

GRACE IMMERSION

WEEK 8

Celebration Weekend

NOVEMBER 20 & 21, 2010 • RENÉ SCHLAEPFER

How we've been changed by grace...

1. _____ is more approachable

Let us then **approach God's throne of grace** with **confidence**, so that we may receive mercy and find **grace to help us** in our time of need.

HEBREWS 4:16 [NIV]

While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him. His heart pounding, he ran out, embraced him, and kissed him. LUKE 15:20 [TM]

The Lord **longs to be gracious** to you. ISAIAH 30:18A [NIV]

If God is **for** us, who can be against us? ROMANS 8:31 [NIV]

2. _____ is more natural

Grace teaches us to live in the present age in a wise and right way...

TITUS 2:12B [NCV]

Jesus: "Are you tired? Worn out? Burned out on religion? Come to me. Get away with me and you'll recover your life... **learn the unforced rhythms of grace.**" MATTHEW 11:28-29 [TM]

3. _____ is more fun

God loves it when the giver **delights** in the giving. 2 CORINTHIANS 9:7B [TM]

4. _____ is easier to share

Paul: "The most important thing is that I complete my mission, the work that the Lord Jesus gave me — to tell people the **Good News about God's grace.**" ACTS 20:24 [NCV; SEE LUKE 14]

5. _____ is more frequent

As **God's grace** reaches more and more people, there will be **great thanksgiving**, and God will receive more and more glory.

2 CORINTHIANS 4:15B [NLT]

Daily Meditations

Monday

In this series we learned grace is...

- **Unearned** (Read Ephesians 2:8–10)
- **Unconditional** (Read Romans 11:5–6)
- **Unlimited** (Read 2 Corinthians 9:8)

And the most amazing thing of all? God *desires* to be gracious to you (see Isaiah 30:18)! After having studied grace for 7 weeks, why do you think it is so often unknown or misunderstood by Christians today?

What is one major way the study of grace has changed you?

Read through all the verses again, making them into prayers of thanksgiving to God that these things are true in your life!

Tuesday

Read Romans 12:4–8; 1 Corinthians 12:12–20. Legalism requires that we look alike, act alike, share the same convictions, pursue our spiritual growth the same way... but that's not *grace*. In today's verses Paul is addressing this. God needs the varied parts of the body. As Charles Swindoll says, "Grace finds pleasure in differences, encourages individuality, smiles on variety, and leaves plenty of room for disagreement." Sounds like a church most people would love! What lessons about grace are there in seeing the church like a body?

Ask God to help you see yourself as an important part of the Body! Ask Him to help you discover and use your gifts! Also ask God to help you become more tolerant of the God-given differences in the Body of Christ.

Wednesday

Read 2 Corinthians 5:16–21; 6:1–2. Paul says he fears that the Corinthians have received God's grace "in vain"; that is, it is not changing their hearts so they are willing to extend grace to another. What about you? How have you responded to your biggest hurts?

Why would someone who has received God's grace be stingy with grace toward others?

Is there anyone to whom you need to risk forgiving grace?

Ask God to help you not receive His grace in vain. Ask Him to help you know how to show radical grace to others in a way that is wise and godly.

Thursday

Read 2 Corinthians 9:8. God has richly lavished so many blessings on you by His grace! Since it's Thanksgiving, there's no better time for you to write down some of the many ways God shows you His grace. Jot down at least 10 ways God is gracious to you below:

Now thank God specifically for these things!

Friday

Read Colossians 2:16–19. Here Paul lists a few of the "extras" legalists were trying to push on the Colossian church. Paul says that such people "have lost connection with the Head," Jesus Christ. I don't think he means they've lost their salvation, but rather that they're *self*-focused instead of *Christ*-focused. Soon their joy, their energy, and their unique witness to the world as a product of grace, will weaken. What additions to the gospel of grace have you encountered in your spiritual life?

What convinced you that trying to live up to religious rules couldn't change you on the inside?

Ask God to help you become skilled at discerning what standards are good, biblical aspects of following Christ, and what is really just our culture permeating our faith.

Saturday

Please pray for our weekend services as we begin a new Christmas series, "LIGHTS." Be praying about who you will invite to our Christmas concert!



And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8 [NIV]