

God's Grace ~ Part 21

"Perhaps there is no word in the Bible more precious than Grace."

~ Rick Countryman, Senior Pastor, Big Valley Grace Community Kehilah
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"The Wrap-Up"

This is the last post in the series on God's Grace, but I'm sure it won't be the last time that I broach the subject in other postings. I want to do a quick review on some of the major points I have made and then share with you random selections from other authors that I have picked up over the years on the topic of God's Grace.

The key passage for this series has been: ***"For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift - not from works, so that no one can boast."*** (Ephesians 2:8-9 HCSB)

In my first post in this series, I asked the following questions: What is God's grace? How do we appropriate God's grace? How do we deal with perfectionism? Is grace really amazing? Is grace sufficient to meet all my needs? Does grace really mean that we are forgiven? These are the highlights of the answers we learned:

- 1. What is God's Grace?** The Bible teaches we are not only saved by grace, but we also live by grace every day of our lives. Grace is God's free and unmerited favor shown to guilty sinners who deserve only judgment. It is God holding out His hand of fellowship to people who are in rebellion against Him. God's Grace is "God's power to help us do whatever it is we need to do."
- 2. How Do We Appropriate God's Grace?** The first avenue of appropriating God's grace is simply to ask for it in prayer. The second avenue is to become intimate with the Bible ~ God's Word. Holding onto God's promises and arming ourselves with the Sword of the Spirit. The third avenue is to submit to His providential working in our lives. The fourth avenue is through the ministry of other Believers via our involvement in small groups to receive prayer support; help in accepting and applying Scripture to our specific needs; and, help in seeing our situation with clearer vision.
- 3. How Do We deal with Perfectionism?** We learned that this is a major stumbling block for us when we try to appropriate God's Grace. We learned salvation is a gift from God; it is entirely by grace through faith - not by works, so that no one can boast. Having trusted in Yeshua alone for our salvation, we have subtly and unconsciously reverted to a works relationship with God in our Messianic lives. We recognize that even our best efforts cannot get us to heaven, but we do think they earn God's blessings in our daily lives. We declared spiritual bankruptcy to get into His kingdom, so now we think we can and must pay our own way with God. We were saved by grace, but we are living by performance. When we learn how to relax in God's liberating grace and break out of the prison of perfectionism, we find a new level of joy and freedom in our life. Many of us believe we deserve God's Grace; but the clear answer from the Bible is that we don't. If we could earn it, it wouldn't be God's Grace.
- 4. Is God's Grace Really Amazing?** His grace overcomes our bad works, which are our sins. God did this by placing our sins on Yeshua and by letting fall on Him the wrath we so richly deserved. Because Yeshua completely paid the awful penalty of our sins, God could extend His grace to us through complete and total forgiveness of our sins. God's Grace really is amazing. He has removed your sins as far as the east is from the west; He has put them behind His back and thrown them into the depths of the sea; and, He has blotted them out of His record book and promised never to bring them up again. You are free from accusation, not because of anything you have done, but because of His grace

alone through Yeshua. Grace is not only to be received by us; it is also to be extended to others. God's Grace is really amazing.

In addition to exploring other aspects of God's Grace, we concluded the series by answering the final question:

- 5. Does grace really mean that we are forgiven?** In my personal journal, I keep a 3x5 card of a quote I picked up while reading "Search for Significance" by Robert S. McGee based on Romans 5:1 and Colossians 1:21-22: ***"Because of Jesus and His Redemption, I am completely forgiven and fully pleasing to God. I am totally accepted by God."*** We have learned not only has Yeshua's atoning sacrifice wipe our slates clean and we ARE forgiven by God – we are to offer real forgiveness to those who have caused us problems, frustrations and hurts.

I have attached PDF versions of three additional devotions I have collected along the way on this topic of God's Grace that I have not included previously for your reading enjoyment. Each one is less than a page in length. Click on the following links:

Understand Grace, Walk in Faith by Joyce Meyer.

Getting What You Don't Deserve by Joyce Meyer.

Grace, Mercy and Peace by Henry T. Blackaby and Richard Blackaby.

I would like to close this series with the same blessing that I closed all our Congregational services:

Y'va-reh-ch'cha ADONAI v'yeesh-m'reh-cha,
Ya-air ADONAI pa-nahv ay-leh-cha vee-choo-neh-ka,
Yee-sa ADONAI pa-nahv ay-leh-cha v'ya-same l'cha Shalom.

The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord make His face to shine upon you and be gracious to you,
The Lord lift up His countenance upon you and give you peace. ~ Numbers 6:24-26

May God richly bless you this day and always.