

Questions / Answers

1. What is God's grace?
God's free gift to men shown in His loving kindness in giving Jesus for our salvation. It is a gift we do not deserve.
2. What separates us from God?
Sin.
3. Who can bring us back to God? How does he do this?
Jesus. By the sacrifice of his perfect life for us.
4. Can we earn salvation?
No. It is the gift of God.
5. Can we wipe out the bad things we do by doing lots of good things?
No. Our sins can only be forgiven by God's grace.
6. How can we be counted as righteous?
By accepting God's gift of grace, repenting and having our sins forgiven and covered.
7. We can't earn salvation by doing good, so do we need to do good things?
Yes. We need to show our gratitude to God by pleasing Him.
8. What does the parable about the king and his servant teach us?
God has shown us so much grace, we must show the same grace to others.
9. What do we need to do to accept God's gift of grace?
Believe in God, repent, have faith, be baptised, be forgiven, live a new life to please God.
10. What will be our reward if we accept God's grace?
Eternal life in God's Kingdom on earth when Jesus returns.

Memory verses

Psalm 103:10—11 Psalm 32:1—2 Romans 6:1—2 Ephesians 2:8

Discussion

Discuss what the grace of God means to you and how you can be counted as righteous in God's sight. Talk about how you can show grace in your life.

Writing

Write the story of the lost son that Jesus told. What lessons can we learn about the grace of God from this parable?

CBM Senior Lessons



Lesson 45 The grace of God

READING Romans 6:23; Luke 15:11—32; Psalm 103:10-11; Isaiah 59:2;
Psalm 32:1—2; Romans 6:1—2; Ephesians 2:8; Matthew 18:23—35

LESSON

In the Bible God's grace means His loving kindness towards men. It is not something that we deserve. It is the free gift of God. The greatest example of God's grace is His gift of the Lord Jesus Christ to bring salvation.

We are used to earning our rewards in this life. We train to do well in sport. We work for our wages. We study for qualifications. God's gift of grace is completely different. The Bible teaches that we cannot earn salvation. We cannot do lots of good things to earn a place in God's Kingdom. We totally rely on God's grace.

We have all sinned and therefore we shall all die. God sent His son, the Lord Jesus Christ, into the world to open up a way of life for us. Our sins separate us from God. Jesus came to bring men back to God. We have to accept the sacrifice of Jesus in humility to have the hope of life.

Many people think that the good things they do and the bad things they do are added up. If they have more good than bad they think they have a right to God's gift of life. This is not true. It is easy to think that we can earn God's gifts. But a gift cannot be earned. Only wages are earned. Paul tells us: "The wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 6:23).

Jesus told a parable about a lost son. A rich man had two sons. The older son was sensible and worked hard. The younger son was restless and wanted to go his own way. He asked his father for his share of the money. He went away and had a good time. He wasted all his father's money on wild living. Eventually he was living in poverty and hunger. He decided he would be better off as a servant in his father's house. He went home to tell his father he was sorry. His father welcomed him home as his son with rejoicing.

The story of the lost son teaches us about the love and compassion of God's grace. The father in the story showed love and mercy to his son, although he had behaved in a very bad way. The father did not treat him as his behavior deserved. God will show us mercy and forgive our sins even though we do not deserve it. This is His gift of grace.

Sin separates us from God because God hates sin. We are separated from God as sinners. God has provided a way for our sins to be covered so that we can have a relationship with Him. There is no way we can cover our own sins. God said that sins can only be forgiven by repentance and offering a sacrifice. In Old Testament times animal sacrifices were offered. When Jesus came he lived a life of perfect obedience to God. He never sinned. He suffered and died on the cross. He was the perfect sacrifice offered for our sin.

This is God's gift of grace to us. It is the opportunity to be saved from our sins. Because of the sacrifice of Jesus our sins can be covered so that we are made sinless before God. Even though we are dirty with sin, we can be forgiven and made clean by God's grace. God says, "Even if your sins are as red as blood, I will make them as white as snow." (Isaiah 1:18).

If our sins are covered by the sacrifice of Jesus, God does not count them against us any more. Instead, He forgives our sins and we are counted as righteous. However terrible our sins are, they can still be covered and forgiven by God's grace if we really repent. When we accept God's grace, we receive forgiveness so that we can put our sins behind us. We can have peace with God. We have been brought into a relationship with God as one of His children.

We must continually remember that it is not the good things we do or our knowledge of the Bible that can save us. We cannot do lots of good works to earn a place in God's Kingdom. We cannot wipe out the bad things we do by doing good things. What God wants is that we confess our sins and accept His grace and forgiveness.

We cannot do good things to earn our salvation. So does that mean that we don't need to do good things and try to live in a good way? Does it mean that we can stop doing good and live to please ourselves? Paul talks about this in his letter to the Romans. "Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means!" We cannot do good works to earn our salvation. But we should be so grateful to God for His wonderful gift of grace that we **want** to live to please Him.

We need to show our gratitude to God by the way we live. We should always thank God for His gift of salvation. We need to show grace to others and grow in grace. We can do this by trying to copy the way Jesus lived. We need to show grace in the way we speak to people and how we act towards them in love.

Jesus told a parable about a king who was settling accounts with his servants. The first servant owed the king 10,000 talents of silver. This was a huge sum that the man could never repay. The king ordered that he and all his family must be sold as slaves. But when the servant begged for mercy the king forgave all his debt and let him go free. That servant went outside and found a man who owed him 100 pence. The man begged for mercy and time to pay his debt. But the servant refused and threw the man into prison. When the king heard about it he was very angry. He told the servant, "I had mercy on you and forgave your huge debt. You should have had mercy and forgiven that small debt." The king punished the servant because he did not show to others the mercy that was shown to him.

This parable teaches us that God has shown so much mercy and grace to us. We should be very thankful for His grace and show the same grace to others.

God's gift of grace is freely offered to us. We must each make our own decision to accept or reject His gift. If we want to accept God's gift of grace we have to do the following things:

- ◆ Believe in God
- ◆ Realise that we are sinners
- ◆ Repent of our sins
- ◆ Have faith that we can be saved through Jesus
- ◆ Be baptised
- ◆ Receive forgiveness for our sins
- ◆ Live a new life to please God, not ourselves

It should be thankfulness for the grace of God which influences our decision to follow the Lord Jesus. We know that we have no strength or righteousness of our own to offer God. It is His grace which teaches us to turn our backs on this life and follow the Lord Jesus Christ as his disciples. It is His grace which makes us want to please Him in the way we live our lives. With the love and grace of God to help us, we shall find a place in God's Kingdom.