

Grace

By Christine Uyehara

Grace is from the Greek word *charis*, defined as: unmerited divine favor which affords others joy, pleasure and delight.

God blesses us with grace so we'll be blessed, joyful and thankful! This is so we'll **want** to do His will with love, gratefulness, joy, and not out of obligation. This was why the Pharisees and Scribes missed it... they lacked the proper heart and motivation. They had a "works" mentality, a "legalism" mentality, which removes grace from the equation and its corresponding joy!

Doing God's will is not supposed to be drudgery or burdensome. "His commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:3) Jesus Christ said, "My yoke is easy and my burden light." (Matthew 11:30)

The Greek word *Charis* is tied to a word family

Charis - that which affords joy, pleasure

Charisma / charismata - gift of favor without merit

Charizomai - to gain a favor, gratify, give freely

Charitoo - to make graceful, indue with special honor, make acceptable

Chara - joy, gladness, cause of occasion of joy

All these come from the Greek root word *Chairo* – full of joy, cheer-full, rejoice, well off, glad.

The common thread here is gladness, gratitude, joy, thankfulness being expressed by the recipient; and giving freely, showing kindness and willingness of favor on the part of the giver.

If it is a drudgery or frustration to do the Word, then perhaps this should be a clue that we are not seeing grace big enough in our lives. The key is to look at Christ!

John 1:17

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

Grace came by Jesus Christ!

Figures of Speech by EW Bullinger (page 663) refers to this as the figure of speech *Hendiadys*, meaning "two words said, one word meant". This has to be figurative, otherwise the words taken literally would not be true to fact. He writes, "Was there no 'grace' in the law? How come only Israel to have it and not the Babylonians, Egyptians, Philistines, Assyrians, and etc.? Yes; it was all grace: as God asks and tell them so earnestly and so often in Deuteronomy 4:32-40 and other places. And was there not 'truth' in the law? Yes, surely, every word was truth. But in John 1:17, the contrast is between one thing that was given by Moses, and another, and a different thing that came by Jesus Christ. The figure *Hendiadys* explains the difficulty and shed light on the verse. The Law was given by Moses, and there was grace in it; and moreover it was truth itself: "but grace, yes - and TRUE grace too (the REAL THING) came by Jesus Christ!"

Grace in the source of:

Salvation - available for both Judean and Gentile.

Acts 15:11

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

Saved/Salvation (*sozo*) to make sound, to save, preserve safe from danger, loss or destruction. In a Christian sense, to save from death and judgment (as in the consequences of sin) and to bring in all positive blessing in the place of condemnation. To save from the penalty of death and destruction. (Not merely to be happy), but to bestow everlasting life as the result of resurrection. (Source: Bullinger Lexicon and Concordance)

Believing –While this record pertains directly to Apollos, it also applies to all of us.

Acts 18:27

And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, helped them much which had believed through grace:

Justification – without cost, freely given. Again, we see that this was through the redemption via the blood and life of Jesus Christ.

Romans 3:24

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

Justify (*dikaioo*) to set forth as righteous, to justify by a judicial act. By a judicial decision to free a man from his guilt, (which stands in the way of his being right) and to represent him as righteous. (Source: Bullinger Lexicon and Concordance)

Forgiveness - remission of sins, we get the riches of his grace (via blood of Jesus Christ)

Ephesians 1:7

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Forgiveness (*aphesis*) - discharge, setting free, remission (as in the year of Jubilee) Remission of debt or punishment (it excludes all idea of punishment). (Source: Bullinger Lexicon and Concordance)

Everlasting consolation and good hope.

II Thessalonians 2:16,17

Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts, and stablish you in every good word and work.

Consolation (*paraklesis*) - a calling near, a summons to one's side, hence, an admonitory, encouraging and consolatory exhortation, invitation or entreaty. Opposite of advise, especially publically, warn or threat. (Source: Bullinger Lexicon and Concordance)

You can see there is intimacy when being called near for exhortation, comfort, and encouragement vs. being lectured or preached to from afar from a lecturn. God's ways are intimate, personable, and gentle.

Grace is described as:

All-abundant (Romans 5:15-20)

All -sufficient (II Corinthians 12:9)

Glorious (Ephesians 1:6)

Great (Acts 4:33)

Manifold (or more accurately, variegated, various, changeful). I think of the manifold of a car where there is so much material being folded in order to cram it all into a small space.

I Peter 4:10

As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God.

Rich (Ephesians 2:7)

Sovereign - it reigns, (Romans 5:21)

Some ways in which GRACE relates to us as believers:

We are under grace (Romans 6:14)

We receive grace

John 1:16

And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. "Grace in the place of grace...continually renewed, replenished." (Source: Critical Lexicon & Concordance, EW Bullinger, page 295)

We stand in grace – (Romans 5:2)

We abound in grace – (II Corinthians 9:8 & 14)

We are told to be strong in grace – (II Timothy 2:1) (A true leader of God's people must be strong in grace, otherwise he will be hard on himself when he make mistakes, which is inevitable. He will also be harsh with and critical of others and discourage them if he is not strong in grace.)

We inherit grace – (I Peter 3:7) We are heirs together with our spouse of the grace of life. A spouse is a gift of God's grace and should be treated as such. We ought to be thankful that someone else in this world, besides our parents, sees value in us. We have been given something for which we should be so thankful. We don't want to despise this gift. Imagine, you've been given someone who cares about your happiness, stays with you at your worst, seeks your joy, and believes in you! What a gift!

We minister grace – This is done by what we speak.

Ephesians 4:29

Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

We grow (*auxano* – to grow without compulsion or coercion)

II Peter 3:18

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.

Growth in grace is like growth of a plant. A rootbound plant is stifled in growth, which is what happens when people try to live in legalism. On the other hand, growth is encouraged when roots have extra space, such as in a larger pot. This is what grace does, it allows room for people to make mistakes, recover themselves, and grow.

Furthermore, this verse also says we grow in grace AND the knowledge of our Jesus Christ. The word "and" here means "even, indeed, also" which ties these two growth accelerators (grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ) together. The word "knowledge" here is *gnosis* in the Greek, which means "understanding, deeper and more perfect and enlarged knowledge". There is an element of intimacy and acquaintance with someone. In this case, that person is Jesus Christ.

To him be GLORY both now and forever. Amen! When we live and grow in grace, it produces gratitude. The result of gratitude is us glorifying Jesus Christ with our thanksgivings.