

GOD IS: GRACE

The Lord reveals Himself as a God of grace, gracious to all. And all that He does is displayed in grace. It's an "action attribute" of God, which extends from His divine nature and character. Grace is God giving His good things to the undeserving. God is gracious because He is defined by grace. Theologian SJ Lawson says, "the grace of God enlivens our hearts, energizes our soul, empowers our inner person, excites us to know Him more," because of the extraordinary effect God and His grace have upon His people.

1- God's grace is GIVEN FREELY for His own glory. In Psalm 86, David prays, "*Be gracious to me, O Lord, for You are good and forgiving and abounding in steadfast love to all who call upon You... Listen to my plea for grace... You, O Lord, are a God merciful and gracious, turn to me and be gracious to me, and save me.*" He consciously quotes from Moses in Exodus 33:11 and 34:6. "*My name is the LORD and I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy.*" The sovereign God gives His sovereign grace because He IS gracious. Grace is integral to His character. You can't earn it, you can't demand it, and you don't deserve it. But God gives His grace, to all who ask.

Ephesians 2:8-9 says you are saved by grace through faith, not by works. Romans 3:23 says His grace is an unearned gift. Romans 6:23 says *the wages of sin is death, but the freely given gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.* Wages are earned and deserved. A true gift is unearned and undeserved. Grace is getting what you do not deserve. Mercy is not getting what you do deserve. God is both merciful and gracious. Sinners are not owed God's grace. We deserve death, but He gives life to all who turn to Jesus Christ in saving faith. For His own purposes and for His own eternal glory.

2- God's grace redeems UNDESERVING sinners. God saves sinners. His grace is eternally effective. It doesn't simply make salvation possible, His grace makes it sure and secure. Ephesians 1:7 says "*in Him we have redemption*" according to the riches of His grace lavished upon us. 2 Timothy 1:9 says it is all accomplished, by God's own purpose and grace "*which He gave to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began.*" Romans 11:6 says "*if it is by grace it is not on the basis of works, otherwise grace would no longer be grace.*" Titus 3:5 says, "*He saved us not because of works done in righteousness, but according to His own mercy.*" Grace is unearned and undeserved.

SB Ferguson affirms, "grace silences negotiations about our contribution before they can even begin. By definition we cannot 'qualify' for grace in any way, by any means, or through any action." Christ alone paid your penalty so you will not be punished. That's mercy. He erases your debt, then credits His own righteousness to your account. That's grace. Undeserved. As Martyn Lloyd-Jones declares, "grace is favor shown to people who do not deserve any favor at all. We deserve nothing but hell. If you think you deserve heaven, you are not a Christian."

3- God's grace extends to WHOSOEVER WILL receive Him. God's grace is unearned and undeserved but is available to all people. Revelation 7:9 presents the company of the redeemed in heaven, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, all tribes and peoples and languages, clothed in white robes, calling out "*salvation belongs to our God and the Lamb on the throne.*" Like numerous other passages, John 3:16 proclaims God so loved the world, that whoever believes in Jesus will be saved.

Titus 2:11 says "*the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people.*" The Bible does not teach universalism, as if "all" people will be saved. These passages do not delineate the "world" or "all people" as all without exception, but rather as all without distinction. The gospel is not for one ethnic group but for all people groups, male and female, slave and free. 1 Timothy 2:4, "*God our Savior, who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all.*" Jesus was promised to come through the Jews as Messiah, to save even Gentiles - whosoever will believe in Him.

What about YOU? These truths Scripturally and logically lead to three points we will consider next time: 4- God's grace provides the only way to be saved, through Jesus Christ. 5- God's grace empowers the believer's transformed life in Christ. 6- God's grace multiplies as you are gracious to others. God's grace is not something you deserve or can earn. Simply receive His grace by faith. Believe what He says. Put your trust in Jesus Christ alone. Live for Him by His power within you. By God's grace!