

## What Does God's Grace Do For Us?

### 1 Corinthians 1:3: (NASB) *Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*



The Bible is full of examples of God's love, justice, wisdom, power and plan. It is a fountain of mercy and foresight, and it is a treasure trove of prophecy. Understanding the magnitude of all these things helps us see God as the Sovereign Creator and Father that He really is. But wait, there is more! Running through ALL of the descriptions we just mentioned is another facet of God's character - His grace. The word for "grace" in the Bible has many shades of meaning. When we understand how this word is applied to God in both the Old and New Testaments, we are given a profound glimpse into the depth and breadth of His character. God's grace is and always has been a game changer. Let's see how!

The study of grace and its meaning is enormous. The words translated into English as *grace* in the Hebrew and Greek languages have many variations of meaning and application, especially as applied to God.

#### Old Testament:

**Grace:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #2580 *chen khane*; graciousness, i.e. subjective (kindness, favor) or objectively (beauty)

The King James Version translates "grace" 38 times, "favour" 26 times, "gracious" twice, "pleasant" once, "precious" once, and other miscellaneous words 7 times

The Hebrew Lexicon: 1) favour, grace, charm  
1a) favour, grace, elegance 1b) favour, acceptance

#### New Testament:

**Grace:** Strong's Exhaustive Concordance #5485 *charis khar'-ece*; graciousness (as gratifying), of manner or act (abstract or concrete; literal, figurative or spiritual; especially the divine influence upon the heart, and its reflection in the life; including gratitude)

Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon: 1) grace 1a) that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech 2) good will, loving-kindness, favour 2a) of the merciful kindness by which God, exerting His holy influence upon souls, turns them to Christ, keeps, strengthens, increases them in Christian faith, knowledge, affection, and kindles them to the exercise of the Christian virtues 3) what is due to grace 3a) the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace 3b) the token or proof of grace, benefit 4) thanks, (for benefits, services, favours), recompense, reward

Many have said that the Old Testament is full of the harshness of the Law while the New Testament is filled with God's grace. Actually, the Old Testament introduces God's grace in many powerful ways.

We are going to look at a few examples, but before we do, there is something interesting in the Old Testament about the word translated as *grace*. In Greek, the word is *charis*. The Septuagint is the first ever translation of the Hebrew Bible - from Hebrew into Greek - and we know the Apostle Paul quoted from it, as it was popular in his day.



In the Septuagint, the Greek word *charis* is translated *grace* in the same places that the Hebrew word *chen* is translated *grace*, which gives us a direct link from the Hebrew to the Greek language.

**The word for “grace/favor” first appears in relation to Noah:**

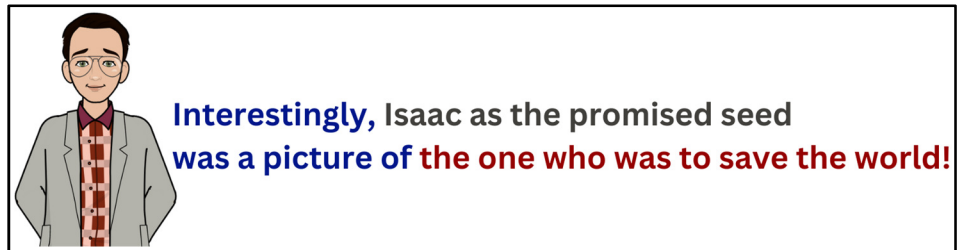
**Genesis 6:8:** (KJV) *But Noah found favor <2580> in the eyes of the LORD.*

Here the Hebrew word for *favor* with the same usage as the Greek word for *grace*. God's grace was applied to Noah when humanity was on the brink of destruction. He found favor with God, and God gave him instructions to literally save the world.

**The very next use of grace/favor in the Old Testament is related to Abraham when giving hospitality to angels as they came to deliver an important message:**

**Genesis 18:1-3:** (NASB) *<sup>1</sup>Now the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door in the heat of the day. <sup>2</sup>When he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men (angels) were standing opposite him; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them and bowed himself to the earth, <sup>3</sup>and said, My Lord, if now I have found favor <2580> in Your sight, please do not pass Your servant by.*

God's grace was next applied to Abraham when he was visited by three angels as representatives of God who told him of Isaac's birth.



**Later in the Old Testament, the Psalmist wrote inspiring scriptures about the magnitude of God's grace:**

**Psalms 84:8-12:** (NASB) *<sup>8</sup>O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer; give ear, O God of Jacob! Selah. <sup>9</sup>Behold our shield, O God, and look upon the face of Your anointed. <sup>10</sup>For a day in Your courts is better than a thousand outside. I would rather stand at the threshold of the house of my God than dwell in the tents of wickedness. <sup>11</sup>For the LORD God is a sun and shield; The LORD gives grace <2580> and glory; no good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly. <sup>12</sup>O LORD of hosts, how blessed is the man who trusts in You!*

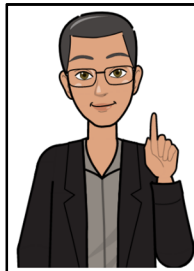
David speaks of personally receiving God's grace, but here is a broader description of the LORD being *a sun and shield*, and *no good thing does He withhold*. God's grace is described in the context of His loving protection and life-giving light to all *those who walk uprightly*.

The word *grace* is found over 60 times in the Old Testament - not as much as the more than 150 times of the New Testament, but it is still there.

## The New Testament introduces God's grace even more powerfully as it begins with Mary:

**Luke 1:28-30:** (KJV) <sup>28</sup>And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly **favoured <5487>**, the LORD is with thee: blessed art thou among women. <sup>29</sup>And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. <sup>30</sup>And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found **favour <5485>** with God.

The angel Gabriel uses the word *favor* twice in this passage to Mary. The first form of the word here **<5487>** is the first of only two instances found in the New Testament, and it means *highly favored*. It shows a tremendous opportunity and unmerited gift for Mary and is the very first time in the New Testament that grace (favor) is mentioned.



It is interesting to note that in the **Old Testament**, God's grace was applied first to Noah, the one who would build the **vessel** that would carry humanity to a new opportunity for life.

In the **New Testament**, Mary was the **vessel** that literally carried the Messiah who would give new life!

The very next uses of grace in the New Testament are solely focused on Jesus, first as a baby and then as a boy:

**Luke 2:40,52:** (KJV) <sup>40</sup>And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the **grace <5485>** of God was upon him. <sup>52</sup>And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in **favour <5485>** with God and man.





We see the parallel here. In the **Old Testament**, Abraham found favor with God's angels, and grace was shown to him regarding the coming of the promised seed, Isaac.

In the **New Testament**, grace was given to the promised seed, Jesus, after his birth.

Grace was given to both seeds of promise.

These are huge comparisons.

 First, Noah with the ark as a vessel of salvation from the Flood, and Mary as a vessel holding the Messiah, the salvation of the world.

 Second, grace was given to both seeds of promise in the Old Testament (Isaac) and New Testament (Jesus).



By looking at the subtleties, we see a beautiful message of God's grace we might not have thought about.

The next use of grace in the New Testament relates to the grace of Jesus early in his ministry when he read from the book of Isaiah in the synagogue.



**He showed God's grace in the execution of his ministry:**

Luke 4:22: (KJV) *And all bare him witness, and wondered at the **gracious <5485>** words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son?*

In Luke 4:18, Jesus had just read from the familiar scriptures of Isaiah 61:1-2.

Isaiah 61:1-2: (NASB) *The spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, because the LORD has anointed me to bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to captives and freedom to prisoners; to proclaim the favorable year of the LORD.*

He tells them this was fulfilled in him. Presumably, he spoke more on the topic with words of favor, blessing and comfort. God's grace was upon him and he was an expression of God's grace. John 7:46 speaks of Jesus as, *Never has a man spoken the way this man speaks*.

We are starting to see that God's grace is to be revered. Grace is not a casual, throw-away word. It had a specific focus in its introduction.



The biblical introduction of God's grace carries with it a simple and profound message. His grace is all about Jesus! It is like God gave us hints as to what He would say on the Mount of Transfiguration: Matthew 17:5: (NASB) *While he was still speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and behold, a voice out of the cloud said, This is My beloved son, with whom I am well-pleased; listen to him!*

God's grace in both the Old and New Testament pointed to Jesus. At the Mount of Transfiguration, one of three times God spoke from heaven, God tells those present to *listen to him* (Jesus). Why? Because Jesus is the expression of the will of God to humanity. He makes God's will understandable because he was speaking the words of God through God's spirit.

With these Old and New Testament applications of God's grace, we can see that it is an invaluable piece of His plan.

**With the fundamental value of God's grace established, how do we go about describing its characteristics?**

In the New Testament, God's grace is described with a very broad brush. As we will see, His grace is woven into His plan from its very beginning right through to its grand conclusion. Listing out several aspects of God's grace will help us see several characteristics of God's own character in a new and bright light. His grace reveals His character.



? People do favors and other nice things for each other all the time. But there is a big difference in the grace we show each other and the grace God shows to us, right?



Yes, there is a major difference, partly because God is a lot bigger than we are. His grace comes from a source we cannot fathom. His grace applies to individuals, like the favors and grace we share with each other, but it also applies to ALL of mankind!



? If God's grace is something we cannot earn and do not deserve, isn't it conditional in that to receive or stay in God's favor, we must be obedient? Are there levels of grace like a baseline? Matthew 5:45 tells us the sun shines and the rain falls on both the just and the unjust. And ALL receive a resurrection. Does being obedient provide more blessings, a higher level?



Broadly, all receive some level of God's grace, as we will discuss further. But it not like a gift that arrives and then sits there. For example, if I get tickets to a football game, I have several things I can do with them. I can sit and look at them and marvel over them, but the purpose of the gift was to send me to the game.



God's grace is an invitation to take His grace and apply it. It requires something of us - an action to give it meaning. The worth of a gift is its meaning. The point of God's grace is to use what we have received, regardless of our circumstances.

Let's describe some of the aspects of God's grace.

### God's grace is **FOUNDATIONAL**

**It is the basis for the plan of redemption:**

Hebrews 2:9: (NASB) *But we do see him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that by the **grace <5485>** of God he might taste death for everyone.*

God's unmerited favor created a just and loving opening for Jesus to become a man and ransom Adam for the sake of ALL. God's grace was there, but Jesus had to take hold of the opportunity and do something with it.

It is hard to understand why so many Christians are so confused about how far-reaching Jesus' sacrifice truly is. The "all-ness" comes shining through in this verse - *so that... he might taste death for everyone.*

We will be using several quotes relevant to our discussion from a sermon given by our friend Tom Gilbert, who has been a guest on Christian Questions in the past:



“God’s grace is expressed in securing the redemption of the human race from sin and its penalty of death. He sent His son, who was willing to dwell among us to bring God’s knowledge and wisdom to the world in a more direct and personal way, and to give his life to remove the penalty of sin - death - that has claimed every member of the human family.”

In this example, Jesus is essentially the personification of God’s grace. What does God’s grace look like? Just look at Jesus, who is God’s gift - His favor - being unfolded. God’s grace is foundational and is through Jesus.

### God’s grace is GLORIOUS

Ephesians 1:4-6: (NASB) <sup>4</sup>...just as He (God) chose us in him (Jesus) before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him (God). In love <sup>5</sup>He (God) predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself (God), according to the kind intention of His will, <sup>6</sup>to the praise of the glory of His **grace <5485>**, which He freely bestowed on us in the beloved.

Sometimes we take the word *grace* and use it without thinking. But here, we have the incredible *glory of His grace, which He FREELY bestowed on us through Jesus!* This is not a little gift - this has to do with spiritual and eternal life, something beyond our comprehension.

God’s unmerited favor opened a door for the true disciples of Jesus to have a share in heaven’s glory as God’s sons. God had decided on this generous favor long before Adam even sinned. He opened the door to us with this gift of grace. What should we do? WALK THROUGH IT!

It is very comforting to have assurance that God had a plan in place even before He created earth. Not only would the plan include favor to the true disciples, but He foreknew sin and evil would be a consequence of free will as mankind learned right from wrong. We should be humbled to have a Father whose plan is this big and based in love.

“Humility in our character is the portal through which God is able to pour grace into our lives. Being humble doesn’t mean thinking badly about ourselves, that we are terrible and worthless. Being humble is remembering that we are a member of the sin-sick human race and therefore not any better than those around us. Any higher plane that we may live on is only because we have opened our hearts and minds to God’s grace. But that grace is a free gift. We didn’t earn it and we’re not worthy of it. That’s why it’s grace.”  
– Tom Gilbert



Check out our CQ Kids videos:

WHAT IS HUMILITY?

[christianquestions.com/youtube](http://christianquestions.com/youtube)

### God’s grace is OBSERVABLE

Acts 11:22-23: (NASB) <sup>22</sup>The news about them (those who had been scattered because of Stephen’s death) reached the ears of the church at Jerusalem, and they sent Barnabas off to Antioch. <sup>23</sup>Then when he arrived and witnessed the **grace <5485>** of God, he rejoiced and began to encourage them all with resolute heart to remain true to the Lord.

Barnabas saw God's grace in the people when he arrived in Antioch, meaning it was obvious that God's presence was with them. He saw God's grace being poured out of their individual and collective lives. It was as though Barnabas stood on holy ground. It was in Antioch when Jesus' disciples were first called "Christians." God's grace is observable when it changes people.

On a side note: this is the church where the Apostle Paul took up collections to help the Jerusalem brethren who were in financial need. This offering bonded both the Jewish and Gentile Christians together.

God's unmerited favor can be seen in the transformed lives of those whom He has begotten with His spirit.

We often ask "mirror questions," where we want to carefully examine ourselves.



Serving others is one way to share God's grace in our lives. We are blessed when we serve others.

### God's grace is RICH

**Ephesians 1:7-9:** (NASB) <sup>7</sup>In him (Jesus) we have redemption through his (Jesus') blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His (God's) **grace <5485>** <sup>8</sup>which He (God) lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup>He (God) made known to us the mystery of His (God's) will, according to His (God's) kind intention which He (God) purposed in him (Jesus)...

God's unmerited favor brings to us the uncountable wealth of a forgiven life and a place in His plan. This wealth is not earthly wealth, but spiritual.

How much more wealthy can you get than having a forgiven life? It gives us both a present and a future.

"Of all of the gifts of grace that God gives, forgiveness is one of the most powerful. How can a holy God freely forgive people who deserve severe consequences? He can do this because none of His attributes operate in isolation from the others. Grace is the bridge that connects God's attributes of love and justice." – Tom Gilbert



God's four main attributes are love, wisdom, justice and power. Grace is that connecting tissue that makes them all work together.

### God's grace is ABUNDANT

**Acts 4:32-33:** (NASB) <sup>32</sup>And the congregation of those who believed were of one heart and soul; and not one of them claimed that anything belonging to him was his own, but all things were common property to them. <sup>33</sup>And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant **grace <5485>** was upon them all.



This example from the early church is full of grace. They shared all they had, willing to fill others' needs before their own. This was God's grace reflected through their human lives. God's unmerited favor helps us see how being unattached to this world's possessions opens us up to being able to possess spiritual abundance. We cannot have spiritual abundance if we are focused on accumulating earthly abundance.

How sad it is that the false teaching of the so-called "Prosperity Gospel" is the exact opposite of God's true abundance of grace. Acts 4 describes everyone's possessions being common property to share where needed.

We can see how God's grace is in a completely different category from the grace we show each other. It is more comprehensive, far-reaching and best of all, unlimited.

### God's grace is MANIFOLD (DIVERSE or VARIOUS)

1 Peter 4:8-10: (NASB) <sup>8</sup>Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup>Be hospitable to one another without complaint. <sup>10</sup>As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold **grace** <5485> of God.

God's unmerited favor provides us with differing gifts, abilities and talents that we are privileged to use as we serve one another. If we have been given an ability or a talent and we do not use it, we have wasted God's grace. God's grace demands an action.



### Christian Questions

All the talents, gifts and abilities are part of the favor from God to use for witnessing the gospel. We just have to look "in house" for an example of this. Christian Questions started out over 25 years ago with seven people working in Jonathan's house. It was a local radio program that reached just a small area. Now we have over 55 volunteers that not only work on the podcast, its research and all the corresponding support documents, like CQ Rewind Show Notes and Study Questions. Others work on ChristianQuestions.com and the Christian Questions app, hundreds of YouTube videos, our children's ministry and so much more.

This is all through God's grace. There are many individual talents put to work because they looked at what was "in their hand" and used it for God's work. God's grace is manifold and amazing. There are many diverse ways to apply it.

### God's grace through Jesus is SUFFICIENT

2 Corinthians 12:8-9: (NASB) <sup>8</sup>Concerning this I implored the Lord three times that it might leave me. <sup>9</sup>And he has said to me, My **grace** <5485> is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.

Paul now understood. He changed his posture to the posture of acceptance. He changed himself to fit into God's grace.

God's unmerited favor is exactly enough. Our job is to apply that grace to our trials, weaknesses, perplexities and temptations so we can find victory through Christ to the glory of God.





This is a powerful description, to say that grace gives us exactly what we need. It gives us comfort to know that our trials have a purpose. We know God is selecting a bride class for Jesus, a church of the faithful, and we are being trained for that position.

**James 1:2-4:** (NASB) <sup>2</sup>Consider it all joy, my brethren, when you encounter various trials, <sup>3</sup>knowing that the testing of your faith produces endurance. <sup>4</sup>And let endurance have its perfect result, so that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing (it is sufficient).



Our greatest growth and wisdom often comes from our most difficult experiences.

### God's grace is ORIGINAL

**1 Peter 5:8-11:** (NASB) <sup>8</sup>Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. <sup>9</sup>But resist him, firm in your faith, knowing that the same experiences of suffering are being accomplished by your brethren who are in the world. <sup>10</sup>After you have suffered for a little while, the God of all **grace <5485>**, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. <sup>11</sup>To Him be dominion forever and ever. Amen.

Think about the timing of Peter's words when he said, *your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.* Soon Rome would start feeding Christians to the lions. He was saying to them, God's grace is sufficient - forget the suffering - God's got this. It needed to be said at that time to get them through persecution for their eternal glory. For us today, Satan uses different tactics of suffering to persecute us.

*The God of all grace... will Himself perfect, confirm, strengthen and establish you. That "all-ness" is incredible!*

*"This suggests not only that He is the author of grace - undeserved kindness - but also that He has an inexhaustible supply of good gifts to give to all who will receive them. He has to give freely, because we could never earn or repay Him for the wonderful things He gives us. So He gives without creating any obligation upon us. Yes, He has reasons, a purpose, for freely giving us good things—He wants us to see and choose the better ways of living and the blessings that come from living that way. His purpose is to nudge us in the direction that will bring true happiness and satisfaction in life, and back into a close relationship with Him." – Tom Gilbert*

God's unmerited favor existed before every part of His creation. It was inherent in His character. It is the origin of any and all acts of true favor on any level. Any true act of unmerited favor that is righteous is a reflection of God, inevitably. Because it is ancient, tested and powerful, His favor WILL deliver! It must - because it comes from the Everlasting God.



Seeing these many characteristics of God's grace so broadly defined should make us pause and reflect. This grace, this gift, this favor, is not only available to us, it is overflowing accessible for the purpose of building us up in spiritual maturity so we can more clearly follow Jesus.

God's grace is so expansive and powerful. Having this mighty favor applied to us is an absolute recipe for deep humility.

## Now that we have seen the magnitude of God's grace in action, What does God's grace do for us?

The first answer to this question is that God's grace will only do what we allow it to do for our lives. As massive and powerful as His grace is, we, in our feeble human form, hold the controls that determine its transformational capacity. We can choose to limit God's grace by dwelling on our own will or we can choose to maximize His grace by letting go of our will and instead seeking His will.

This reminds us of Joshua 24:15: (NASB) *...choose for yourselves today whom you will serve...*

We must make a choice. Yes, God's grace is abundant but, remember, it demands action. If we have abundant grace but do not act upon it, it will become scarce since we are not making good use of it.



### being "one of the crowd"

All receive some measure of God's grace and should be thankful for even having life itself, as well as basic amenities like a planet to live on, sunshine, fresh air and water, and so on. God's grace made the provision for Jesus to pay the ransom price for Adam, allowing all to have a resurrection and an opportunity for life in God's kingdom.

**God's grace stimulates a process of change. It all begins with being "one of the crowd":**

Ephesians 2:1-3: (NASB) *<sup>1</sup>And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup>in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. <sup>3</sup>Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.*

No one can boast, as all are inherently sinful and selfish before we were called by God's gracious invitation to follow Jesus.

*We too formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh...and of the mind* - Paul is talking about himself. He literally hunted down Christians when he was known as Saul of Tarsus, and look at his transformation - only by God's grace!

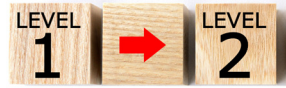
Colossians 3:16: (KJV) *Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with **grace <5485>** in your hearts to the Lord.*

The grace of God should put a song in our hearts, knowing God is working out every detail of our life for His purposes and our blessing. God's grace keeps us singing in gratitude to God even during times of extreme trials. In Acts 16:25, Paul and Silas sang hymns in their jail cell.

Paul shows us a comparison of what was to what can be. We would never know we live in squalor if we were born and raised in squalor and never given a comparison. God's favor and mercy DOES give us a comparison.

The Apostle Paul, as Saul of Tarsus, lived in the squalor of faulty Jewish thinking that said, “Destroy Christianity.” The moment he was forced to see a comparison, he followed the Lord’s direction.

God’s favor and mercy DOES give us a comparison.

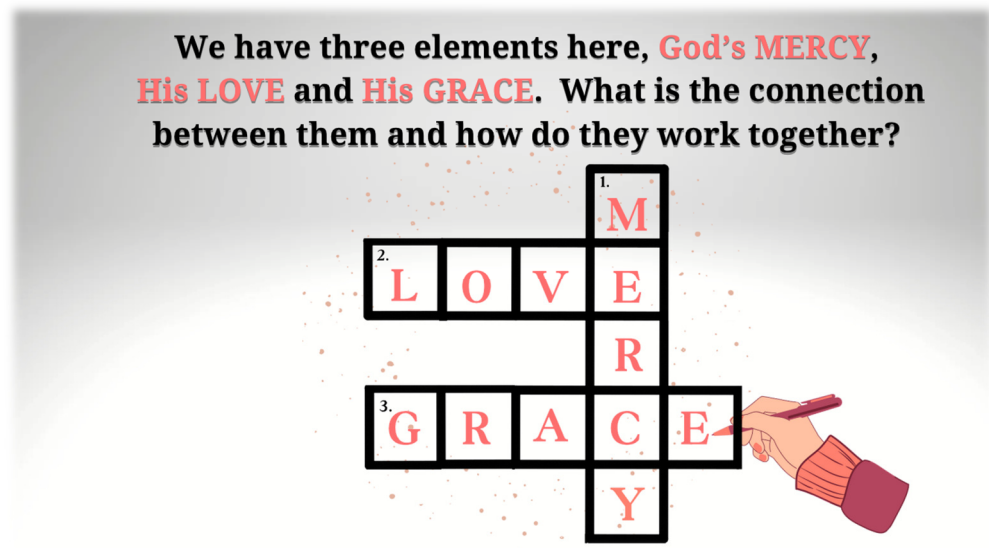


### having access to God's mercy and grace

At this stage, we are beyond just counting our basic blessings. We recognize all God has done for us and have the desire to look into His word and especially the message of the gospel. We start to follow Jesus, transforming our lives into becoming more Christlike. We begin to change our lives so that we are set apart or “sanctified” from those around us - we no longer do, say or think the way we used to.

This brings us to the next level of the grace-driven process of change - having access to God’s mercy and His grace:

Ephesians 2:4-5: (NASB) *4But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by **grace** <5485> you have been saved).*



We could say God **IS** love, God **HAS** mercy and God **GIVES** grace.

- ♥ **God IS love.** This means that His very nature is one that instinctively cares and gives in ways that cannot be reciprocated. Justice, wisdom, power and love are the foundation of God’s plan. God so loved the world that He gave us Jesus. God’s justice required that humanity be ransomed from sin and death.

God had the wisdom to provide this gift and the power to give it. There is nothing we could **EVER** do to give back to Him what He gave to us. God **IS** love.



- ♥ **God HAS mercy.** He also GIVES mercy, but we want to contrast this with grace. God's mercy is His active, undeserved compassion that can be declared towards someone who deserves negative consequences. His mercy brings relief from the pain or suffering that someone deserves. God's mercy removes consequences in the sense that all will have an opportunity in God's kingdom to learn, rehabilitate and reconcile with each other and God, even though the penalty of sin is death (Romans 6:23).
- ♥ **God GIVES grace.** God's grace is unmerited favor that lifts someone into a position of privilege that was previously unattainable. Saul of Tarsus did not earn the title of the 12th Apostle; God's grace opened that door. God's love provided Jesus as the ransom, and God saw who Saul could be if he was given truth to follow. The result was that Saul of Tarsus became the Apostle Paul.



God's love is the foundation. It is unchangeable.  
He sent Jesus as proof.

God's mercy is applied to us through Jesus' ransom.  
Jesus paid the price for Adam's sin and our sin.

God's grace is applied to us through Jesus' resurrection.  
Because he lives, we will live with him!

*Mercy*

Some get mercy and grace confused, using them interchangeably. But there is a distinct difference. Mercy is to not apply a consequence to something negative. God's mercy is applied through the ransom for all. God is not applying the consequence because Jesus paid the price for Adam's sin.

*Grace*

Grace is applied through Jesus' resurrection. Grace gives someone a privilege. It is not keeping from giving a consequence for a negative action, but giving something extra, a positive.

Mercy and grace are two aspects of God's goodness in the structuring of His plan for all humanity. We have heard it said: Grace is getting what we don't deserve and mercy is NOT getting what we do deserve!



**living for Christ and being granted eternal life**

On this level, we have been called by God to "come up higher" and be a true disciple of Christ, beyond just calling ourselves a Christian. At this stage, our desire is to do God's will instead of our own, and we can claim the many precious promises God gives to this special group. These overcomers are given a heavenly reward of immortality.



**Ephesians 2:4-10:** (NASB) *<sup>4</sup>But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup>even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by **grace <5485>** you have been saved), (here is the result) <sup>6</sup>and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup>so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His **grace <5485>** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup>For by **grace <5485>** you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; <sup>9</sup>not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. <sup>10</sup>For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.*

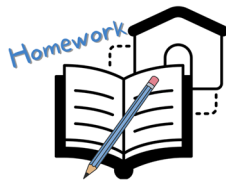
For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works - who deserves that? No one, and yet here we are. This opportunity to follow Christ and be seated in heavenly places is only because of the gift of God's unmerited favor - His grace. What a privilege! We want to live up to the amount and the degree of grace we have been given.



He shows the world the surpassing riches of His grace. This is bigger than just us. All of mankind receives a resurrection because Jesus has paid the ransom price (1 Timothy 2:6) - a one-for-one offset price for an original sin.

Romans 5:5-21 explains how original sin brought death. The sacrifice of Jesus through grace brings exponential benefits - not just a price for Adam. One man's sin brought death. One man's offering for sin provides unceasing benefits - that is the enormity of grace! Not only does it give his faithful followers a heavenly reward, but God's grace will give the ability for resurrected mankind to learn and rehabilitate after their resurrection.

Our focus as dedicated Christians should be to seek to live for Christ so that we may be given eternal life. God's grace places us in a position of distinct favor, right here and now. The world will get their favor later, but we get it now.



**Romans 5 can be called "The Great Grace Chapter"** and is worth reading in its entirety for homework.

God's grace places faithful followers of Jesus in a position of favor, but His grace never acts alone. It is always built upon love's foundation and usually has mercy as a co-laborer. Grace and mercy always work together to accomplish God's plan.

In our next verses, Paul verifies the elements of God's love, mercy and grace, even though he does not use those words.

**His point will ultimately show his deep and personal experience with God's grace:**

1 Corinthians 15:3-11: (NASB) *<sup>3</sup>For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, <sup>4</sup>and that he was buried, and that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, <sup>5</sup>and that he appeared to Cephas (Peter), then to the twelve. <sup>6</sup>After that he appeared to more than five hundred brethren at one time, most of whom remain until now, but some have fallen asleep; <sup>7</sup>then he appeared to James, then to all the apostles;*



**Now Paul will show us the transformative power of God's grace in his own personal experience:**

<sup>8</sup>and last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared to me also. <sup>9</sup>For I am the least of the apostles, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

Paul is saying: "All the others were in a position of loving and honoring Jesus, but I WAS NOT - I am the least of all because at that same time, I was persecuting Christians, hunting them down. I was not doing things in a godly way."

**Here is his conclusion:**

<sup>10</sup>But by the **grace <5485>** of God I am what I am, and His **grace <5485>** toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the **grace <5485>** of God with me. <sup>11</sup>Whether then it was I or they, so we preach and so you believed.

Paul is saying: "Of all people, God's grace changed ME." The same grace that changed him changes US. Do we respond with that same awe and reverence? God's grace stimulates our faith and in turn makes us more Christlike. We become reflections of His grace so we can reflect His grace to others.

**One easy test to see if we are doing this is through our speech:**

Colossians 4:6: (NASB) *Let your speech always be with **grace <5485>**, seasoned, as it were, with salt, so that you may know how you should respond to each person.*



Ephesians 4:29: (NASB) *Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give **grace <5485>** to those who hear.*

Our words should be saturated with grace - kind, considerate, respectful, beneficial, uplifting. If we find we are being harsh, critical, complaining or gossipy, we are not reflecting God's grace.

The Apostle Paul showed his deep, profound appreciation by saying, "He applied it to ME!"



When God grants His unmerited favor, He grants us His mercy and love as well. All of those accepting the call to follow Jesus and being granted God's spirit are in this class of highest privilege. God's grace does not stop there. It also addresses our individual needs and deficiencies. No matter how "out of step" we were with God's ways, His grace can raise us up to being a tool in His hand!

We may start as "one of the crowd." We may start completely out of step. But if we pay attention to God's grace in our lives and act upon it, we can become a tool in God's hands.

If this does not overwhelm us with grace and reverence, what will? God wants us working with Him and for Him.



Do I act like a recipient of the greatest unmerited favor given to any human being of all of creation,

or do I take all of this for granted?

With all grace has to offer, it kind of feels like we may use the word too casually. Experiencing God's grace is a life-changer!

**To live in the grace of God is to live in a very safe place.  
How do we continue to stay strong in grace and not falter?**

Being imperfect human beings, we all are prone to the disaster of divided thinking. We continually need to be guarded. Our hearts and minds must stay focused on the most important things and when they stray, we need to be able to recognize it and readjust. There are two obvious ways to readjust. First is prayer, and second is constantly being aware of God's grace.

**Falling short of God's grace can bring us to a sad state of being:**

Hebrews 12:14-16: (NASB) <sup>14</sup>Pursue peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord. <sup>15</sup>See to it that no one comes short of the **grace <5485>** of God (After all we have discussed, this should make us take notice!); that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled; <sup>16</sup>that there be no immoral or godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a single meal.

As we remember, Esau was the firstborn and was therefore in a position of a more favorable inheritance. In a moment of hunger and weakness, he traded that advantage to his brother Jacob for a bowl of stew. He later blamed it all on Jacob. The picture here is nurturing a root of bitterness that corrupts all around it.



Understanding the depth of disaster that bitterness can cause

*pursue peace with all men* - here is that "ALL-ness" again. If we do not pursue peace in our Christian lives, we come short of God's grace. This is a choice. If we do not act in accordance with what God's grace gives us, then we end up in **divided thinking**. This is what happened to Esau. He had something precious and sold it because it did not mean much to him at the time.



We see how we can fall. We all know the power of prayer. Let's see how that can help us. **Divided thinking** draws us away from God and His grace, as *no man can serve two masters* (Matthew 6:24).



**It is no accident that God's grace is pictured as the majesty of a throne where He hears our prayers:**

**Hebrews 4:14-16:** (NASB) <sup>14</sup>Therefore, since we have a *great high priest* who has passed through the heavens, *Jesus the son of God*, let us hold fast our confession.

The Hebrew Christians are used to having a high priest who would mediate between them and God. Paul is saying to them: "You know what it is like to have a high priest here on earth. Our *great high priest* (Jesus) has passed through the heavens! He is actually with God. Think of how much more powerful that connection is! Because our high priest has an incredible connection with God, *let us hold fast our faith.*"

<sup>15</sup>For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin.

On top of the fact that he is with God, he understands us. He was human; he knows what we go through.

**This paints the picture of the power of prayer:**

<sup>16</sup>Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of *grace <5485>*, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Remember in the Lord's Prayer Jesus taught us to pray, "Hallowed be Thy name." When approaching God in prayer, we must show Him reverence first.



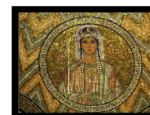
**Check out our CQ Kids videos:**  
**WHAT DOES THE LORD'S PRAYER MEAN?**  
[christianquestions.com/youtube](http://christianquestions.com/youtube)



We are to come before *the throne of grace*, the throne of God's unmerited favor. Jesus has opened the door and tells us: "Because of me - you can approach this throne!"

Because we already have God's grace through Jesus as our advocate, going before the majesty of *the throne of grace* is our personal privilege. When riddled with weakness and failures, this majestic throne of grace can and will renew His grace in us.

In the story of Queen Esther, she could have been put to death for even trying to approach the king's throne. Here we see why we puny, sinful humans are even able to approach the throne - because it *is a throne of grace!* This is not a physical chair - it is the monarchy itself, the royal power. How grateful we are to serve a God whose very power is based on grace!



**Episode 1057 and 1063:**  
**Is This the Moment You Were Created For? (Parts I and II)**

Learning from Esther to stand heroically against all odds

In the Psalms we see the word *selah* which means, "pause and consider." This is a moment to pause and consider all that we have looked at regarding God's incomprehensible gift of grace to us.

We want to constantly remind ourselves of God's grace.



### Paul always reminded everyone about God's grace - a small sampling:

Romans 1:7: (NASB) *to all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: **Grace <5485>** to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

1 Corinthians 1:2-3: (NASB) *<sup>2</sup>To the church of God which is at Corinth... <sup>3</sup>**Grace <5485>** to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

2 Corinthians 1:2: (NASB) ***Grace <5485>** to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Galatians 1:2-3: (NASB) *<sup>2</sup>...To the churches of Galatia: <sup>3</sup>**Grace <5485>** to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Ephesians 1:1-2: (NASB) *<sup>1</sup>...To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus: <sup>2</sup>**Grace <5485>** to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Philippians 1:1-2: (NASB) *<sup>1</sup>...To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, including the overseers and deacons: <sup>2</sup>**Grace <5485>** to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.*

Colossians 1:2: (NASB) *To the saints and faithful brethren in Christ who are at Colossae: **Grace <5485>** to you and peace from God our Father.*

There are many more examples. Each time the Apostle Paul communicates to the churches, he started by extending *grace* and *peace*. He often closed his letters this way, and sometimes even added in the middle.

### Here he says his very ministry was because of grace:

Ephesians 3:7-8: (NIV) *<sup>7</sup>I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's **grace <5485>** given me through the working of His power. <sup>8</sup>Although I am less than the least of all the LORD's people, this **grace <5485>** was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ.*

Why does Paul emphasize grace so much? Because he knew they were invited to stand on holy ground and did nothing to deserve that invitation. Being right with God - receiving His grace - produces peace with God. Grace frees us from the burden of sin to enjoy a rich and satisfying relationship with Him. Again, it is an unbelievable privilege that we are even allowed, let alone encouraged, to approach the *throne of grace*.

This is very humbling. Now, when we read the reminders we will pause and think of what it can mean in our lives. Are we living up to the unbelievable merit and favor that we have been given?



Paul not only reminded us of God's grace in a formal way, he reminded us of His grace in a very personal way as well.



### **This is the last letter Paul wrote before his execution:**

**2 Timothy 2:1-4:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>You therefore, my son, be strong in the **grace <5485>** that is in Christ Jesus. <sup>2</sup>The things which you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses, entrust these to faithful men who will be able to teach others also. <sup>3</sup>Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. <sup>4</sup>No soldier in active service entangles himself in the affairs of everyday life, so that he may please the one who enlisted him as a soldier.

We started by talking about divided thinking. Here is a great example of how Paul instructs Timothy to avoid divided thinking - a soldier must be single-minded and not distracted by outside influences.

The Apostle Paul is telling Timothy this because he will no longer be there to mentor Timothy. He is about to die. He is handing off part of his ministry to Timothy and telling him to *be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus*. Make it your own, respond to it - act upon the part of God's grace that has been given to you.

### **The results of God's grace are NOT just for the called-out ones who follow Jesus now; they are for every man, woman and child after resurrection:**

**Romans 5:15:** (NASB) *But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the **grace <5485>** of God and the gift by the **grace <5485>** of the one man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many.*

When we look at the context in Romans 5, the word *many* here means ALL. Jesus' sacrifice covers everyone - ALL people. God's grace, and the gift given to us from the man Christ Jesus, abounds to all the world, to everyone, Christian or not. We have all been given the opportunity of God's unmerited favor through Jesus.

*abound to the many* - the curse of Adam already had the remedy - the remedy co-existed with the curse. From **Romans 5:15-19**, Paul contrasts what came from Adam - death - versus the grace that comes through Christ. The abundance of grace (a free gift) which will result from the ransom has so many more results than did Adam's transgression! By one man's (Adam's) transgression, everybody died; BUT, by God's gift of grace through the one man, Jesus, there are going to be a SUPER-ABOUNDING of benefits - both to the faithful Christians and to the entire world.

There are hundreds of Old Testament prophecies that expand and describe what God's grace will look like for the world of mankind.

### **We will look at just one of the prophecies of all-inclusive grace for the world:**

**Micah 4:1-4:** (NASB) <sup>1</sup>And it will come about in the last days that the mountain of the house of the LORD will be established as the chief of the mountains. It will be raised above the hills, and the peoples will stream to it. <sup>2</sup>Many nations will come and say, Come and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD and to the house of the God of Jacob, that He may teach us about His ways and that we may walk in His paths. For from Zion will go forth the law, even the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. <sup>3</sup>And He will judge between many peoples and render decisions for mighty, distant nations. Then they will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation will not lift up sword against nation, and never again will they train for war. <sup>4</sup>Each of them will sit under his vine and under his fig tree, with no one to make them afraid, for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.



No wonder God said He desired all to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. This is the culmination of His loving grace and its fulfillment. To God be the glory!

Faithful Christians are the beginning of His grace. The culmination is with the rest of world. Please accept the magnitude of God's grace!



It sounds so simple when we say that God's grace is His unmerited favor. What we need to realize is, God's grace changed history.

By His grace, He sent Jesus to die for every man, woman and child who has ever lived.

By His grace, the disciples of Jesus are called to a heavenly calling.

By His grace, He individually shapes us into faithful members of the body.

By His grace, the earth and all of humanity will be perfected for eternity.

God's grace IS His unmerited favor. In its simplicity, it reveals the glory, honor and reverence due Him.

**Praise God forever for His grace!**

*So, what does God's grace do for me?  
For Jonathan, Rick, Julie and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!*

All quoted scriptures are from the 1995 version of NASB unless otherwise indicated.



Join us next week for our podcast on January 23, 2023  
Ep. 1265: What Sins Can Never be Forgiven?



### Bonus Material and Study Questions

Some scriptural examples of the varied uses of *grace* in the New Testament:

**1a) That which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech:**

Luke 4:22: (NASB) *And all were speaking well of him, and wondering at the gracious <5485> words which were falling from his lips; and they were saying, Is this not Joseph's son?*

Colossians 4:6: (NASB) *Let your speech always be with grace <5485>, as though seasoned with salt, so that you will know how you should respond to each person.*

**2) Good will, loving-kindness, favor:**

Luke 2:52: (NASB) *And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature and in favor <5485> with God and men.*

**3) What is due to grace, 3a) the spiritual condition of one governed by the power of divine grace:**

Romans 6:17: (NASB) *But thanks <5485> be to God that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed.*

**4) Thanks, (for benefits, services, favors), recompense, reward:**

Luke 17:9: (NASB) *He does not thank <5485> the slave because he did the things which were commanded, does he?*

*There is no reason for grace but grace. – Anonymous*

*God's grace is not only amazing grace, it's abounding grace. - Vince Havner*

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CQ Rewind Show Notes and Study Questions

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# Study QUESTIONS

## Ep. 1264: What Does God's Grace Do For Us?

<https://christianquestions.com/character/1264-gods-grace/>

See:  CQ Rewind  
SHOW NOTES

1. The Hebrew word *chen* and the Greek word *charis* are translated into which English words? Explain three examples of grace in the Old Testament. (See Genesis 6:8, 18:1-3, Psalms 84:8-12)
2. Describe the first three instances of grace in the New Testament. Who was God's grace pointing to in both the Old and New Testaments? Why should we "listen to him" (Jesus) according to Matthew 17:5? (See Luke 1:28-30, 2:40,52, 4:22, John 7:46, Isaiah 61:1-2, Matthew 17:5)
3. How is grace an invitation? What happens if we do not act on it? In what way is God's grace *foundational*? What did Jesus have to do to "bring God's knowledge and wisdom to the world"? How is Jesus the personification of God's grace? (See Hebrews 2:9)
4. How is God's grace *glorious*? When did God plan to offer Jesus' true disciples the privilege of adoption as God's sons? What is necessary for us to receive God's grace? How should this make God's grace *observable* in us? How is it observable in you? (See Ephesians 1:4-6, Acts 11:22-23)
5. What does the *richness* of God's grace give us? How does grace enable God to forgive? What is necessary to possess spiritual *abundance*? In what way is God's grace *manifold* or diverse in its manifestation? (See Ephesians 1:7-9, Acts 4:32-33, 1 Peter 2:8-10)
6. How is God's grace *sufficient* for our weaknesses and trials? What is our job in approaching trials? How are trials comforting? In what way is God the *origin* of all grace? (See 2 Corinthians 12:8-9, James 1:2-4, 1 Peter 5:8-11)
7. What does grace do for us? Are we, as Christians, better people than others? Define how mercy differs from grace. How do "the surpassing riches of His grace" apply to us and to the world? (See Ephesians 2:1-10, Colossians 3:16, 1 Timothy 2:6, Romans 5:5-21)
8. How does Paul show the transformative power of grace in his life? How should we respond to God's grace? How have you responded? (See 1 Corinthians 15:3-11, Colossians 4:6, Ephesians 4:29)
9. How can we fall short of God's grace? Why is Jesus comforting as our high priest? With what attitude should we approach the throne of God's grace? What will the approach to this throne do for us? "Being right with God" allows us to receive which privilege? (See Hebrews 4:14-16, 12:14-16, Ephesians 3:7-8)
10. What does Paul tell Timothy? To whom does God's grace abound? Does His grace end with His called-out ones? Explain. (See 2 Timothy 2:1-4, Romans 5:15-19, Micah 4:1-4)
11. List the ways God's grace has affected the history and future of the world of mankind. How has God's grace changed you? How have you acted on the opportunities His grace has opened in your life?