

## GOD

### We Can Abound in God's Grace

We have a loving and merciful God who made it available for us to be saved and to become members of His family. He did this because of His great **grace**, His unmerited divine favor, even though we didn't deserve it. We see this in **Ephesians, Chapter 2:**

#### Ephesians

- 2:4** But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,  
**2:5** Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us (*made us alive*) together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)  
**2:6** And hath raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in heavenly places (*in the heavenlies*) in Christ Jesus:  
**2:7** That in the ages to come (*in all ages*) he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in *his* kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.  
**2:8** For by grace are ye saved through faith (*the faith of Jesus Christ*); and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:  
**2:9** Not of works, lest any man should boast.  
**2:10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

In these verses we see the great emphasis placed on the fact that **we were saved by God's grace**. According to E. W. Bullinger's *Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, **grace**, from the Greek word *charis*, can be understood as "a kind, affectionate pleasing nature and inclining disposition... friendly willingness, favor". When used in the context of **the grace of God**, the word denotes "God's grace and favor manifested towards mankind or to any individual, which, as a free act is no more hindered by sin than it is conditional upon works". One thing to note is that our "sin nature" or past sins **don't** keep God from giving His grace. Also, God's grace is **not** conditional on our works. As verse 9 states: "Not of works, lest any man should boast." It's not **our** works, but **God's**. Verse 10 says that we are **His** workmanship.

We were saved by **grace**, not by works. **Romans 3:24** tells us that we were "justified freely **by his grace** through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." **The accomplishments of Jesus Christ** made it available for us to become saved, justified in the sight of God. Look at **Romans, Chapter 5**, beginning in **verse 1:**

#### Romans

- 5:1** Therefore, being justified by faith (*believing*), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:  
**5:2** By whom (*through whose accomplishments*) also we have access by faith (*"by faith" is not in the texts*) into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.

When we confessed Jesus as Lord and believed in our hearts that God raised him from the dead (**Romans 10:9**), we were **saved, justified** by our believing. The accomplishments of Jesus Christ gave us access to God's grace, and we now stand as His children, with the hope of Christ's Return. This is all because of **God's grace**.

Look at **Romans 15:13**:

**15:13** Now the God of hope (*“God of” is not in the text: read “Now the hope”*) fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost (*through the power of holy spirit*).

**Because** of God's **grace** we have the hope of Christ's Return and can be filled with joy and peace as we believe. Let's return to Chapter 5:

**5:15** But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many.

The words “**free gift**” are from the Greek word *charisma*, an **act of God's grace**. God by His **grace** gave us the gift of holy spirit, giving us spiritual life.

**5:17** For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.

**5:20** Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.

Note the usages of the word “**abound**” in **verse 20**. We see this word used in relation to negatives and a positive. The word “**abound**” used with both “the offence” and “sin” is from the Greek word *pleonazō*, which means “to become more” or “to make more”, indicating growth or increase. However, the word “**abound**” that goes with “**grace**”, God's unmerited divine favor, is from a form of the Greek word *perisseuō* which means “to be over and above; more than enough”. For us, it's definitely a much **stronger** word for abound! And, in this verse, the three words “much more abound” are actually from the Greek word *hyperperisseuō*. That prefix “*hyper*” can be understood as “**super**”. So even though “sin” simply abounded by increasing, God's grace **super-abounded**! God provides us with a **super-abundant** supply of His **grace**.

Because Romans, Chapters 6 and 7 are a **parenthesis**, a Figure of Speech expanding on the truths of Chapter 5, we **could** read **directly** from Chapter 5 to **Chapter 8, verse 1**. **Because** of the great **super-abundant grace of God**, we have the great **truths** expressed in **Chapter 8**: no condemnation (8:1); all things work together for good (8:28); if God be for us, who *can be* against us? (8:31); we are more than conquerors (super-conquerors) (8:37); nothing can separate us from the love of God (8:39). We truly do **benefit** from God's superabundant **grace**!

**Because** God's **grace** super-abounds toward us, He can promise what we read in **Ephesians 3:20**: “Now unto him that is able to do **exceeding abundantly above all that we ask**

**or think**, according to the power that worketh in us.” The words “exceeding abundantly” are from the Greek words *huper ek perissōs*, so we see “**super**” with a form of the word for **abound** that means “over and above; more than enough”.

Let’s take a closer look and consider how we can **abound in God’s grace** as we do His will and reach out to others.

### Psalms

**84:11 For the Lord God is a sun and shield: the Lord will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.**

The word “**grace**” here is from the Hebrew word *chen*, meaning “**grace**” or “**favor**”. The Lord, **Jehovah**, God in His personal relation to us, is **the source** of grace. Because of this grace, this unmerited divine favor, God will **not** withhold, or keep back, any **good thing** from “them that walk uprightly”, those who endeavor to live according to God’s Word. **Proverbs 28:20** tells us “A faithful man shall **abound with blessings**...” Look at the **next** verse:

**84:12 O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in thee.**

When we trust in God we are **blessed**. In fact, when we trusted in God as we believed Romans 10:9 and got born again, God, by His grace “**blessed us with all spiritual blessings** in heavenly places (in the heavenlies) in Christ”, as it says in **Ephesians 1:3**.

We are **blessed**. We have God’s **super-abundant grace**. God will **not** withhold any good thing from us.

### II Corinthians

**9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you, that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work:**

This great verse emphasizes the **magnitude** of God’s grace toward us, and the **benefits** we can have as we **abound** in that grace. Notice that it begins by saying that **God** is able: it has **nothing** to do with **our** ability. The word “**abound**” here is again that word *perisseuō*, meaning “over and above; more than enough”. As God’s super-abundant grace abounds toward us, we can “always have **all sufficiency** in all things”. **God is our sufficiency** and our **supply** (**Philippians 4:19**): He makes all that we need available by His **grace**. We can then “abound to every good work”.

Since we’re in **II Corinthians**, let’s look at **Chapter 8, verse 7**:

**8:7 Therefore, as ye abound in every thing, in faith, and utterance, and knowledge, and in all diligence, and in your love to us, see that ye abound in this grace also.**

**God’s grace** is a major theme of the Book of **Ephesians**, driving home the point that it is by **God’s unmerited divine favor**, not by our works, that we have what we have as members of God’s family.

With the exception of Ephesians Chapter 1, verse 2, where “grace” is part of Paul’s standard salutation seen in all of his writings, the **first** of the many usages of the word **grace** in Ephesians is in **Chapter 1, verse 6**. Let’s take a look at this significant first usage and the next few verses that follow:

### Ephesians

**1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.**

**1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness (remission) of sins, according to the riches of his grace;**

**1:8 Wherein (*in God’s grace*) he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;**

**1:9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:**

In **verse 6** we see that God did something for us “**to the praise of the glory of his grace**”. “Praise” is from a Greek word better translated as “**commendation**”. Something that is worth commending is something that is worthy of attention, or **worthy of special praise**. In this case, it is “**the glory of his (God’s) grace**”. The words “glory of his grace” are actually a Figure of Speech in which the word “**glory**” is used to emphasize the fact that **God’s grace is glorious**. We could read this “To the commendation of his **GLORIOUS** grace”.

**What** did God **do** for us that makes His glorious grace so commendable? Verse 6 **continues**: “wherein (in God’s **grace**) **he hath made us accepted in the beloved.**”

The word “**accepted**” in this verse is from the Greek word *charitoō*, which literally means “to make one an object of **favor**”. This word is actually the verb form of *charis*, our word for “**grace**”, so we could render it “to make one an object of **grace**”. God has made **us** objects, **receivers**, of His great **grace**. This word *charitoō* is used in only **one** other place in the Bible:

### Luke

**1:28 And the angel (*Gabriel*) came in unto her (*Mary*) and said, Hail, *thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women.***

The words “**highly favoured**” are from *charitoō*, translated “**accepted**” in **Ephesians 1:6**. So, **because** of God’s great **grace**, He has made us “**highly favoured**”, “**accepted**”. When we became born again, we became children of God. We were **accepted** into the Family of God and could become members of His household. God was able to make this available because of **the accomplishments of Jesus Christ**. Verse 6 says that God made us “accepted in **the beloved**”, and we know from verses like **Matthew 17:5** (“This is my **beloved** Son...”) that “the beloved” refers to **Jesus Christ**. Because of what Jesus Christ accomplished, God could, by His commendable, glorious **grace**, make us **accepted** so we could become members of His family.

In one of his earliest works, his *Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament*, the Biblical scholar E. W. Bullinger indicated that the word “**accepted**” in Ephesians 1:6 **might** be understood as “**lovely**” or “**acceptable**”, suggesting that this verse could be read as **either** “...he hath made us **lovely** in the beloved” or “he hath made us

**acceptable** in the beloved”. **However**, thirty years later, in his book *How to Enjoy the Bible*, in his chapter “The Importance of Accuracy in the Study of the Words of Scripture”, Bullinger **corrected** himself and clarified the important **difference** between our being “**accepted**” (the Greek word *charitoō* in **Ephesians 1:6**) and our being “**acceptable**”, which is from a **different** Greek word, *euarestōs*, used **elsewhere** in the New Testament. He wrote:

“We must accurately note the distinction between the two words. The former (*the word “accepted” in Ephesians 1:6*) is *charitoō*, to make one an object of favor. This refers to the standing which God has given us, in Christ, in the heavenlies. The latter (*the word translated “acceptable,” found elsewhere*) is *euarestōs*, well-pleasing. This refers to our state, and our daily walk and life on earth...It is one thing for us to be accepted in Christ, and it is another thing for our walk to be well-pleasing (*acceptable*) to God. The former is the gift of God’s grace: the latter is the fruit of that grace. It is most important that we should be accurate in noting this distinction...We do not labor to be accepted, but having been “accepted in the beloved” we make it our aim for our walk to be acceptable.”

So, God, by His abundant grace toward us, chose to make us **accepted** so we could stand as members of His family. Now that we are **accepted**, it’s **up to us** to choose to make ourselves **acceptable** by the quality of our walk. We can, by our walking in fellowship with Him and with others in the household, walk so that we are acceptable **as well as** accepted.

What does it then **mean** to abound in God’s grace? What do we **do**? We already saw in **II Corinthians 9:8** that because God’s grace abounds toward us so that God is our sufficiency, we can **abound “to every good work”**. Look at **I Corinthians 15:57 and 58**, at the close of the section on our hope of Christ’s Return.

### **I Corinthians**

**15:57** But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

**15:58** Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

Because of God’s grace and our hope of Christ’s Return, we can **stand firm** on God’s Word and we can **abound in “the work of the Lord”**; abounding to every good work. Included in these “good works” that we can abound in is the truth that **we can do the works of Jesus Christ and greater (John 14:12)**.

Let’s look at **I Thessalonians 4:1**:

### **I Thessalonians**

**4:1** Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would **abound more and more**.

We know from God's Word how we should walk, doing "the work of the Lord", and we can **abound** as we do so.

We can **stand strong in God's grace** as we share the truths of His Word to others:

### II Timothy

**2:1** **Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**

**2:2** **And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.**

Finally, as we abound in God's grace, we can **share that grace** with other members of the household. We see the **model** for this sharing of grace in **Acts Chapter 2, verses 42 through 46**, which tell us how the members of the Body of Christ functioned together in the days following the Day of Pentecost. We'll just read **verse 47**, which sums up the great results as **these** believers abounded in God's grace:

### Acts

**2:47** **Praising God, and having favor (*literally*, "sharing grace") with all the people. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.**

Because of **God's grace** which super-abounds toward us, we became accepted into His household and have the hope of the Return of Jesus Christ. As we **abound in God's grace**, we can abound to every good work, doing the works of Jesus Christ and greater as we share grace with other believers in the household.

- Dr. Rick Batt