

Grace – a Big word.

Grace – then what is it?

Lot's of cliché answers.

God's

Riches

At

Christ's

Expense. A Lovely little acrostic and pretty good for describing grace at one level.

A bible dictionary wraps it up this way.

**GRACE** [H2834, H2858, H2876, G5919, G5921].

A term employed by the Biblical writers with a wide variety of meanings:

charm, sweetness, loveliness (Ps 45:2),

the attitude of God toward men (Tit 2:11),

the method of salvation (Eph 2:5),

the opposite of legalism (Gal 5:4),

the impartation of spiritual power or gifts (1Co 2:6; 2Ti 2:1),

the liberty which God gives to men (Jude 4).

a. Thus by analogy, **grace has come to signify the kindness of God to man** (Luke 1:30)

b. In addition, the word "grace" is often used to **express the concept of kindness given to someone who doesn't deserve it**: hence, undeserved favor, especially that kind or degree of favor bestowed on sinners through Jesus Christ (Eph 2:4-5).

Grace, therefore, is that unmerited favor of God toward fallen man whereby, for the sake of Christ--the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14)--he has provided for man's redemption.

Hey there is some stuff here. We probably don't need to look at the another meaning in the dictionary: charm, sweetness, loveliness, we understand that concept within our own culture and it is more cultural than explaining God's perspective.

This week we will look at the meaning of this grace thing. Next week we will look at its impact on us. The following week we will look at replicating it.

So here we go.

1. **The attitude of God toward men** (Tit 2:11-13)

Ever heard the term "God is gracious toward men" Well we heard that in principal at Christmas, you know the angels came and announced the birth "**Good will toward men etc**"

TIT 2:11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men. <sup>12</sup> It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age, <sup>13</sup> while we wait for the blessed hope--the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,

God has graciously allowed a format for us to be able to achieve a relationship, not just a relationship but a truly right relationship able to reach God's concept of correctness. That format is through Jesus Christ. Our acknowledgment of what he did by dying on the cross in our place, becoming alive again and allowing us to know Him.

God's attitude is that He would and did do everything necessary to give us that chance. God's attitude to us led to Him finding a way of salvation.

2. That way of salvation is also termed grace.

(Eph 2:5),<sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved. The format for salvation is termed to be grace. God's grace allowed an act that brings salvation for us from the effects of sin.

Grace is also the sustaining influence enabling the believer to persevere in the Christian life. Acts 11:23<sup>23</sup> When he arrived and saw the evidence of the grace of God, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts. (; 20:32; 2 Cor 9:14). It is also used as a token or proof of salvation (1:5).

3. Grace is also referred to as the opposite of legalism The relationship between law and grace is one of the major themes of Paul's writings (Rom 5:2, 15-17; 8:1-2; Gal 5:4-5; Eph 2:8-9). Grace is the medium or instrument through which God has effected the salvation of all believers (Titus 2:11). To comparison is that we as humans think that it is within our power, that we can do something. Paul speaks against that idea. WE can't keep the rules well enough to make salvation happen. Grace can achieve what we can't.

Listen what happens when we try to do it ourselves.

(Gal 5:4),<sup>4</sup> You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

4. God's grace is also referred to the impartation of spiritual power or gifts (1Co12:6;

<sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.

2Ti 2:1

2TI 2:1 You then, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Grace can also refer to the capacity for the reception of divine life (1:10). It may also mean a gift of knowledge (1 Cor 1:4) and thanksgiving or gratitude expressed for favor (10:30; 1 Tim 1:1-2).

5. Grace also has the meaning of the liberty which God gives to men

(Jude 4).<sup>4</sup> For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord.

By God's grace we are free. Actually we are free enough to ignore grace as the guys as Jude 4 did. Bit weird that but God's grace is optional for us to appropriate.