are introduced to the rich man, the masculine singular of the noun **πλούσιος** (*plóúsios*): “rich man.”
3. The verse begins with the adversative conjunction **δέ** (*dé*): “but.” It sets up a contrast between the poor believer and the rich one.
4. In verse 10 we have our seventh imperative mood which is not stated because of an ellipsis in the text but indicated by the insertion of the italicized phrase *is to glory*.
5. The explanation of why James’s text contains this ellipsis is explained by this excerpt:

Grammatically, it appears that the verb (“he should glory”) of this verse should be borrowed from the parallel previous verse, thus yielding that the wealthy person should glory in humiliation.

No interpretation is admissible which does not supply the imperative *καυχάσθω*. If James was thinking of the rich person as outside the community [of believers] he would have indicated that more clearly within this ambiguous phrase.³

6. When we expand the translation of this verse, we will indicate that the verse-10 ellipsis is Imperative Mood #7.
7. The command issued to the “poor” believer is that he “must keep on celebrating in the sphere of exaltation.” In verse 10, the rich believer is to “keep on celebrating in the sphere of his humiliation,” the noun, *ταπείνωσις* (*tapeínōsis*).
8. The rich man’s grace orientation is related to his understanding that his wealth is not able to *purchase* the same abundance in time that his salvation will provide him in eternity.

For the rich man, prosperity is a test. The prosperous man must also glory [celebrate], but he must [celebrate] “in that he is made low” [KJV]. He must glory in his humiliation. Why? Because he had to recognize his sin, his need for salvation, and the fact that no amount of his money could buy this salvation. This wealthy man had to approach God on the same basis as did the poor man. In the end, all physical wealth fades away.⁴

9. To illustrate the evanescent nature of earthly wealth, James refers to the lilting prose of the prophet Isaiah in:

Isaiah 40:6b All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness⁵ is like the flower of the field.

v. 7 The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass.

v. 8 The grass withers, the flower fades, but the Word of God stands forever. (NASB)

10. The unfailing love of God speaks of the divine attribute of love which itself magnifies the integrity of God: His righteousness, justice, and omniscience in association with His grace policy to all mankind.

³ Dan G. McCartney, *James* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 96.

⁴ Arnold G. Fruchtenbaum, *The Messianic Jewish Epistles: Hebrews, James, I & II Peter, Jude* (Tustin, Cal.: Ariel Ministries, 2005), 222.

⁵ The Hebrew word here is the masculine noun *חֶסֶד* (*cheseth*). When referring to deity, it is best translated, “unfailing love.” When referring to people or in illustrations, it is translated in various ways in English translations. The KJV has “goodliness,” the NIV, “glory,” the NET, “promises,” and the NASB, “loveliness,” all of which are abstruse.

11. With regard to the words used by Isaiah in verse 6, we find mankind typified as grass along with its floral accouterments. The message they present is described in this excerpt:

The appointed theme is the perishable nature of all flesh, and, on the other hand, the imperishable nature of the word of God. Men living in the flesh are universally impotent, perishing, limited; God, on the contrary, is the omnipotent, eternal, all-determining; and like Himself, so is His word, which, regarded as the vehicle and utterance of His willing and thinking, is not something separate from Himself, and therefore is the same as He. *Chasdō* [חֶסֶד] (masculine singular of *cheseth*) is the charm or gracefulness of the outward appearance.⁶

12. The NIV translation of Hebrew noun **כְּסֵף** (*cheseth*) in Isaiah 40:6 is “glory.” The NASB translation of the Greek noun **καυχάομαι** (*kaucháomai*) in James 1:10 is also “glory,” an ellipsis based on its use in verse 9.
13. The application in Isaiah emphasizes the beauty and splendor possessed by the flowers in context. The application in James makes reference to the prosperity enjoyed by the “rich man.”
14. Both the flower of the grass and the prosperity of the wealthy are described by the imagery initially found in Isaiah and used by James to make his similar illustration. Let’s note Isaiah first.
15. As already noted, the grass represents mankind which is fallen. Isaiah introduces the illustration by a metaphor: “All flesh is grass.”
16. The grass has temporal possessions depicted as a flower. In its prime, it is glorious, but its beauty is brief. The bloom quickly withers, fades away, and falls to the turf.
17. This process is even hastened “when the breath of the Lord blows upon it” as observed by Isaiah 40:7. This imagery illustrates the divine management of a fallen environment caused by human sin.
18. All earthly life is temporal be it of man, animal, fish, bird, tree, plant, and the flower that adorns grass. Humans and their temporal possessions are destined to pass away.

⁶ Franz Delitzsch, *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah*, 3d ed., trans. James Martin (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1969), 2:143.