

The Lord Our God Is Gracious

Sermon Outline

In our last message on the character of God we discovered that God is first and foremost merciful. And we discovered that mercy is not receiving what we do deserve, by taking the consequences of our sins upon Himself. That's expensive mercy.

This week we are looking at God is gracious.

Exodus 34:6

The Lord passed before Moses and proclaimed, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious."

"Gracious" (Hanun) is based on the Hebrew verb "to grace". It literally it means "To bend or stoop in kindness to an inferior." When God said I am gracious, He was conveying I AM here to serve you with everything I've got.

Like mercy, grace can only be expressed when everything is messed up.

God's Grace in the Old Testament

Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord. God came to Noah and helped Noah out of the earth's darkest, most sinful hour, and rescued he and his family.

Abram had tried everything else and was well beyond his years to fulfill the promise God had made to him about having a son. In this situation what did Abram find? Abram found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

Sarah too, the barren Sarah, found grace to conceive.

What did Moses find when he pleaded with God on behalf of his wayward people? He found grace in the eyes of the Lord. He found God bent over that whole situation ready to help.

Grace in the Life of Jesus

Luke 2:40, in reference to Jesus...

the grace of God was upon Him.

John 1:14 - He Himself came into our world "full of grace".

When you met Jesus you met grace. Every story in the Bible about Jesus provides another glimpse of His grace.

One thing grace isn't...it isn't stingy. Romans 5:20

"where sin abounded, God's grace much more abounded."

The word used for "abounded" is best translated super abounded. And the word translated into "much more abounded" is hyper super abounded. Where sin super abounded, grace hyper, super abounded even more.

Steps to Christ, p. 12.

While He ever bore Himself with divine dignity, He bowed with the tenderest regard to every member of the family of God. In all men He saw fallen souls whom it was His mission to save.

Jesus was bowed, He was bent, He was stooped, He showed up and said I AM here, ready to serve, ready to help. What can I do for you?

Grace Expressed through Us

Are we supposed to be gracious like God is gracious?

Ephesians 4:29. God's grace changes our speech to...

"always impart grace to the hearers."

In Colossians 4:6 it says something similar. Our speech is to "always be with grace."

Proverbs 3:34; 1 Peter 5:5; James 4:6 all say...
God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.

Galatians 5:4.

In Galatia they had "fallen from grace."

This reference is very ironic. It is the only one of its kind...emphasizing the possibility of falling from grace. Not by sinning mind you. In the context of Galatians they fell from grace by scrupulously keeping the law of Moses.

We must focus our attentions on the fruits of the spirit,
"love, joy, peace, long suffering, goodness, meekness, faithfulness, and self control.
Against such there is no law." Galatians 5:22, 23

God-like character, not endless lists of legalities, is what counts. Being a gracious human being. To do otherwise we may "deny the faith" and "fall from grace".

Mercy is "not getting what we do deserve".
Grace is "getting something we do not deserve."

The secret to becoming gracious is receiving God's grace yourself, when you are at your lowest. Experiencing it prepares us for showing it to others. He's bowed and ready to go...how about you?