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**EDINBURGH**

# Amazed by Grace

God invites us to be freshly amazed by Grace. Psalm 66:5 the writer invites us "*Come and see what God has done, his awesome deeds for mankind*"

John 1:46 Philip invites Nathanael to "*come and see*" the person of Jesus.

Grace is the works of God in the person of Jesus Christ. It's life changing:

Acts 11:23 "*When Barnabas arrived and saw what the grace of God had done, he was glad and encouraged them all to remain true to the Lord with all their hearts*"

He saw the effects of Grace.

GRACE (Greek charis = gift) = UNDESERVED FAVOUR. How different to the world we live in where good things come to those who work hard!

By contrast GRACE is UNDESERVED.

The book of Romans is the closest thing we have to a systematic explanation of Grace.

Chapter 1: God is righteous. But people have rejected him in preference for what they think is right. God's righteous judgment is revealed against people.

Chapter 2-3 There are no exceptions: 3:10 "*no-one is righteous- not one, no-one who understands, no-one who seeks God.*"

BUT Chapter 3:21 "*But now apart from the law the righteousness of God has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. 22 This righteousness is given through faith in[h] Jesus Christ to all who believe.*

Chapter 4:

Abraham - Is he a good guy or bad guy? He is a FAITH guy! He believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness.

V23 gets personal *"The words "it was credited to him" were written not for him alone, 24 but also for us, to whom God will credit righteousness—for us who believe in him who raised Jesus our Lord from the dead."*

Chapter 5: *"Therefore since we have been justified through faith"* Justified through faith (Just as if I'd never sinned, Just as if I'd always obeyed")

We have PEACE with God. ACCESS, RECONCILED, HOPE. SAVED from WRATH.

World history has two important figures.

ADAM or JESUS. Who is your spiritual head?

V18 *"Consequently, just as one trespass resulted in condemnation for all people, so also one righteous act resulted in justification and life for all people. 19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one man the many will be made righteous."*

ADAM = disobedience- sin affects all. Condemnation  
JESUS = obedience  
righteousness Affects all who trust him.

5:20 *"Where sin increased grace increased all the more"*- there's no sin outwith this grace.

Chapter 6: Can we carry on sinning if sin is covered?

JB Phillips *"What a ghastly thought!"*

The power of sin is broken.

There's a new power at work in you.

Chapter 8: Nothing can separate us from the love of God no matter the setback!

*"31 What, then, shall we say in response to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? ...35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall trouble or hardship or persecution or famine or nakedness or danger or sword?..."*

*"37 No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons,[k] neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, 39 neither height nor depth, nor anything*

*else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord."*

We need to regularly remind ourselves of the Grace of God, or we easily slip away from it.

Questions to ask to ascertain if I'm living in Grace (based on Galatians)

1) Do I boast in Jesus or in my effort? Grace boasts in Jesus gal 6:14 14 May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ,

2) How do I see God? as a slavemaster or a Father? Gal 4:6 Because you are his sons, God sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, the Spirit who calls out, 'Abba,[c] Father.

3) Do I see the Holy Spirit as a gift or a reward? Gal 3:2 did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by believing what you heard?

4) Do I have a growing or diminishing heart for God's family Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

5) Is my vision growing or Do I get over-excited about obscure Christian teachings or single issues. Gal 4:10 how is it that you are turning back to those weak and miserable forces? Do you wish to be enslaved by them all over again?

6) Are my joy-levels sustained or reduced? Gal 4:9 "what has happened to all your joy"

7) Am I growing in Christ-likeness or peer-likeness? Ga 5:7 you were running the race.

Questions:

1. Amazing Grace. What stops grace from feeling amazing to us?
  2. Reminding ourselves. Why do we regularly need to invite ourselves and one another to "see" Grace afresh?
  3. The Roman road. Which chapter of Romans 1 to 8 do you find most helpful in describing the grace of God? Which do you find most challenging? Why?
  4. Effects of Grace. Skim read Acts 13 and 14 (The churches in Galatia). What initial fruit do you see from the preaching of Grace?
  5. Those same churches fell into anti-grace practices. Do you feel we face any similar danger?
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