

Jesus- Grace

Name some attributes of God that particularly relate to humanity....

Which attribute(s) stand out the most? To me- love and grace.

It is interesting to note that the word translated “grace” is only used 14 times in the entire Old Testament and just six times in the gospels but over 100 times in the rest of the New Testament. Four of the six times grace is used in the gospels is in the first chapter of John’s gospel speaking of Christ.

14 The Word became flesh and took up residence among us. We observed His glory, the glory as the One and Only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. ¹⁵ (John testified concerning Him and exclaimed, “This was the One of whom I said, ‘The One coming after me has surpassed me, because He existed before me.’”) ¹⁶ Indeed, we have all received grace after grace from His fullness, ¹⁷ for although the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. **John 1:14-17** (HCSB)

Jesus never even used the word grace one time in all His teaching and preaching. But this is such a divine and crucial attribute of God toward humanity. It is by grace alone that we are saved. Without grace we are all hopelessly lost in our sin. Why didn’t Jesus talk about grace? He didn’t need to. He was full of grace. He lived, taught and exuded grace. Would you rather hear about, discuss, and talk about grace or would you

rather experience it? Many people who encountered Jesus experienced grace.

Time for the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles was approaching and Jesus' brothers were trying to persuade Him to go with them to Jerusalem for the feast. Jesus chose to not go with them instead going a little later secretly because threats on His life were escalating and it wasn't His time yet. After the festival was already half over Jesus entered Jerusalem inconspicuously and went to the temple complex and began to teach. There was much division and conflict about His teaching. Some believed He was Messiah, others were confused because He came from Galilee. The temple police were sent to arrest Jesus but they were so moved by His teaching that they failed to fulfill their duty. Jesus slipped away and spent the night at the Mount of Olives.

² At dawn He went to the temple complex again, and all the people were coming to Him. He sat down and began to teach them. ³ Then the scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery, making her stand in the center. ⁴ "Teacher," they said to Him, "this woman was caught in the act of committing adultery. ⁵ In the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do You say?" ⁶ They asked this to trap Him, in order that they might have evidence to accuse Him. Jesus stooped down and started writing on the ground with His finger. ⁷ When they persisted in questioning Him, He stood up and said to them, **"The one without sin among you should be the first to throw a stone at her."** ⁸ Then He stooped down again and continued writing on the ground. ⁹ When they heard

this, they left one by one, starting with the older men. Only He was left, with the woman in the center. ¹⁰ When Jesus stood up, He said to her, "Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?" ¹¹ "No one, Lord," she answered. "Neither do I condemn you," said Jesus. "Go, and from now on do not sin any more."] ¹² Then Jesus spoke to them again: "I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."] John 8:2-12 (HCSB)

Nowhere in this dialog between Jesus and the woman is the word grace used but grace was all over that place and was certainly being offered to the woman. In this encounter we gain a full panoramic view of the conflict between law and grace. The law said she must die. Those scribes and Pharisees were not lying or stretching the truth.

¹⁰ If a man commits adultery with a married woman—if he commits adultery with his neighbor's wife—both the adulterer and the adulteress must be put to death. [Lev 20:10 (HCSB)

The law demanded, and still does, that sin be punished. But with divine wisdom Jesus raised the question of who was qualified to judge the woman and carry out her execution? Scribes? Pharisees? NO! Why? They too, though proclaimed guardians of the law, were sinners. Only Jesus was worthy! He was the only one qualified to pronounce judgment and carry out the punishment on this quite guilty sinner, but grace prevailed. Jesus withheld judgment and condemnation which would have led to death and hell and offered mercy and forgiveness which if

accepted would result in new life. This is a perfect picture and demonstration of grace. She deserved condemnation and death. She was offered forgiveness and life.

Of course the scribes and Pharisees weren't concerned about grace or justice, they just wanted to trap Jesus. But Jesus took advantage of the situation and used to teach about and demonstrate His wonderful grace.

Remember, there was already a large crowd assembled of people who had come to listen to Jesus' teaching and the feast meant that Jerusalem was swollen with many extra people, like Jesus' brothers, who were there from Galilee for the festival. Not only did this woman experience the wonderful grace of Jesus the whole crowd including the scribes and Pharisees heard it and saw it.

Why did the accusers begin to walk away? We are not told. My guess is some were: Humiliated and embarrassed

Convicted of their own sin (Holy Spirit)

Overwhelmed by grace

What is grace? There are other uses of the word grace in the bible but in the context of God's grace toward us the Bible dictionary says- "God's forgiving mercy"

What is the difference between mercy and grace. Mercy simply refrains from punishment due. Grace offers mercy (avoid punishment) and also forgiveness, reconciliation with God, salvation and eternal life. That is grace, grace that saves.

Grace is God's unmerited favor. We don't deserve it. We can't earn it. It is not for sale. It can only be humbly, unconditionally received through faith. This, I'm quite sure, is one of, if not the most, misunderstood doctrines of all Christianity. The very nature and definition of grace reveals that it is undeserved and cannot be earned. But human nature cries out, "I have to do something. I have to be a better person. I have to give to get. I have to try harder." Truth- if you could offer one penny, change one behavior, do one thing differently to acquire God's favor it would no longer be grace.... Just accept it!

That said, once grace is received then grace compels you to "go and sin no more." Jesus did not offer freedom from condemnation and forgiveness to send the adulteress woman back to her old way of life. He commanded her **"Go, and from now on do not sin any more."** John 8:11 (HCSB) Grace changes a person from the inside out. Jesus expounded on that even more in what first might seem like a detached statement. **"I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life."** John 8:12 (HCSB)

But looking closely- anyone who has experienced grace similar to that which was offered to the woman has been transformed. They have received and been changed by the light of life, the light of Christ in them and they will never again walk, or live in a lifestyle of darkness. If someone says they have experienced God's grace but they still walk (or live) in darkness they are a liar and the truth is not in them. (I Jn 1)

Does this wonderful, amazing attribute of God called grace appeal to you? Be sure you.....

Grace:

Experience it

It is built into all our thinking just about since birth. “You can’t get something for nothing. Look out for yourself. Pull yourself up by your own bootstraps. Take care of number“1.” Everything good comes through hard work and perseverance. If you want something you have to earn it.” These things may be true in many areas of life but this kind of thinking in regard to faith and salvation will keep you from ever experiencing God’s saving and sustaining grace.

Grace is the unmerited, unearned favor of God offered as a gift to you. This gift was bought and paid for by Jesus’ death on the cross. Just accept it and experience the transformation it brings.

7 I was made a servant of this [gospel] by the gift of God’s grace that was given to me by the working of His power.
Eph 3:7 (HCSB)

Have you accepted God’s gift of eternal life by His grace? “The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Are you experiencing God’s grace on a daily basis? Let His grace overwhelm you and sustain you.

Embrace it

When I was a teenager I experienced God’s wonderful, amazing saving grace, but I did not do much to embrace it. I didn’t allow it to fully impact and change who I was to become who God wanted me to be. To embrace grace is to accept God’s sole

authority in my life. I didn't do that. To embrace grace is to be overwhelmed with gratitude for what Christ has done leading to passionate worship. I didn't do that. To embrace grace is to respond with faithful giving and service to Christ and His church. I didn't do that.

As I mentioned last week, It wasn't until eight or nine years after I first experienced God's grace unto salvation that I began to embrace it and when I did my life quickly began to change. How could I have taken God's grace so lightly for so long? How could I enjoy and look forward to the blessings and promises brought on by God's grace and not be moved to "go and sin no more." How could I have accepted such a wonderful gift of salvation by God's amazing grace and not be compelled to give back to Him through my offerings, time and service?....It is only by grace that God patiently called and waited for me to respond to that call.

Please take my advice as one who lived several years without fully embracing God grace in my life, still trying to rule and reign my own life, competing with Christ as true Lord of my life. Embrace grace. Be transformed by it. Be overwhelmed by it.

1 What should we say then? Should we continue in sin in order that grace may multiply? **2** Absolutely not! How can we who died to sin still live in it? **3** Or are you unaware that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? **4** Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, so

we too may walk in a new way of life. ⁵ For if we have been joined with Him in the likeness of His death, we will certainly also be in the likeness of His resurrection. ⁶ For we know that our old self was crucified with Him in order that sin's dominion over the body may be abolished, so that we may no longer be enslaved to sin, ⁷ since a person who has died is freed from sin's claims. ⁸ Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with Him, ⁹ because we know that Christ, having been raised from the dead, no longer dies. Death no longer rules over Him. ¹⁰ For in that He died, He died to sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives to God. ¹¹ So, you too consider yourselves dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.^[9]
Romans 6:1-11 (HCSB)

Exude it

If you have experienced and embraced grace, something very natural should have begun to take place in you. The grace that so wonderfully rescued and transformed you from a miserable, hell-bent, conflicted sinner to a redeemed, born-again, cleaned up, Jesus lovin' child of God should be oozing out of you like an over-ripe, firmly squeezed banana. Do you exude grace? I'm not talking about putting on your Sunday best and flickering a little light at the church building. I'm talking about Monday and Tuesday and..... Does grace flow through you toward others. Do others see God's grace in you as you live, work, and play? That's what Jesus meant after commanding the woman to not sin anymore. He said “**Anyone who follows Me will never walk in the darkness but will have the light of life.**” **J**ohn 8:12 (HCSB)

Your light, God's grace in you, should abundantly flow through you as you live. God's character should be your character offering forgiveness instead of condemnation. Patience instead of judgment. Mercy instead of harm. If grace is flowing through you, if Jesus' light is emanating from you, lives around you will be impacted for Christ's sake.