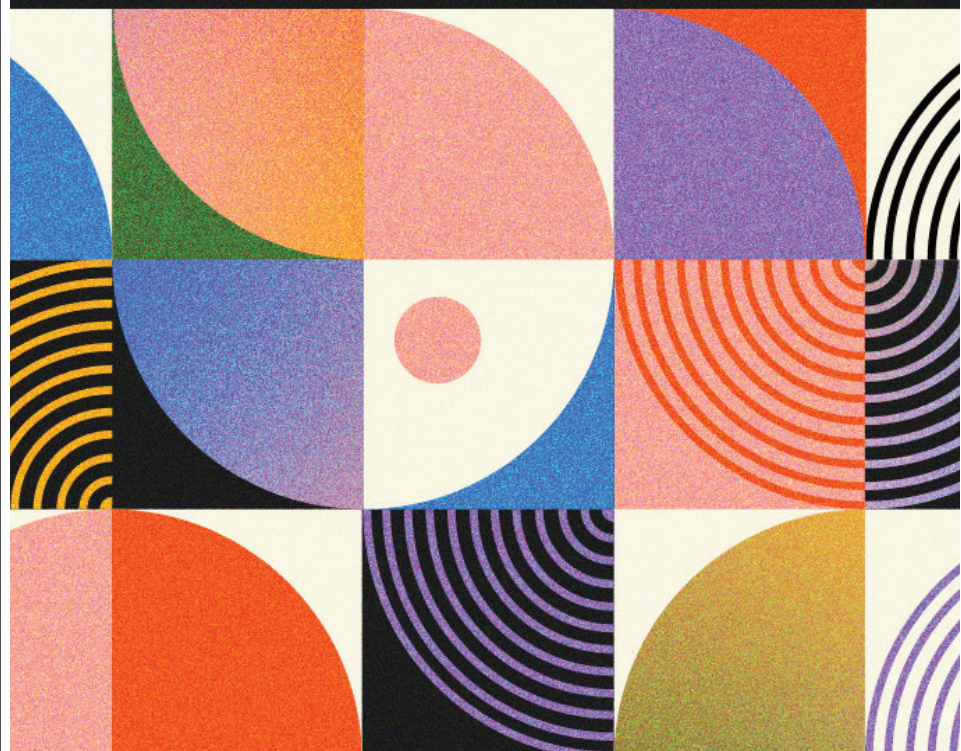




# Free

*by the Grace of God*

***Devotionals: Book 2***



# Eagerness to Show Grace

Christina Ellis

## Read Isaiah 30:18

*“Therefore the LORD longs to be gracious to you,  
And therefore He waits on high to have compassion on you.  
For the LORD is a God of justice;*

*How blessed are all those who long for Him.”*

When someone hurts us, when they disappoint us, when they let us down, we’re not normally in a hurry to show grace. We want the person in the wrong to show remorse, apologize, and make amends. And if they can do that satisfactorily, then we’ll be willing to start showing some grace. That’s why Isaiah 30:18 is so startling. God doesn’t just allow grace—He longs to show it. He’s not waiting for a perfect apology or a cleaned-up heart. His posture toward us, even in our failure, is eager kindness. While we brace ourselves for judgment, He’s preparing compassion. That’s who He is.

Isaiah 30 addresses a nation running in the wrong direction — when Judah was threatened, they looked to Egypt for security instead of trusting in the Lord. Though God warned them, they still insisted on going their own way. And yet, this verse interrupts the story with a stunning truth: God isn’t looking to punish. He’s waiting to show compassion. Even after rebellion, His posture remains open-handed and kind. He waits—not because they must earn His mercy—but because He delights to give it in spades when they turn back to Him. Grace isn’t a reward for performance. It’s the overflow of who God is.



This verse offers breathtaking clarity about God's heart: He is not watching with arms crossed, demanding change before He'll act in kindness. He is already inclined to show mercy. He is just and His justice makes His mercy even more powerful. His longing to be gracious is not rooted in what we bring, but in what He's already done for us on the cross. And those who turn toward Him, however weak or weary, are blessed, not because they've proven themselves, but because they've trusted the One who never fails. His grace meets us where we are, not where we wish we were.

If you've stumbled, drifted, or failed, God has not moved away from you. He waits—not with condemnation, but with compassion. His desire to restore you is not based on how strong your return is, but on how willing He is to love. You don't need to earn your way back. You only need to turn and trust.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- Do you picture God as eager to show you grace, or slow to forgive?
- Where have you been trying to earn what God already wants to give freely?
- Spend time thanking God for His compassionate posture. What would it look like to rest in it today?



# Guarding the Gift of Grace in Community

Seth Mabry

## Read Hebrews 12:15

*“See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled.”*

Imagine this: you’re standing in a lush garden, vibrant and peaceful. Then, unnoticed at first, a single weed sprouts. If left alone, it spreads, winding through the soil, choking life from the beauty around it. Bitterness is that weed in the soil of our relationships. It rarely begins with shouting or division; it often starts small: a hurt unspoken, a misunderstanding left unresolved, a wound that festers in silence. Hebrews 12:15 warns us that grace in the life of a believer, if not actively pursued and protected, can be overlooked. And when it is, bitterness can take root—and the damage spreads fast, touching more than just ourselves.

This verse is part of a larger encouragement in Hebrews to live faithfully in light of God’s grace and discipline. The writer is urging believers to strengthen their spiritual walk and support one another, not just as individuals, but as a community running the race of faith together. In this context, the grace of God isn’t just about salvation—it’s the power and provision to live in unity, forgiveness, and holiness. The warning is clear: if anyone falls short of that grace, bitterness can grow like a poisonous root, bringing division and defilement to the whole body. It’s not just personal—it’s communal.



Grace is both a gift and a responsibility. We receive it freely from God, but we also carry the privilege of helping others walk in it. When we ignore conflict, nurse resentment, or withdraw from community, we don't just hurt ourselves—we endanger the spiritual health of those around us. This verse calls us to vigilant grace-guarding. That means we must be honest about our hurts, quick to forgive, eager to reconcile, and unafraid to lovingly help others do the same. Bitterness multiplies, but so does grace—when we live it out. Imagine a church where no one is left behind in grace. That's the vision Hebrews offers.

Are there small signs of bitterness taking root in your heart today?

Ask God to show you where you might be withdrawing grace—from others or even yourself. Take a step toward someone who needs to be reminded they're not alone in this race. Guard grace well. It's too precious to lose.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- Where in your community or relationships might bitterness be quietly growing?
- How can you actively help someone else stay rooted in God's grace this week?
- Who do you need to forgive—or ask forgiveness from?



# Growing Deeper in Grace Throughout Life

Scott McEwen

## 2 Peter 3:18

*“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”*

Imagine a life where every day brings you closer to Jesus, where His grace shapes your heart and His truth lights your path. In 2 Peter 3:18, we’re called to grow in our relationship with Christ — not to stagnate, but to thrive in faith. This verse isn’t just a suggestion; it’s Peter’s final, urgent plea to believers. In a world pulling us in countless directions, what would it look like to pursue Jesus intentionally? Let’s dive into this verse and discover how to grow closer to our Savior.

Second Peter, written by the apostle Peter near the end of his life, addresses believers facing false teachings and moral challenges. In chapter 3, Peter focuses on the return of Christ, urging steadfastness despite scoffers who doubt God’s promises. He emphasizes God’s patience, desiring all to repent (2 Peter 3:9). Verse 18 concludes the letter with a call to spiritual growth, contrasting the instability of false teachers with the stability found in Christ. Peter’s readers, likely early Christians in Asia Minor, needed this encouragement to remain rooted in truth. This verse encapsulates Peter’s hope for believers: to mature in faith and knowledge, giving glory to Christ eternally.

This verse offers hope and direction. Growing in grace





means embracing God's unmerited favor, letting it transform how we live and love. Growing in knowledge (*gnosei*) invites us to know Jesus deeply—His character, teachings, and love—through Scripture and prayer. This growth guards us against deception, anchoring us in truth. Peter's doxology, "To Him be the glory," reminds us that our spiritual journey points to Christ's eternal reign. No matter our struggles, we're invited to keep growing, trusting God's grace is sufficient. This promise assures us that every step toward Jesus strengthens our faith, preparing us for eternity with Him.

Let's make growth a daily pursuit. Start with a simple habit: read a Bible verse or pray for five minutes each morning to deepen your knowledge of Jesus. Show grace by forgiving someone or offering kindness, reflecting Christ's love. Journal your thoughts to track how God's grace shapes you. In decisions, ask, "Does this glorify Jesus?" Share what you're learning about Christ with a friend or small group to stay accountable. These small steps build a life rooted in Him. As you grow, trust that God is working in you, equipping you to live for His glory now and forever.

## Reflection Questions:

- What is one way you can grow in your knowledge of Jesus this week?
- How can you show God's grace to someone in a challenging situation?
- What habits or distractions might be hindering your spiritual growth, and how can you address them?



# Living Under the Canopy of God's Grace

Russell Johnson

## Read Luke 2:40

*“The Child continued to grow and become strong, increasing in wisdom; and the grace of God was upon Him.”*

I've got a digital photo frame in my office that scrolls through pictures of my kids at different stages and moments of their lives. These little moments—first steps, musicals, basketball games, and significant milestones are fun to remember. I often catch myself getting pulled into those memories.

If digital photo frames were around 2,000 years ago, I wonder what picture Mary and Joseph would have had scrolling. When we think about Jesus, we often forget that He was a child, too. Jesus didn't walk onto the world stage as a fully-formed adult Messiah. He had to learn how to walk, how to use tools, and how to interact with others. He likely scraped His knees, sat with Joseph in the workshop, and asked a thousand questions—just like any other child. Luke 2:40 is our best shot at a digital photo frame when it comes to giving us a peek into Jesus' childhood. This verse reminds us: Jesus wasn't pretending to be human. He really was human. But here's what's struck me: “The grace of God was upon Him.”

What does that mean? Jesus didn't need grace the way we do. He was sinless. But grace isn't just about forgiveness. It's also about God's empowering presence. Jesus lived in that empowering presence perfectly. He didn't earn the Father's approval by what He did. He lived from the delight of already being His Son.





And here's the part that is true for you as a believer in Jesus Christ. If you've placed your trust in Jesus, then you are in Him, and that means God's grace is on you, too. Similarly, just as Jesus matured gradually under grace, our growth isn't a condition for receiving God's favor but a response to it. Grace isn't the reward at the finish line of hard work; it's the starting point and the continuing power for our journey. This liberates us from performance-based spirituality. We don't need to earn what has already been freely given. The grace that nurtured Jesus from childhood to the crucifixion is the same grace offered to us, not because we deserve it, but because of the richness of God's generosity.

I can imagine the Father looking at a photo frame of Jesus, seeing His growth and maturity as His grace was upon His Son. As you reflect on your own journey, rest in the fact that the Father, who delighted in watching His Son grow up under grace, takes that same delight in you. His grace isn't waiting for you to become something more—it's already yours, freely given. You're not working for grace. You're growing in it.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- In what areas of your life do you still feel you need to “earn” God's favor rather than resting in His freely given grace?
- Just as Jesus “grew and became strong, increasing in wisdom” under God's grace, we too are called to mature spiritually. What specific practice could you implement this week to position yourself under God's “grace canopy” and nurture your own growth in wisdom and strength?



# Grace That Empowers Bold Witness

Chad Melton

## Read Acts 4:33

*“And with great power the apostles were giving testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and abundant grace was upon them all.”*

What does boldness in your faith look like? Is it standing up for truth when it's unpopular? Speaking about Jesus in a conversation that feels risky? Or choosing to live differently—being a light in a dark world? No matter how it looks, boldness doesn't come naturally to most of us. We often wonder: Where does that kind of courage come from?

In Acts 4:33, we find the answer. The early church was marked by bold proclamation. They weren't just preaching. They were testifying to the core truth of the Christian faith: the resurrection of Jesus. His rising from the dead fulfilled prophecy and confirmed His identity as the promised Messiah. This wasn't a side note—it was the heartbeat of their message.

But the power behind their witness wasn't rooted in talent or charisma. It was the result of grace. The Greek word for “grace” (*charis*) speaks to God's favor—His loving support and commitment to work in the lives of His people. But it's not just passive kindness; it's active and empowering. God's favor rested on the apostles, working in and through them. It gave them the courage to speak with authority. God didn't just smile upon them. He moved powerfully through them.



And the impact of that grace extended beyond words. Jesus had told His disciples, “By this all men will know that you are My disciples; if you have love for one another” (John 13:35). As outsiders looked in, they saw something undeniably different, believers who loved radically, gave generously, and lived in unity. Their message was confirmed by their lifestyle. Grace empowered not only their preaching, but their compassion, generosity, and community.

That same *charis* is available today. God’s favor still empowers His people to live boldly and love sacrificially. By God’s grace through faith, we are saved, but it also changes how we live. Let His grace strengthen your heart today. When you stand in His grace, you’ll find courage to speak truth, love deeply, and reflect Jesus in a world that desperately needs Him.

## Reflection Questions:

- In what area of your life do you most need God’s grace to empower boldness—your conversations, your decisions, or your lifestyle?
- How is the favor of God currently shaping the way you love others—especially within the church community?
- What practical step can you take this week to let God’s grace work through you, not just in you?



# Personal Connection in God's Grace

Dan & Jane Pope

## Exodus 33:17

*"The LORD said to Moses, 'I will do this thing of which you have spoken, for you have found favor in My sight and I have known you by name.'"*

God's promise to Moses is actually quite personal to me. I was the young wife of Dan who was just beginning his pediatric practice in Abilene, Texas, and full-time mother of Greg, Alyson, and Peter Benjamin. While Dan was in his medical training, I had participated for not-quite-a-whole year in Bible Study Fellowship in the first class in Houston.

After army service in Killeen, Dan accepted an invitation to join a truly exceptional pediatric practice in Abilene. I mothered our children and looked for a Bible teacher who would start BSF in Abilene so that I could learn God's word more deeply. As I searched for interested women, God brought together a small group who had been in BSF in other cities and who shared my desire to see a class started in Abilene. BSF's representative, Lana, met with us and said the next step would be for one of us to agree to teach the class. Someone said, "Jane could do it." I am an introvert, quiet, not particularly courageous, and definitely not a leader. How could I teach a class that was only a dream?

We continued praying and as I prayed, I walked with Moses through God's call to him to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt. One by one, I lived with Moses as he listed excuses to God for why he definitely could not lead the children of



Israel. And I applied those excuses to my own situation—  
“I can’t talk!” “I am an introvert!” “What if no one comes?”  
Moses continued those excuses until God got angry at the  
excuses. THAT frightened me. And so my very specific  
prayer became Moses’ prayer: “If your presence does not  
go with us do not lead us up from here. For how then can  
it be known that I have found favor in Your sight, I and Your  
people? Is it not by Your going with us, so that we, I and Your  
people, may be distinguished from all the other people who  
are upon the face of the earth?” (Exodus 33:15-16)

God’s answer to my heart as to Moses was in verse 17. And  
so I breathed deeply and trusted Him and helped establish  
and then taught the brand-new BSF class in Abilene for 19  
years and in Nairobi for 5 years. God’s presence was clear,  
overcoming all my excuses, clearly demonstrating that He  
indeed is our personal, living, very real God. All praise goes  
only to Him.

## Reflection Questions:

- What is God asking of you right now that you’ve been avoiding because it feels too big or scary?
- How would your decision-making approach change if your primary question was “Will God’s presence be with me in this?” rather than “Will this be successful or comfortable?”
- If God truly knows you by name — your fears, dreams, strengths, and struggles — how does this change the way you view yourself and your potential to serve Him?



# Grace as the Expression of God's Character

Melissa Phan

## Read Psalm 145:8

*"The LORD is gracious and merciful;  
Slow to anger and great in lovingkindness."*

There are some things in scripture that I can ponder and wonder at and dig into, only to feel my eyes twitch and mind wander into what feels like no-mans-land. Then, there are some things that God is so clear with, to the point He will repeat it over and over so I can't miss it. The clarity preempts all my questions and settles my tendency to overthink. God displays much of who He is by telling stories and stating plainly so that it's crystal clear.

Psalm 145 encompasses a classic expression of praise for Yahweh's character in verse eight. It actually occurs in seven other places in scripture—Exodus 34:6, Numbers 14:18, Nehemiah 9:17, Psalm 86:15, Psalm 103:8, Joel 2:13 and Jonah 4:2. David repeats this phrase in this psalm of praise to give a list of four key words in Hebrew that describe God's motivating attitudes—"gracious," "merciful," "anger", and "lovingkindness". All four are packed with deep meaning. Beautiful examples of all four are found throughout scripture. David reflects here on God's favor and divine enablement as His motivating attitude, how He gives to those who don't deserve it. When one deserves His wrath, He gives mercy. When people continue in sin and give way to anger, He is patient.

By the grace of God we live, worshiping His incredible and





immeasurable character, unwavering and unchanging. We sing praises of His mystery and all that He is. We'll spend this life and our eternal life learning who God is fully. It is a lifelong search and a joy because with each discovery we find more to be praised. All the while He fully knows us. He is more familiar with who we are and our hearts than anyone could ever be, including ourselves. What a gift to trust the Almighty to help us know who we are and learn what His character teaches us of our Creator. By His grace we live, and He expresses that relentlessly to His children.

Some of His attributes belong only to Him— omnipotence, almighty, infinite, and sovereign are some. As His creation living in His grace, we can foster and grow in His character. We are to be holy as God is holy. We are to love as God has loved us. We can extend the grace that He has given us freely. We can be merciful even when we have a laundry list of what someone deserves. We can be slow to anger and fight our flesh's reaction. We can be abundant in lovingkindness to those we encounter daily.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- List off the character qualities of God you have witnessed in your life. Pray through each and ask God to help you see Him more today.
- Is there a part of you that doesn't feel like you can trust God's character is true? What lie could you be believing that His character doesn't extend to you?
- Read Exodus 34:6, Numbers 14:18, Nehemiah 9:17, Psalm 86:15, Psalm 103:8, Joel 2:13 and Jonah 4:2. See what connects between these passages.



# Grace That Claims Us as God's Own

Eric Wischmann

## Read Isaiah 43:1-2

*"But now, thus says the LORD, your Creator, O Jacob, And He who formed you, O Israel, 'Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine! When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; And through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, Nor will the flame burn you.'"*

Self-worth is a fascinating thing. It's frustrating how often our natural tendency is to seek it in what we do. It's so easy to be tempted to tie our worth to our finances, careers, or the quality of our relationships—as a friend, spouse, child, or parent.

For me, growing up—and still at times as an adult—I felt that self-worth had to be earned. I grew up in a small, traditional church, where being a Christian was more about what you did than who you were. Self-worth had to be earned. I looked at my sin and was overwhelmed knowing that I could never do enough to earn it.

Isaiah was tasked with being God's mouthpiece to Judah, the southern kingdom of Israel. He had to address Judah's sin while pointing them to the future restoration God had promised. Isaiah 43 focuses on God's grace. Judah wasn't in a position to earn anything. They were deeply entangled in idolatry and rebellion against God's commands. And now, facing the threat of Assyria, I can only imagine the fear they



must have felt. What ground did they have to stand on based on their own works? None.

But God reminds them why they are worthy. In verse 1, He points them back to their relationship with Him: He is their Creator, and they are His creation. He had redeemed them. Being a child of God is about who we are because of what God has done, not what we have done. God's words here are like a father comforting his child—reminding them in their fear that nothing will separate them. They are loved, they are His, they have been redeemed by unmerited grace.

Each of us has been redeemed by that same unmerited grace—so great it changes our eternity and our very identity. A grace we could never earn and therefore can never lose. Our self-worth doesn't rise and fall based on how we've done at work, in school, as a parent, as our parent's child, or as a spouse. From the moment we put our faith in Jesus, we are worthy because we have been redeemed by the unmerited grace of the Creator of the universe.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- Where are you tempted to tie your self-worth to your achievements or performance rather than resting in your identity as a redeemed child of God?
- When fear or pressure overwhelms you, how can you remember God's promise that He is with you in the deep waters and the fires of life (Isaiah 43:2)?
- What would it look like for you to live each day with the unshakable confidence that you are loved, redeemed, and precious in God's sight—regardless of how you perform? What would it communicate to the people around you that you love?



# Grace as Divine Compassion

Rick Wilcox

## Read Zechariah 12:10

*"I will pour out on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication."*

When Zechariah shares God's promise—"I will pour out"—we're reminded that grace isn't earned. It flows straight from God's heart, unmeasured and overwhelming. That Hebrew phrase "pour out" paints a vivid picture—God opening the floodgates of heaven. Grace doesn't trickle; it floods. We can't earn it or control it. It simply pours.

Free grace was never meant to stay stagnant. In Luke 10, the Good Samaritan "felt compassion" for the man beaten by the roadside. That Greek word describes the deepest kind of love—the kind that moves you from the inside out. It's the same word used for Jesus' own compassion. When we truly experience God's free grace, we're moved to share it with others. It's how we love our neighbors the way Jesus taught us.

I see this beautiful truth played out in our church family all the time. In hospital rooms where you've held each other's hands, in our recovery and support groups where you've shared your struggles, and in moments when crisis hits—you've shown up for one another. God's Spirit creates both the grace to keep going and the heart to serve others. The free grace that saves us transforms us into people who freely give grace away.

When we look at Jesus—pierced for us—we see that



God's grace cost Him everything, yet it comes to us completely free. Paul understood this when he heard God say, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." (2 Corinthians 12:9) God's free grace flows strongest when we're honest about how much we need it.

In our shared church life, we have the privilege of being both receivers and givers of this free grace. Like the Good Samaritan, we feel compassion and act on it—not to earn God's love, but because we already possess it. Whether in our community, during crisis care, or in everyday friendships, we demonstrate God's compassion through ordinary people transformed by extraordinary grace.

This week, may you experience both receiving and giving free grace, knowing that Jesus paid the full cost so grace could be truly free for you.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- How does viewing God's grace as an overflowing flood (not measured drops) reshape your understanding of what you've received? Where might you still be trying to earn His favor?
- Think of a recent opportunity you had to show compassion. How could a deeper grasp of God's grace change how you respond to others in need?
- Where have you seen or experienced grace in your community? How can you more actively receive and extend that kind of grace to others?



# Grace That Offers Rest to the Weary

Collin Trimble

## Read Matthew 11:28-30

*“Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and YOU WILL FIND REST FOR YOUR SOULS. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.”*

Have you ever seen a toddler try to pick up something that is too heavy? They walk up fully expecting to lift this heavy object, wrap their too-short arms around it, and try to pick it up with all of their might. Their face strains, they give a little grunt, and they attempt to pick it up, but it doesn't move, even after a few attempts. Finally, they turn and look at you with a confused look, not understanding why it won't budge.

Just like the toddler attempting to lift something impossibly heavy, Jews during the time of Jesus were trying to live under an impossibly heavy standard of perfection placed on them by the religious elite of their time. Many of the Jews had the right intention. They wanted to honor God, but their means of achieving that were flawed. Their hearts were infected by the same original sin that has plagued humanity since Adam and Eve were in the garden—self-sufficiency.

In today's passage, Jesus is teaching a group of Jews who were worn out trying to live up to an impossible standard of perfection. Jesus uses an illustration of two oxen tied together by the same yoke, pulling a cart or till. During that time, it was standard practice for the farmer to take a young,





inexperienced ox and pair it with an older, seasoned ox. When the young ox inevitably stumbled or tried to veer off course, the experienced, stronger ox would stand still to guide the young ox back in place.

We are 2,000 years beyond the time Jesus shared this teaching, and yet it's still applicable as we all struggle with the same original sin of self-sufficiency. Trying to earn the right to approach God; constantly attempting to outwork our sin and expecting others to do the same. But we don't have to, our Father provided the perfect substitution to perpetual toil—His own Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus' offer to us is the same as it was to the Jews He was teaching in Matthew. To be that older, seasoned ox—to bear the heaviest part of the load, to protect us from going to dangerous places, and to guide us to a place of rest and peace. The word He uses in the Greek for "rest" is *anápausis*, which literally means inner tranquility that comes from the complete cessation of work. Believer, find peace in knowing that your work will never be enough, and Jesus will always be more than you need.

## Reflection Questions:

- Write out 3 specific areas in your own life that you are trying to outwork your sin.
- Who in your life are you holding to an impossible standard?
- In what specific ways can you embrace Jesus' offer of rest in your life?



# Grace Renewed Each Morning

Trisha Dillon

## Read Lamentations 3:22-23

*"The LORD'S lovingkindnesses indeed never cease,  
For His compassions never fail.  
They are new every morning;  
Great is Your faithfulness."*

Do you ever wish you could have a fresh start? Maybe you are regretting a bad decision, impatient reaction, or harsh word you said recently. Or maybe you have a long-term regret or relational pain that you have been struggling with for years.

No matter what the circumstances, you can take refuge in God's Word today. These verses refresh our thirsty souls. This scripture is plopped right down in the middle of the book of Lamentations, an unlikely spot to find an uplifting verse like this.

Lamentations, which literally means "cries of grief", is an appropriate name for this book. It was written at a dark time in Israel's history. After hundreds of years of patience, God has finally brought disciplining judgement on the Israelites for their wickedness and refusal to repent. The Babylonian empire has taken the Israelites captive and has destroyed the city of Jerusalem. This book captures laments over the Israelites' sins and the resulting tragedy.

So how does our beautiful verse for today find itself tucked away in here? Despite the heaviness of the conviction and consequences of their sins, our writer recognizes God's



faithfulness and provision. He knows God is with them despite their bleak circumstances. He writes about three aspects of God's goodness:

1. His loving kindnesses, which never cease. He is good and gracious at all times.
2. His compassion, which never fails. He is full of love and mercy that never waiver.
3. His faithfulness, which is great. He is abundantly steadfast and trustworthy.

The writer emphasizes this goodness of God's character, and he recognizes that God's grace is relentless! The truth of this scripture is the same for us today. When we mess up, God's lovingkindnesses never cease. When we feel ashamed and unworthy, God's compassions never fail. When our circumstances look bleak, God's faithfulness is great. God's mercy to us is so much greater than our mercy to ourselves or others.

The refreshment of a new day, or even a new moment, means that we don't have to hold on to the past. Today is a new day and God has fresh love and mercy for you. Delight in this truth today.

## Reflection Questions:

- Do you believe that God's mercy is new today?
- What do you need to release to God today?
- Spend time in prayer thanking God for His ever-fresh mercies and asking Him to help you release your burdens to Him so you can have a fresh start today!



# Grace That Preserves Through Judgment

Alisha Pish

## Read Genesis 6:1-8

*“But Noah found favor in the eyes of the LORD.”*

Genesis 6 paints a grim picture of a world that was drowning in corruption, violence, and spiritual decay. Humanity had veered far from the path of righteousness, and God’s heart was grieved. The judgment to come—the great flood—was not arbitrary wrath, but divine justice. Yet, in the middle of this narrative stands a small but powerful verse: “But Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord.”

That single sentence holds the weight of the gospel. “Favor” here is the Hebrew word *chen*, often translated as “grace.” It is the first time in Scripture this word is used. Amid a flood of wickedness, grace breaks through. While the world was facing destruction because of its sin, God’s favor rested on one man—not because Noah was perfect, but because grace was extended to him. It was this grace that preserved Noah and his family, allowing them to become the foundation for a new beginning.

Too often, we imagine grace as something soft or sentimental. But in the context of Genesis 6, grace is both fierce and faithful. It doesn’t deny the reality of sin or the necessity of judgment. Instead, it provides a way through it. Noah’s life became a testimony that God’s judgment and His mercy can exist together—not as contradictions, but as part



of His holy character.

And Noah responded to grace with obedience. When God instructed him to build an ark, Noah obeyed—not knowing the full picture, not understanding the timeline, but trusting the One who called him. Obedience for Noah meant building an ark over decades in the face of ridicule. It meant trusting God when skies were clear and rain was unheard of. It meant living set apart when the entire world chose rebellion. God’s grace preserved Noah, but Noah still had to pick up the hammer and build. Grace empowers us to act in faith, even when the world mocks or misunderstands our convictions.

Today, our world often mirrors the chaos and depravity described in Noah’s day. Moral confusion, injustice, and spiritual apathy are rampant. And still, God extends grace. The cross is our ark, the place where judgment and grace meet. In Jesus, we are spared not from the storm but through it. He carries us, sustains us, and equips us to be bearers of hope in a broken world.

If you feel surrounded by darkness today, remember Genesis 6:8. Judgment may be real, but so is grace. And the same God who preserved Noah through the flood preserves us through every trial and storm.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- Why do you think Noah found favor when others did not? What set his character or actions apart?
- How does God’s grace show up in your life, even when the world around you seems chaotic or broken?



# Grace That Removes Our Transgressions

Caleb & Lydia Wohlgemuth

## Read Psalm 103:10–12

*“He has not dealt with us according to our sins,  
Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.  
For as high as the heavens are above the earth,  
So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him.  
As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed  
our transgressions from us.”*

It's easy to understand a start and an end—the end of a movie, the end of a year, the end of this sentence. But infinity is one of those ideas that's hard to wrap our minds around. It's like gazing up at a starry night sky that seems to stretch on forever. You can't reach it, measure it, or find where it ends. Or imagine setting off to travel east; you'll never suddenly find yourself going west. And for some of us, infinity might feel like the time it takes our kids to put their shoes on.

The point is, infinity is beyond us, and that's exactly the word-picture David uses to describe the depth of God's grace. Psalm 103 is a beloved psalm of thanksgiving written by King David. It celebrates the Lord's compassion, forgiveness, and faithfulness, resting in the certainty of His covenant love. In verse 8, David praises God as merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in mercy. Then, in verses 10–12, he offers a breathtaking picture of that grace in action.





God doesn't treat us as our sins deserve. He doesn't keep a record to hold over our heads. Instead, His lovingkindness stretches higher than the heavens, and He removes our sins as far as the east is from the west. His grace is freely given, no conditions. Just pure, unearned love.

This kind of grace is so different from how the world often works, where mistakes are held against us, and forgiveness is earned by good behavior. It's not about what we've done or haven't done; it's about who He is. As hard as it is for our human minds to imagine, God's mercy has no limit. His forgiveness knows no end.

So if you're carrying guilt or shame today, let this truth wash over you: God's grace is bigger than any mistake, brighter than any darkness, and wider than any distance we could ever travel.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- When have you struggled to believe that God's forgiveness is truly free and unlimited?
- How does knowing that God removes your sins "as far as the east is from the west" change the way you view your past mistakes and failures?
- In what ways can you extend the same kind of grace and forgiveness to others that God freely gives to you?



# The Inseparable Nature of God's Grace

Drew Howard

## Romans 8:38-39

*“For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

After high school, I volunteered at a Young Life camp in Colorado. I was placed on the ‘pit crew’ with a couple of other recent graduates. When we arrived, our pit crew boss Ethan Collins introduced himself. He was a recent graduate of Texas A&M University who had just been hired to lead Young Life in The Woodlands, Texas. (He would later transition to be the missions pastor of Faith Bible for a number of years.)

He told us that over the next month we would be washing dishes for 8-plus hours a day for the glory of God, growing deeper in our walk with Christ together. He challenged us to memorize the greatest chapter in the entire Bible — Romans 8. I remember then thinking what a bold statement, but after deep study, I agreed then and still agree over 30 years later that Romans 8 is the greatest chapter in the entire Bible.

When we look at Romans 8, we see that Paul starts by saying we are FREE. We are FREE in Christ. The greatest chapter in the Bible starts by telling us we are FREE. Paul concludes with another profound, simple idea.



That NOTHING, let me say that again — NOTHING! Yes, NOTHING can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. In fact, he does not just say it but goes to great lengths to emphasize and illustrate it. He points to the extremes to give us certainty of his proclamation—things present and future, beings and forces we can see and those we cannot. That as believers in Jesus Christ, NOTHING can separate us from the love of God!

This means whether you are having a bright sunny day or are in the middle of the darkest night, God's love is there. No matter how bad things seem, how much the world around you is crumbling, no matter what trial, trouble, tribulation, turmoil or trench you find yourself in — God loves you. Just simply say that over yourself today — GOD LOVES YOU!

Tomorrow morning when you get out of bed, before you throw off the sheets and your feet hit the floor, just lay there for one minute and say to yourself: no matter what happens today, this week, this year, this lifetime — NOTHING will separate me from God, NOTHING will separate me from my eternal security, NOTHING will separate me from walking with Jesus today. He will be there, His love will be there, and I will walk FREE with Him in that truth.

## Reflection Questions:

- What specific circumstances, relationships, failures, or fears in your life currently feel like they might be creating distance between you and God's love?
- Take time to name these areas and surrender them to the truth of God's unchanging love.



# Grace From Beginning to End

Megan Clark

## Philippians 1:6

*“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.”*

How often do you find yourself at the beginning of a project with no intention of finishing it? Probably not very often. Yet how many projects have you started that, for one reason or another, are still left incomplete? It is rarely, if ever, our intention to set out to accomplish something and then never see it to the end. Life just has a way of shifting our plans and making it necessary to adjust our priorities and focus. Wouldn't it be great to have a guarantee at the beginning of whatever we set out to do that it will be completed? Imagine the confidence such assurance would inspire in us, providing strength and endurance to keep going in the midst of difficulties, knowing with certainty that our labor is not in vain.

The context for today's passage is Paul expressing his thankfulness to the church in Philippi for their financial generosity and support of his work. Keep in mind it is to believers that Paul is writing. He informs them of how his prayers for them are always offered with joy because of their active participation in the gospel. In verse six, Paul writes of his confidence on their behalf. What is he confident of? That the good work Christ began in them when they first believed, He will bring to completion, or perfection, until the day they stand face-to-face with their Savior. From the cross to the throne, beginning to end, it's by the grace of God that the believer is saved, shaped, and brought to completion in Christ. The Lord's work in us begins with His grace, is



sustained by His grace, and is perfected by His grace. Notice where Paul's confidence is grounded: in Christ's work. Paul's confidence comes from knowing the character of the faithful and trustworthy Savior, who is all-powerful and able to finish what He begins. Notice also the lack of any "if/then" phrases in this verse; Christ's accomplishing this good work in the believer is not based on the believer's merit, performance, or perseverance, but on His work and magnificent grace. What He began in you, He will see to completion.

If it is God's grace sustaining us from the beginning of our journey in Christ to the end of our time on this earth, we can rest in blessed assurance this side of heaven that what Christ has begun in us will be brought to completion. What He desires and asks of us is to remain close to Him, trust Him, and obey Him. We are invited into the journey, and through God's grace, He will bring us to the end.

### **Reflection Questions:**

- How in your life have you been seeking and striving to succeed apart from God?
- Where do you need to accept God's grace as sufficient in your life today?
- Do you trust that what Christ has begun in you since you first believed, He will bring it to perfect completion? Why or why not?



