

THE GRACE OF GOD

Meaning of Grace

1)The Word Cha'ris.

In the English translation of the New Testament the word "grace" comes from the Greek word (cha'ris), this word is found in the New Testament Greek text more than 170 times. The word was in common use during this time and had a number of other meanings.

The word seems to have been used to describe an appearance like "gracefulness," this compares with Luke 4:22;

"22 And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. And they said, Is not this Joseph's son? "

Col 4:6.

"6 Let your speech be alway with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."

The same word is translated "joy" in 3 John 1:4.

" 4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth. "

A second use of the word is used towards a person or persons and is translated "favour" as in Luke 2:52.

"52 And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man."

A further use of the word shows the effect on the person, like "gratitude," and used in Luke 17:9;

"9 Doth he thank that servant because he did the things that were commanded him? I trow not. "

Or "thanks," as in Rom 6:17.

"17 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

2) Use of the word Cha'ris in the New Testament.

In the New Testament additional meanings were added to usage, as well as the use describing "speech" and "thanks for the blessing" the word "cha'ris" took on the meaning of "a gift."

The word is used when the Corinthian Christians sent a money gift to Jerusalem, 1 Cor 16:3;

"3 And when I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send to bring your liberality unto Jerusalem. "

2 Cor 8:19,

"19 And not that only, but who was also chosen of the churches to travel with us with this grace, which is administered by us to the glory of the same Lord, and declaration of your ready mind:"

worldly goods that God supplies for life of the Church.

Other uses of the Greek word are as an indication of benefit to the receiver, for example 2 Cor 9:8.

"8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:"

The main use of this word is associated with God.

What is the Grace of God?

We must ask ourselves what do we mean by the "Grace of God." As sinners we do not deserve any help or kindness from God. We have rejected and disobeyed the Laws and instructions He has given, yet He still has mercy, love and care for each of us. In showing us mercy, God does not give us what we deserve however, because of His grace He is instead prepared to give us what we do not deserve. All this is only possible through the act of Jesus dying on the cross, the debt for sin has been paid.

This mercy and grace does not mean that He can ignore our sinful lives, the love, purity and holiness of God cannot conflict, cannot be against each other. As an Holy God He must judge and punish any disobedience. As a loving God, He wants to save sinners. It is through His grace that this is made possible.

Why do we require the Grace of God?

The Bible lists a number of reasons why we require the Grace of God:-

1) The most important one is that we are sinners, Rom 6:23.

"23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

There are many who think that just living a good life will get them into heaven, "I try to obey all the laws, work hard, look after my family, even go to church occasionally, I'm far better than most people in this world." However, that is not enough, Eph 2:8,9

"8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. "

This tells us that "works," or just living a "good life" will not save us, salvation is a gift from God, by His Son paying the price on the cross.

We each are born with a nature which is against God, no one is a sinner because they do wrong, we do wrong, sin because we are sinners. We all have chosen to disobey God, therefore, we need His salvation through His grace.

2) We are here to serve God.

Once we receive salvation through grace we become His servants and are given a task or job. To carry out the task He has given us God gives us the abilities and powers through His grace, this grace is not a one time gift but is available and supplied as required. Being a servant does not mean we will have an easy time, the world is against anyone who serves God, many of the jobs He requires of us may involve tough problems, but, God will provide all that is needed, consider Moses, Peter and Paul their tasks, God never failed them.

3) We are fighting a spiritual battle.

1 Peter 5:8,9;

"8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

9 Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world."

A Believer is not liked by the world, though Satan can never take our salvation, he is out to destroy any work for God, it is a continual battle, so we need the power and grace of God to fight this battle, 2 Tim 2:1-3.

"1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. "

4) Health and suffering.

We each live in a world which is full of pain and suffering, brought on by our flesh nature. God has never promised that true Believers will not suffer pain and suffering, Paul had a health problem, he looked for healing from God three times, but God had a purpose for it, 2 Cor 12:7-9.

"7 And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure.

8 For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me.

9 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. "

God needed to make sure Paul never became proud of his ministry, 1 Cor 15:10;

"10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. "

Heb 4:16.

"16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

God could have healed Paul and can heal any Believer at any time, but any action by God will be to His glory. God may feel that the Believer needs a little suffering or pain to increase their love and faith, we may not understand the reason for this action until we reach heaven. To allow us to carry these burdens we need the grace of God.

5) We need help in learning.

The spiritual life is so different from the flesh life so the Believer needs help from God to allow them to learn, Titus 2:11-13;

"11 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,

12 Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;

13 Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; "

Matt 11:29,30.

"29 Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.

30 For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

Grace allows us to become more Christ like, to understand all that God asks and requires of us.

Bible References to the Grace of God.

We have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith. Rom 1:5

Access by faith into this grace. Rom 5:1,2

Faith and grace has been given to me. Rom 12:3

The grace that has been given to me from God. Rom 15:15

If by grace, then it is no longer by works. Rom 11:6

For the grace of God which is given you. 1 Cor 1:4-7

According to the grace of God which is given unto me. 1 Cor 3:10

By the grace of God I am what I am. 1 Cor 15:10

My grace is sufficient for you. 2 Cor 12:9

Abound in this grace also. 2 Cor. 8:7

Grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. John 1:17

God's forgiving mercy. Eph 2:5

Dispensation of the grace of God. Eph 3:2,8

Be sober and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought to you. 1 Peter 1:13

Be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2 Tim 2:1

Every man has received the gift, ... as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. 1 Peter 4:10

Have you despised the Spirit of grace? Heb 10:29.

Saved by Grace. Eph 2:8-10

Served by Grace. 1 Cor 15:9,10

Come to the Throne of grace for our needs. Heb 4:16

Endure suffering. 2 Cor 12:9

Strengthened 2 Tim 2:1

Victorious soldiers, God is all grace 1 Peter 5:10

The Bible is the Word of Grace Acts 20:32

We have access to the Spirit of Grace. Heb 10:29

We receive Grace for grace. John 1:16

Justification and Grace

"To Justify" is used in the world of Law and Law Courts, it has the meaning of 'acquit,' declared or said to be 'righteous,' the opposite to 'condemned' This word reflects an action by the judge when he declares a person 'Not guilty' or Proved to be right, acceptable..

The use in the Bible is used as God is the 'Righteous Judge of the earth.' Mankind does not or cannot reach the standard set by the Law and the Judge of the earth must declare mankind as guilty.

When Jesus the Son of God died on the cross He took all of the sins of the world on Himself, therefore the Judge cannot see a guilty person, there can be no charge of 'guilty,' a true believer is sin free, but still not acceptable in the eye's of God, we need to also take upon ourselves also the righteousness of Christ, 2 Corinthians 5:21.

"21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

The sin of a person is therefore covered and replaced by the righteousness of Christ. God the Judge only sees the righteousness of His Son Jesus when He looks at a true believer, this cover was placed there when the person asks for forgiveness and places their faith in Christ, Rom 8:1.

"1 There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

Grace in Justification

The passage we must examine is Rom 11:5,6.

"5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.

6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

Here Paul links 'works' and 'grace,' The whole act of forgiveness through Jesus comes entirely from within God Himself, if God had not sent Jesus to become the God Man and then die on the cross, there would be no way back to God. Mankind could not do anything to save themselves, no 'works' would or can make him right to God. Being made righteous is a pure gift which has not been earned.

"Grace" then becomes involved, it is the opposite to "works" and comes freely from God, without it there can be no Justification.

Examine Romans 3 through to Romans 6, especially Rom 3:23,24;

"23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: "

Rom 4:4.

"4 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt."

Gal 2:20,21;

"20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

21 I do not frustrate the grace of God: for if righteousness come by the law, then Christ is dead in vain."

Eph 2:4-9;

" 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in 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 through Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. "

2 Tim 1:9;

"9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, "

Eph 3:8;

"8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;"

Gal 1:6;

"6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: "

Tit us 3:5-7;

"5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;

6 Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour;

7 That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

John 1:17;

"17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. "

Acts 15:11;

"11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. "

Jude 1:4;

"4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 5:12;

"12 By Silvanus, a faithful brother unto you, as I suppose, I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand. "

Rom 15:15;

"15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, "

1 Cor 15:10.

10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

Grace in Christian lives:

2 Cor. 8:7;

"7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also."

2 Peter 3:18.

"18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen."

Future and Grace:

1 Peter 1:13

"13 Wherefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ; "