

Ambassadors of God's Grace

Bill Scheidler

Introduction

How many here are thankful for the grace of God?

God's grace is His unmerited favor.

The grace that we have received from the Lord we are to extend to others.

The grace that we have received is to motivate us toward good deeds (II Cor. 9:8).

And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. –NIV

The context here has to do specifically with the issue of natural supply—money. God has given us all that we need so that we can be used of the Lord to sow that same seed into the lives of others.

The principle here is that what we have so graciously received from the Lord we are to in turn be willing to extend to others.

When we apply this principle to the area of grace it looks like this. We have received grace or unmerited favor from God and now we are to abound in every good work—the principal good work being that of **abounding in grace to others**.

How do we extend the grace of God to others?

The Bible speaks of ways in which we who have received grace are to extend grace.

Luke 6:27-36, NIV

*“But I tell you who hear me: Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, 28 bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you. 29 If someone strikes you on one cheek, turn to him the other also. If someone takes your cloak, do not stop him from taking your tunic. 30 Give to everyone who asks you, and if anyone takes what belongs to you, do not demand it back. 31 Do to others as you would have them do to you. 32 If you love those who love you, **what credit is that to you?** Even ‘sinners’ love those who love them. 33 And if you do good to those who are good to you, **what credit is that to you?** Even ‘sinners’ do that. 34 And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, **what credit is that to you?** Even ‘sinners’ lend to ‘sinners,’ expecting to be repaid in full. 35 But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. 36 Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.”*

Three times in this passage it says, “What credit it that to you?”

Other translations say

...what quality of credit and thanks is that to you? –Amp

...what credit is that to you? –NIV

...what kind of graciousness is yours? –Wuest

...what grace have ye? –Young’s Literal Translation

...what grace do you practice? –Berkeley

The word translated credit or thanks in these verses is the Greek word *karis* which is most often translated “grace” and is the word that describes God’s grace or unmerited favor to us.

Seven ways that we demonstrate grace to others

What are seven ways that we demonstrate grace or “unmerited favor” to others?

1. Extending grace means loving your enemies (Luke 6:27).

God loved us when we were enemies of God (Rom. 5:10; Col. 1:21; Phil. 3:18).

And you, who once were alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now He has reconciled... Colossians 1:21

2. Extending grace means loving the sinner who you deem does not deserve your love (Luke 6:32).

God loved us while we were yet sinners and totally unworthy of the least of His mercies (Gen. 32:10; Rom. 5:8).

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Romans 5:8

I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies and of all the truth which You have shown Your servant... Genesis 32:10a

3. Extending grace means forgiving, loving and praying for those who mistreat you (Luke 6:29-33).

Jesus was able to pray for those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34). Stephen was able to pray for those who stoned him (Acts 7:59-60).

And they stoned Stephen as he was calling on God and saying, “Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.” Then he knelt down and cried out with a loud voice, “Lord, do not charge them with this sin.” And when he had said this, he fell asleep. Acts 7:59-60

4. Extending grace means being generous with your finances to the undeserving (Luke 6:34; I Cor. 16:3).

And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even 'sinners' lend to 'sinners,' expecting to be repaid in full.

Jesus became poor so that we might become rich (II Cor. 8:9).

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich.

5. Extending grace means reaching out and ministering to those in need among the redeemed (II Cor. 8:1-9).

In II Corinthians 8 Paul calls upon the church at Corinth to enter into the grace of giving to the fellow believers in Jerusalem who were struggling financially. In the Body of Christ we are to supply what is lacking in others.

II Corinthians 8:6-7, NIV

So we urged Titus, since he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. But just as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

II Corinthians 8:14

Right now you have plenty and can help them. Then at some other time they can share with you when you need it. In this way, everyone's needs will be met.

The thought behind this is that God supplies all of our needs by His grace and mercy (Phil. 4:19). In other words, God takes care of His kids.

And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

As He takes care of us we are to look around and be generous to our fellow believers who are suffering lack. God wants to use us to supply their need. In either case, God is the one who supplies for the need, it's just that sometimes He provides through His **ambassadors of grace**—you and I.

One of the things that made the Early Church so great was that the Christians looked out for each other (Acts 2:44-45; 4:32-34).

6. Extending grace means committing ourselves to only speak those things that build others up (Eph. 4:29; Col. 4:6).

God speaks those things over our lives in faith. He relates to us through the cross and sees us in Christ.

We are to do the same with others our fellow believers.

Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. Ephesians 4:29

Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one. Colossians 4:6

7. Extending grace means showing kindness to all through Jesus Christ (Eph. 2:4-7).

God has shown us His kindness in Christ Jesus. We are to extend that kindness to all whether we feel that they deserve it or not.

But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Closing

Do not receive the grace of God in vain.

Paul challenged the believers in Corinth not to receive the grace of God in vain (II Cor. 6:1).

We....plead with you not to receive the grace of God in vain.

Other Translations:

...do not receive it to no purpose. –Amp

...we beg you to make good use of God's kindness to you. –CEV

...we beg you, then, not to fail to use the grace of God. –Phillips

Don't let God's undeserved love be wasted on you. –Beck

I appeal to you not to accept the grace of God without using it. –Berkley

How do you receive the grace of God in vain?

I think there are at least three ways we receive the grace of God in vain. We receive the grace of God in vain when we...

1. Continue to walk in willful sin or walking away from God after experiencing His grace.

Romans 6:1-2, NIV

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer?

2. Get mad at God when we do not understand what is going on around you (Heb. 12:15).

Hebrews 12:15

See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

3. Fail to extend to others the grace that we have received from the Lord (Mt. 18:21-35).

Matthew 18:32-35

“Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me. 33 Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?’ 34 And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him. 35 So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.”

Let’s be ambassadors of God’s grace and show the world the grace of God in a tangible way by loving, forgiving, blessing and showing kindness to all.

Prayer for grace to extend grace.