

Strength for Today

“The Lord, the Lord God, [is] compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth” (Exodus 34:6).

God's grace is His undeserved favor shown to sinners.

God's grace has always been a focus of praise for believers. Today's verse is quoted several times in the Psalms and elsewhere in Scripture (for example, Neh. 9:17, 31; Ps. 86:15; 103:8; 145:8). Paul is grateful for God's abundant grace in 1 Timothy 1:14, and John writes, “For of His fulness we have all received, and grace upon grace” (John 1:16). Today some of our favorite hymns are “Amazing Grace,” “Marvelous Grace of Our Loving Lord,” and “Wonderful Grace of Jesus.”

What exactly is grace? It is simply God's free, undeserved, and unearned favor. It is a gift given by God not because we are worthy of it, but only because God, out of His great love, wants to give it.

Grace is evident to Christians in two main ways. The first is electing, or saving, grace. God “has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity” (2 Tim. 1:9). “By grace [we] have been saved through faith” (Eph. 2:8). This is God's grace to sinners, for “where sin increased, grace abounded all the more” (Rom. 5:20).

Another grace in our lives is enabling, or sustaining, grace. We didn't just receive grace to be saved; we now live in grace. It is the grace of God that enables us to live the Christian life. When Paul asked that some debilitating “thorn in the flesh” (2 Cor. 12:7) be removed, the Lord told him, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness” (v. 9). Paul elsewhere says, “I can do all things through Him who strengthens me” (Phil. 4:13).

Remember, we have earned neither saving nor sustaining grace. Nothing we can do can make us worthy of one more bit of grace. God says, “I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious” (Ex. 33:19). This truth should make us all more grateful because He saved us and sustains us despite our sin. It should also make us humble because we have no worthiness to boast about (Eph. 2:9).

Suggestions for Prayer

Thank God for His grace in saving and sustaining you.

For Further Study

Read Genesis 9:8-19.

-How did God extend grace to Noah and his family?

-What was the visible sign or symbol?

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