

How the Grace of God Changes Lives

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Introduction: What does the grace of God mean to me personally?

- A. God has pleaded with us to come to know His character and then let that knowledge change everything about us! **(Ex 34:5-8)**
 1. This is the eternal plan of God.
 2. What does this mean to me personally? Each one of us today should consider.
 3. God tells us that these things “abound” in His character. He “so loves” me and passionately wants me to experience His grace.
- B. The 1st step in salvation is coming to know God. **(Jn 17:3; 2 Pt 1:2-3)**
 1. Why would an all-powerful and perfect God seek my good? He does! **(Jn 3:16)**
 2. There must be a response from each person to this message of good news.
 3. How can I know God in a way that changes me?

I. God’s grace becomes powerful when I understand the consequences of sin

- A. God is holy and cannot abide with sin. **(Rom 1:16-18)**
 1. No man wants to face God having “died” in their sins. **(Jn 8:21, 24; Col 3:6-7)**
 2. Man on his own cannot remove one sin. God must act on man’s behalf.
- B. What is salvation?

Salvation - σωτηρία, ας, ή salvation, deliverance; (1) physically, as rescue from danger *deliverance, preservation, safety* (HE 11.7); (2) as a religious technical term *safety of the soul* in a spiritual sense *salvation* (2C 7.10); (3) of the messianic deliverance at the end of the present age. (Rom 13:11)

1. Why did Jesus have to shed His blood for our sins?
(1 Pt 1:18-19; 2 Cor 5:20-21)
2. It is crucial to understand that salvation comes through the sacrifice of Christ.
- C. How do I move from the “theoretical” to the personal?
 1. This is challenging but absolutely essential. “What must I do” “Is it I?” are asked by those whose hearts come to trust God. **(Acts 2:36-37; Mt 26:21-22)**
 2. Every parent prays for the time their child comes to experience this. They have “heard” but have not yet come to realize this personal truth.

II. God’s grace always leads to repentance and peace

- A. What is God’s grace?

Grace - χάρις, ιτος, ή grace; (1) as a quality that adds delight or pleasure *graciousness, attractiveness, charm* (LU 4.22); (2) as a favorable attitude; (a) active, of what is felt toward another *goodwill, favor* (AC 2.47); (b) as a religious technical term for God’s attitude toward human beings *kindness, grace, favor, helpfulness* (JN 1.16, 17; EP 2.8); (3) concretely;

1. Jesus knew that the very understanding of the gift of God would change us.
(John 4:10)
2. God made us as social creatures with the need to both give and receive.
2. If we could but see this unseen gift of God, we will be changed.
3. We are made in God’s image and God loves to give! **(Lk 11:11-13)**

4. The only true purpose in our lives is found in the grace of giving. We are empty and miserable in any other purpose.
 5. I will never forget my parents' gracious service to me and my brother. They were fulfilled and happy to do this.
- B. Satan has a version he calls "grace" that leaves men untouched and unchanged.
(Rom 2:4-5; 2 Cor 7:9-10)
1. Grace changes us and molds us to love God's word and carefully follow it.
 2. What if someone has not personally realized God's grace? **(1 Pt 2:1-3)**
 3. Why do some see God's way as burdensome and some do not?
 4. Many struggle in understanding God's grace because of their experience with men. Sometimes churches have failed in this too.
- C. What would you and I say to someone that asked us about what God is like?
1. Can we speak about what we have learned and also what we have experienced?
 2. What does Paul often say about this? **(1 Tim 1:12-17; 1 Cor 15:9-10)**

III. How do we grow in the grace of God?

- A. God wants this mindset to encompass all that we think and do! **(2 Pt 3:18)**
1. This takes time! This is why it is called growth.
 2. To change our thoughts, we must often dwell on the mind and examples of Jesus. True worship must be grace centered!
 3. What kind of associates do we have? This is a key to real growth.
- B. God's grace will produce a hatred of all sin. **(Heb 1:9)**
1. When I understand why Jesus gave Himself for men, then I despise my sin.
 2. Paul viewed his entire work as testifying to God's grace. **(Acts 20:24)**
 3. Grace always prepares us to see and fight sin. This is not legalism!
(Acts 20:26-27; 31-32)
 4. When God's grace is not in our thoughts then pride has entered. We are blind.
- C. We will come to see God's grace in our past and present with a confident expectation of the future!
1. The thankful heart keeps growing in their understanding of God's actions.
 2. This keeps our focus on God and will bring true peace. **(2 Cor 4:13-18)**
 3. God does not change! One day I will meet our gracious God. I need not fear!
- D. God's grace will change our character and cause others to seek God.
1. I love to be around kind and gracious people. I can trust them! **(2 Cor 9:14)**
 2. God's grace will move us to be honest. **(2 Cor 1:12)**
 3. God's grace makes us want to put others 1st and meet their needs.
 4. Grace-filled people are optimistic and encouraging. **(Acts 4:36; 11:22-24)**

Conclusion: May we constantly be renewed in our understanding of God's grace!
(2 Cor 13:14)