

## HAVE YOU HEARD? GOD'S GRACE IS AMAZING

by David R. Kenney

One of my favorite passages extolling God's love for mankind: *"When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have ordained, what is man that You are mindful of him, and the son of man that You visit him? For You have made him a little lower than the angels, and You have crowned him with glory and honor."* (Psalm 8:3-5, NKJV)

What exactly is "grace"? From various lexicons, I found definitions such as "unmerited favor", "demonstrated goodwill", "free benevolence", and "merciful kindness". Words such as grace, mercy and justice are words that apply to God. Some have distinguished these three as justice is receiving what we deserve, mercy is not receiving what we deserve, and grace is receiving what we did not deserve. All three of these terms are used in relationship between God and man. We serve a God of amazing grace! Why is this grace so amazing?

First, God's grace is amazing because of who receives it, sinful man (Romans 5:8). Perhaps the greatest example in the NT was Saul of Tarsus. He persecuted the church even going so far as breaking up families and dragging them to prison. Because of God's grace, he would go on to become the apostle Paul and spend the rest of his life, even surrendering his life, for the cause he once tried to destroy (1 Timothy 1:13-15).

Another reason why God's grace is amazing is the cost! We are forgiven because of God's grace, but this came at a great cost. The apostle Peter explained that our forgiveness, or redemption, was not paid with silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ (1 Pet 1:18-19).

God's grace is also amazing in the extent in which it provides forgiveness. It provides not only forgiveness for any who become Christians, but grace also provides additional forgiveness to Christians who sin, repent and confess their transgressions. Grace provides extended continual forgiveness (1 John 1:7).

Grace is also amazing because of its benefits. It transformed "Persecutor of Christ Saul" to "Persecuted for Christ" Paul. Grace provides justification, or as some refer to it "Just-As-If-I-Never" Sinned (Romans 3:24). Grace also builds us up for an inheritance in heaven (Acts 20:32).

So, we can see that God's grace is amazing by those who have received it at a great cost paid by God. We can also see that God's grace is amazing by the extent of forgiveness it provides and the benefits it bestows. God has demonstrated Himself to be a gracious God from the creation of the man, by which sin would enter the world, to the man who would bring mankind redemption, Jesus Christ—*"But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man's offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many."* (Romans 5:15, NKJV). Amazing indeed!

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