



Living Under God's Grace to Eternity on Earth



Lord Jesus Christ Community Baptist Church
Bible Class-Lesson 14
Houston, TX and Detroit, MI



What is God's Grace?

God's grace is a core concept in Christian theology. It's a gift from God that we don't earn or deserve. It's an expression of God's love and kindness toward humanity, even though we're imperfect. Grace isn't something we can buy or work for. It's freely given by God out of his own goodness. While grace includes forgiveness of sins, it also encompasses God's empowering presence, enabling us to live a life that honors him. It's a transformative power. This highlights that grace is given despite our shortcomings. salvation is received through God's grace, not through human effort. Grace also empowers believers to live a Christian life. It provides strength to overcome sin and to do good works. Grace is closely related to mercy. While mercy is God withholding the punishment we deserve, grace is God giving us blessings we don't deserve.

- "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast."-Ephesians 2:8-9
- "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:"-Romans 3:24
- "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."-Romans 11:6

Grace vs. Works

Christian theology emphasizes that salvation is received through God's grace, not through human effort. It's God's loving kindness and mercy extended to humanity, despite our sinfulness. Actions performed by individuals, which can include adherence to religious laws, moral behavior, and acts of service. The debate centers on whether works contribute to or are a result of salvation. Some interpretations emphasize that works are a natural outflow of genuine faith and gratitude for God's grace. Protestant theology generally emphasizes "sola gratia" (grace alone) and "sola fide" (faith alone). Other theological views may place more emphasis on the role of works in the process of salvation. Many believe that genuine faith will inevitably lead to good works as a demonstration of that faith.

- Romans 4
- Galatians 2:16,
- Titus 3:5

Extent of God's Grace

Understanding the extent of God's grace involves recognizing its vastness and the various ways it manifests. It's a concept that stretches beyond simple forgiveness and permeates every aspect of our existence. God's grace provides salvation from sin and eternal separation from Him. God's grace isn't a one-time event. It's an ongoing provision that sustains us throughout our lives. God provides for our physical needs, such as food, shelter, and health. Grace empowers us to overcome temptations, grow in our faith, and live according to God's will. Grace has the power to transform us from the inside out. It changes our hearts, renews our minds, and enables us to become more like Christ. God's grace is present in the seemingly ordinary moments of life. While the application of grace is received through faith, the offer of grace is extended to all of humanity. God's desire is for everyone to experience His grace and be reconciled to Him.

- John 3:16
- Romans 5:8
- Titus 2:11

Grace in the Old Testament

God's grace is present throughout the Old Testament, though it may be expressed in different ways. The Hebrew word "chen" is often translated as "grace" or "favor." It conveys the idea of finding favor in someone's eyes. God consistently demonstrates mercy and favor towards those who are undeserving. Even the Old Testament law and sacrificial system pointed towards God's grace. The sacrifices were a way for people to seek forgiveness and reconciliation with God, highlighting their need for His mercy. Jonah knew that God was "a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in lovingkindness". This shows that the character of God, as a gracious being, was known in the old testament.

- Ephesians 4:32
- Matthew 6:14-15

Grace and Gratitude

Grace, by its very nature, is a gift freely given. When we truly grasp that God's favor is not something we earned, but a gift, a natural response is gratitude. Understanding that we are recipients of unmerited favor fosters a deep sense of thankfulness. Grace is an expression of God's love. Gratitude is our heartfelt response to that love. It's a way of acknowledging and appreciating the depth of God's care for us. A life lived in awareness of God's grace is a life marked by gratitude. This involves recognizing God's hand in our daily lives, both in the big and small things. Expressions of gratitude can take many forms, including prayer, worship, acts of service, and simply acknowledging God's goodness. Gratitude fosters humility. Cultivating a grateful heart leads to greater joy and contentment. Focusing on God's blessings shifts our perspective from what we lack to what we have.

- Colossians 3:15
- 1 Thessalonians 5:18

Grace and Spiritual Growth

The relationship between grace and spiritual growth is fundamental to the Christian journey. It's a dynamic interplay where God's unmerited favor empowers and shapes believers to become more like Christ. Spiritual growth isn't about human willpower alone; it's about God's transforming power working within us. It is God's grace that allows us to even recognize our need for spiritual growth. Grace empowers us to overcome our weaknesses and struggles. Spiritual growth, or sanctification, is the process of becoming more like Christ. Grace is the driving force behind this process, enabling us to grow in holiness and character. God's grace enables the holy spirit to work within us, and therefore produce the fruits of the spirit. Grace also facilitates our growth in the knowledge and understanding of God. As we experience God's grace, we gain a deeper appreciation for His love, mercy, and wisdom. Grace equips us to serve God and others. It provides the gifts, talents, and opportunities to use our lives for His glory.

- 2 Corinthians 9:8
- 1 Corinthians 15:10