

What Does the Bible Say About Grace?

Grace is one of the sweetest words in the Bible, and one of the most misused. To some it means that God is so kind He will overlook anything, so that how a man lives hardly matters. To others it is a word they sing but could not explain. The Bible means something definite by grace, and getting it right is the difference between humble gratitude and careless presumption. Let us see what it says.

What Grace Is

Grace is favor we have not earned and do not deserve. It is God being good to people who had every reason to expect the opposite. Paul put it where it belongs, against the dark background of our sin. *"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us"* ([Romans 5:8](#)). He did not wait for us to clean ourselves up. He reached down while we were still in our sins. That is grace.

Saved by Grace, Not by Our Own Goodness

This is why salvation can never be something we earn. *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast"* ([Ephesians 2:8-9](#)). Even our best falls short, for Isaiah confessed that *"all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags"* ([Isaiah 64:6](#)), and Jesus told us that after we have done everything commanded we must still say, *"We are unprofitable servants"* ([Luke 17:10](#)). No one buys his way into heaven. Grace humbles us, because it leaves us nothing to brag about.

Grace Came Through Christ

Grace is not a soft feeling in God that costs nothing. It came to us through the cross. *"grace and truth came by Jesus Christ"* ([John 1:17](#)). Paul described the price of it, that *"though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich"* ([2 Corinthians 8:9](#)). When we speak of grace, we are speaking of the blood of the Son of God. It is free to us only because it was costly to Him.

Grace Is Not a License to Sin

Here is where grace is most abused. Some reason that if grace covers sin, then sin is no great matter, and a man may live as he pleases. Paul met that lie head on. *"Shall we continue in sin,*

that grace may abound? God forbid" (Romans 6:1-2). Jude warned of men who were "turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness" (Jude 1:4), using the kindness of God as cover for the very sins it was meant to free them from. Grace was never given to excuse sin. It was given to break its hold.

Grace Teaches Us to Live Godly

Far from leaving us to do as we please, grace is a teacher, and it teaches holiness. *"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world" (Titus 2:11-12).* The man who has truly tasted grace does not love his sin more. He loves it less. Grace trains the heart it saves.

Grace Is Greater Than Our Sin

No one is beyond the reach of grace, and that is part of its wonder. Wherever sin has done its worst, grace can do more. *"where sin abounded, grace did much more abound" (Romans 5:20).* Paul, who had hunted down Christians and stood by while a man was stoned to death, called himself the chief of sinners, and then said God had shown him mercy on purpose, *"that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him" (1 Timothy 1:16).* If grace could reach Paul, it can reach anyone. No past is too dark and no sin too deep for the grace that flows from the cross. The only sin grace cannot cover is the one a man refuses to bring to it.

Grace Must Be Received and Continued In

Grace is offered to all, but it is not forced on anyone, and it is not held without care. We come into it by faith, for it is *"by whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand" (Romans 5:2).* Paul begged some that they *"receive not the grace of God in vain" (2 Corinthians 6:1),* and warned others they had *"fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4).* So the saints were urged to *"continue in the grace of God" (Acts 13:43).* Grace is a place to stand and stay, not a thing to take once and presume upon forever.

So receive grace as what it is, a gift you could never earn, bought at a price you could never pay. Do not try to deserve it, for you cannot. Do not abuse it, for it was given to make you holy. Take it humbly, walk in it carefully, and let it teach you, day by day, to live for the God who showed it to you.

Every Scripture reference in this study links to the King James Version. Open it and read for yourself.