



# Berean Christian Fellowship

DEVOTIONAL 200.0

September 7  
2018

## Amazing Grace: What Is It? — P1

**“For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ” (John 1:17).**

This is the first part in a new series looking at the concept of “grace.” What is it? Grace in Christian theology is defined as “the free and unmerited favor of God, as manifested in the salvation of sinners and the bestowal of blessings” (Google dictionary). Grace can be a hard word for us to understand. However, no word in the Bible is perhaps more important for us to understand. It is the foundation that underpins our understanding of how Salvation works, as well as how God interacts with those saved.

First of all, we see from the definition above that grace is often translated from the Greek as God’s “favor.” It is also translated as “goodwill” or “lovingkindness.” Secondly, and perhaps most importantly, it is by definition unmerited, unearned, and undeserved. In contrast, human favor is almost always earned – it is merited—as when soldiers earn the favor of their king by the deeds they perform for him. Favor in human terms means you’re “preferred” or “liked” more than someone else. There IS a favor of God that is merited – as when David found favor with the Lord because his heart was after the Lord’s heart (Acts 13:22). Just as with any parent and child, there is behavior that is pleasing to the Lord, and there is behavior that deserves discipline. But this is not GRACE! It is not the kind of favor we are looking at here. The favor we call grace is unmerited – it has nothing to do with you and everything to do with God.

Next, we see from the definition that there are two types of grace. The first kind of grace is what God gives to sinners. This is probably the most mentioned form of grace in the Church, because it truly is the most important grace for our eternal lives. This grace is the unmerited favor of God manifested in the free gift of salvation through Jesus Christ: “*For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,*

*being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus” (Rom. 3:23-24), “therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand” (Rom. 5:1-2), “for by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast” (Eph. 2:8-9). By this grace, God cancels the judgment due our sins to everyone who puts their faith in Jesus Christ and believes in His name. Every Believer has entered EQUALLY into this “favor” of God, being reconciled back to Him through no work of our own, receiving an inheritance of eternal life, which we will “come into.”*

But there’s a second kind of grace in the definition – called “blessings.” More accurately, it refers to God’s support, strength, encouragement, direction, and blessings in the struggles, temptations, difficulties, frustrations, and traumas of the Christian life. Paul often prayed for this kind of grace upon people who had already received the grace of Salvation: “*To all who are beloved of God in Rome, called as saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom. 1:7). Stephen, already a Believer, was filled with this grace, which enabled him to do the work of the Lord: “And Stephen, full of grace and power, was performing great wonders and signs among the people” (Acts 6:8), for “God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed” (2 Cor. 9:7-8). This grace is also undeserved and unmerited—we don’t do anything to earn it. It is granted to Believers at God’s discretion for His will and purposes in your life for His glory and your ultimate good. It IS NOT given equally as we will see later. In the weeks ahead, we’ll look more at this second, less understood definition of grace. Lord willing, Amen.*

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