

The Bulletin

Meeks Street Church of Christ

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July 2, 2023

“Amazing Grace”

By David Carl Swanson

The word for grace (Greek *charis*) appears only eight times in the Gospel of Luke, three times in the Gospel of John, not at all in the Gospels of Mark or Matthew and is not spoken by Jesus. However, the word appears many times in the epistles.

What is grace? A popular definition is "unmerited favor." Another definition might be: "something we need but do not deserve." We certainly need a savior, forgiveness, and God's love, but we do not deserve these on our own merit.

Some folks imagine that they don't need God. Others think they do all right in the righteousness department—they feel they are good people and are good "because that is the right thing to do." However, an appreciation for God's grace can motivate us to serve the Lord with the proper motives and in ever-increasing ways.

We see Amazing Grace when we: See how awful sin is. "Sin" means "to miss the mark." *"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23). In Romans chapter one we see that sin has touched every aspect of each person.

The physical: *"Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them"* (v. 24) .

The Emotional: *"For this reason God gave them over to degrading passions..."* (v. 26).

And the Intellectual: *"God gave them over to a depraved mind"* (v. 28). Our bodies and hearts should be used for God and for good (Romans 6:12-13; 1 Corinthians 6:20, etc.)!

Sin has social consequences (Romans 1:29-31) and worse, eternal consequences (Romans 1:32; 2:1-10).

We see Amazing Grace when we understand the magnitude of God's sacrifice for sin! *"And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world"* (1 John 2:2).

Consider what sin did to the sinless Son of God: *"But we do see Him who was made for a little while lower than the angels, namely, Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor; so that by the grace of God He might taste death for everyone"* (Hebrews 2:9; see 2 Corinthians 5:21). The prophet Isaiah foretold of the suffering Jesus would endure for our sakes (Isaiah 53).

We must also appreciate the salvation God offers in Christ Jesus. Notice Paul's attitude of himself in light of sin:

"It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life." (1 Timothy 1:15-16).

Was Paul literally the foremost (worst) of all sinners? Perhaps not, but his attitude is the right one: we don't deserve Jesus' sacrifice — God's grace — on the basis of our own righteousness. By the way, Paul is an example of how God can save someone who is a sinner and doesn't realize it. God could save Paul because he had an honest heart.

Paul had tried to destroy the Lord's church (Acts 8:1-3; 9:1), but he did it because he thought it was the right thing to do. After he became a Christian he said: *"I have lived my life with a perfectly good conscience before God up to this day"* (Acts 23:1).

When Paul found out that he was wrong he repented and was baptized to wash away his sins (Acts 22:16), and went on to preach the gospel to many and to become an example of how God's grace can work in the rest of us as well: *"Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life"* (1 Timothy 1:16).

Salvation is *"grace unto you."* (1 Peter 1:5-12). In other words, salvation is receiving God's grace (2 Corinthians 6:1-2). The result of salvation is the deliverance from the power and spiritual consequences of sin!

Are you saved? Have you received God's amazing grace? Read the following passages in your Bible and do what God says to do:

Believe (Mark 16:15-16; Romans 10:9-10), Repent (Acts 2:38; 3:19), Confess Christ (Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32; Acts 8:37), and Be baptized into Christ for the remission of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-5; Galatians 3:26-27; 1 Peter 3:21).

A HIGHER MORALITY REQUIRED

(By Benjamin Franklin, the preacher, not the statesman—inventor)

We need a higher morality, a more pure and unadulterated piety and greater simplicity of benevolence. We do not want money extracted from the pockets of the people by the Church offering them sensual gratification, amusements and entertainments, to say nothing of the ball, the lottery and other gambling.

Let us in the name of the Lord and of religion, in a manly way, come directly to the people for means to support religion and ask them to give from love to Christ, and no matter if we do not obtain one-fourth the amount it will do ten times as much good.

The Lord needs no money made by lotteries, gambling, fairs, festivals, or any such appeals to the lust of the flesh, the human appetite, the love of fine companies, etc. He needs no money only that given to him through love and devotion to his cause.

Those who appeal to entertainments, amusements, fine companies of men and women, the dance, lotteries, festivals, fairs, etc., etc., thus publish to the world their impression that there is more potency in these worldly and secular appliances than there is in the grace of God and the love of Christ, and we doubt not they find it to be so, in raising money in their assemblies.

They have tried it and demonstrated it to be so. We care not if it be so; we care not if it has been demonstrated that the people will give more money for a monkey show than for the kingdom of God; we will not resort to the monkey show; nor do we care if they will give more money for revelling than for the holy cause for which Jesus died; we will not resort to the revelling.

There are other matters aside from the question, how much money can we raise, that must be kept in view. We must maintain our piety, devotion to the Lord, purity, and must not be conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of our mind.

We have never consented to this modern element that will appeal to anything and everything that will raise money. It is not Godliness, nor the love of God, but sensual; it is devilish. Come directly to the children of God in the name of the Lord and appeal to them for his sake to give, to give freely and of a willing mind; that *"it is more blessed to give than to receive,"* and appreciate what is given in his name.

News and Notes:

Sick and recovering: Tim Harris Sr, Tim Harris Jr, Daniel Holloway, Debbie Keplinger, J F Dancer, Robbie, Sheila, Sherry Doles, Sandi Poole, Nathan Cox, Sandra Oliver, Chad Harris, Eli Johnson, Burt Ward, Jamie Jones, Janet Boren, Fred Johnson, Todd Bryan, Hillard Switcher, Alton Bailey, Joe Shane, Bill Woodall, and Mary Ann Holley.

Those Who Serve:

Sunday Morning 9:00 A.M. Service:

Opening Prayer: Tim Harris Jr.
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #1: *"Things People Find Incredible To Them"*

Auditorium Bible Class: 9:35am:

Workbook: Fred Johnson
1 & 2 Thessalonians
Author: Mark Mayberry
Starting Page & Question: Page #8, Question #9

Sunday Morning 10:30 A.M. Service:

Announcements: Russell Briggs
Opening Prayer & Scripture Reading: Danny Sheffield
Scripture Reading: *Mark 10:17-22*
Song Leader: Jerry Kennemur
Lord's Supper: Paul Busby
Assisting: — —
Preaching: Brian Meade
Sermon #2: *"Why The Rich Young Ruler Was Lost"*
Closing Prayer: Adam Harris

Wednesday Evening: 7:00 P.M.

July 5, 2023

Auditorium Bible Class: Paul Busby
Workbook: Ezekiel
Author: Dan King
Starting Page & Question: *Page #46, Question #1*
Invitation: Paul Johnson
Song Leader: Tim Harris Sr.
Closing Prayer: Russell Briggs

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“Things People Find Incredible To Them”

Lesson Text: **Acts 26:8.** It Is Incredible To Some That:

I. God Created Man In His Own Image.

- **Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 2:7; Acts 17:26.**
- Why? Because:
 - Many Do Not Like To Acknowledge Their Creator- **Romans 1:18-22.**
 - They Do Want To Serve Him- **Romans 1:25-26.**
 - Evolution Is Taught As Scientific Fact/Some Scoff At The Creation- **Psalms 74:22-23.**

II. God’s Word Is Perfect.

- **Psalms 19:7; 2 Timothy 3:16-17; 2 Peter 1:20-21.**
- Why? Because:
 - Some Say It Has Many Mistakes And Contradictions- **Proverbs 12:15; 30:12.**
 - Some Want There To Be, So They Can Discredit God & His Word! **Psalms 119:159-160.**

III. All Men Will Not Be Saved.

- **Romans 11:22; Matthew 7:13-14; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-9.**
- Why? Because:
 - Some Want Everyone To Be Saved, Even If They Do Not Obey God Now.
 - Some Don’t Believe That God Will Punish Anyone For Disobedience- **1 Peter 4:17-18.**

IV. Baptism Saves.

- **1 Peter 3:21; Mark 16:15-16; Colossians 2:11-13 (See Romans 6:4-7).**
- Why? Because:
 - Most Denominations Teach Faith Alone Saves. They Must Ignore These Passages.
 - Many Have Taken Out Of Context The Teaching About Baptism- **1 Corinthians 1:17.**

V. There Is One Body, One Faith.

- **Ephesians 4:4-6; John 10:16; Romans 11:17-21; Ephesians 2:16; 3:6.**
- Why? Because:
 - We Are Born Into A World Of Religious Division And Confusion- **1 Corinthians 14:33.**
 - Many Think It Is Incredible To Teach That Jesus Just Has One Body- **1 Cor. 12:12-14; 27.**

VI. God Should Raise All The Dead.

- **Acts 26:8; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15.**
- Why? Because:
 - **1 Corinthians 15:35.** Some Don’t Believe in An Afterlife: Naturalist, Atheist, Humanist...
 - Some Didn’t Believe Paul Either- **Acts 17:31-32 (vs. 18).**

Conclusion: It Is Incredible That Some Refuse To Obey.

Hebrews 2:1-3.

“Why The Rich Young Ruler Was Lost”

Lesson Text: **Matthew 19:16-22.** (See **Mark 10:17-22; Luke 18:18-23**).

I. He Was Lost, Even Though He Had A Good Background.

- Possibly of Noble Birth And Inherited His Position.
- He Had: **1.** Resources. **2.** A Good Education. **3.** A Position Of Authority.
4. Quite Possibly Parents Who Taught Him The Scriptures.
- He Didn’t Have To Struggle With Poverty, Low Social Standing, Or Insignificance.
- Many Of Jesus’ Disciples Were Not As Privileged In Their Backgrounds— But Overcame Their Backgrounds To Follow Jesus— Zacchaeus (**Luke 19:5-10**), Mary (**Luke 7:44-48**).
- A Bad Background In Life Can Be Overcome- **2 Chronicles 28:22–29:2.**

II. He Was Lost, Even Though He Asked The Most Important Question.

- **Matthew 19:16-** *“Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”*
- He Wanted To Know- **Mark 10:17**, Asked The Right Question, & Got The Right Answer- **vs. 18.**
- **1.** Many Never Ask This Vital Question. Too Busy With Other Things...
- **2.** Many Today Get The Wrong Answer.... Sinner’s Prayer, Faith Alone, Grace Alone....
- **3.** Some May Even Have The Right Answer Today, But Fail To Act On That Knowledge.

III. He Was Lost, Even Though He Was Morally Better Than Most.

- **Matthew 19:18-20**, He Kept The Commandments, & Was A Moral Person Because Of It.
- He Was Not A Murderer, An Adulterer, A Thief.... **Deut. 4:5-8.**
- But Morality Alone Is Not Enough- **Acts 10:1-2.**

IV. He Was Lost, Even Though He Was Very Religious.

- **Matthew 19:18-20**, One Does Not Observe The Law Without Being Religious.
- Most People Today Who Go To Church Are Religious, Being Religious Is Not Enough.
- **Acts 17:22-23; Romans 10:1-3.**

V. He Was Lost, Even Though Jesus Loved Him.

- **Mark 10:21.** Why Does Mark’s Account Say This?
- Jesus’ Love Does Not Guarantee Acceptance- **John 3:16; Revelation 3:16-19.**
- We Must Return Our Love To Jesus- **John 14:21; Hebrews 5:9.**

VI. He Was Lost, Even Though He Had A Tender Heart.

- **Matthew 19:22**, He Showed Sorrow Concerning The Words Of Jesus; Conviction.
- He Did Not Walk Away Mocking Or Scoffing At Jesus, But Sadness For The Realization...
- Not Everyone Who Is Convicted In Their Heart Obeys- **Acts 2:37 – Acts 7:54.**

VII. He Was Lost, Because He Trusted In His Riches.

- How Do We Know? **Matthew 19:23-26.**
- Because He Trusted In His Riches, He Considered It Too Much To Give Up.
- What Jesus Asked Him To Do Showed Him His Real Problem— Materialism.
 - Many Today Want All This World Has To Offer And Eternal Life- **1 John 2:15.**
 - Trusting In Riches Puts Us In A Conflict Of Interest- **Matthew 6:19-21; vs. 24.**