

Extreme Faith (Part 8)

Sunday, October 9, 2022

God calls us to live and an Extreme life of FAITH. When we began this series, we compared a life of Extreme Faith to Extreme Sports. Take a look at this video that reminds us of some of those extremes...

VIDEO: Extreme Sports

WOW, now that is extreme!! But it doesn't begin to compare to a life of faith lived with...

EXTREME COMMITMENT

EXTREME TRUST

EXTREME GIVING

EXTREME RIGHTEOUSNESS

EXTREME LOVE

EXTREME WORSHIP

EXTREME EVANGELISM

The key word for our next extreme is found in the Bible over 130 times (138). For the most part, when we think of Grace, we think of it as it applies to God's Grace (His unmerited favor).

Grace is an essential part of God's character. Grace is closely related to God's benevolence, love, and mercy. Grace can be variously defined as "God's favor toward the unworthy" or "God's benevolence on the undeserving." In His grace, God is willing to forgive us and bless us abundantly, in spite of the fact that we don't deserve to be treated so well or dealt with so generously.

God extended His favor to us. Grace is what saves us ([Ephesians 2:8](#)). Grace is the essence of the gospel ([Acts 20:24](#)). Grace gives us victory over sin ([James 4:6](#)). Grace gives us "eternal encouragement and good hope" ([2 Thessalonians 2:16](#)). Paul repeatedly identified grace as the basis of his calling as an apostle ([Romans 15:15](#); [1 Corinthians 3:10](#); [Ephesians 3:2, 7](#)). Jesus Christ is the embodiment of grace, coupled with truth ([John 1:14](#)).

The gift and the act of giving have nothing at all to do with our merit or innate quality ([Romans 4:4](#); [11:5-6](#); [2 Timothy 1:9-10](#)). In fact, the Bible says quite clearly that we don't deserve God's salvation. [Romans 5:8-10](#) says, "God demonstrates his

own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us. . . . While we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to him through the death of his Son."

Grace does not stop once we are saved; God is gracious to us for the rest of our lives, working within and upon us. The Bible encourages us with many additional benefits that grace secures for every believer:

- *Grace justifies us before a holy God ([Romans 3:24](#); [Ephesians 1:6](#); [Titus 3:7](#)).*
- *Grace provides us access to God to communicate and fellowship with Him ([Ephesians 1:6](#); [Hebrews 4:16](#)).*
- *Grace wins for us a new relationship of intimacy with God ([Exodus 33:17](#)).*
- *Grace disciplines and trains us to live in a way that honors God ([Titus 2:11–14](#); [2 Corinthians 8:7](#)).*
- *Grace grants us immeasurable spiritual riches ([Proverbs 10:22](#); [Ephesians 2:7](#)).*
- *Grace helps us in our every need ([Hebrews 4:16](#)).*
- *Grace is the reason behind our every deliverance ([Psalm 44:3–8](#); [Hebrews 4:16](#)).*
- *Grace preserves us and comforts, encourages, and strengthens us ([2 Corinthians 13:14](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:16–17](#); [2 Timothy 2:1](#)).*

Grace is actively and continually working in the lives of God's people. Paul credited the success of his ministry not to his own substantial labors but to "the grace of God that was with me" ([1 Corinthians 15:10](#)). Grace is the ongoing, benevolent act of God working in us, without which we can do nothing ([John 15:5](#)). Grace is greater than our sin ([Romans 5:20](#)), more abundant than we expect ([1 Timothy 1:14](#)), and too wonderful for words ([2 Corinthians 9:15](#)).

As John Newton's famous hymn declares to the world, grace is "AMAZING!"

But the more we understand God's grace towards us, the more we come to realize that God calls us to give that grace to others as a part of an extreme life of faith.

2 Corinthians 8:7 (ESV)

7 But as you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in all earnestness, and in our love for you—see that you excel in this act of grace also.

1 Peter 4:10

10 Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms.

2 Corinthians 9:8 (ESV)

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

God never intended for His grace to stop with us; but rather that we would use the example of His grace, given to us to, and the power of His grace, working in us, to live a life of Extreme Grace towards others.

EXTREME GRACE...

1. Bestows Favor, Blessing, Love, thoughtfulness and Goodwill

Psalm 103:8

8 The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.

And so should we

2 Timothy 1:9

9 He has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace. This grace was given us in Christ Jesus...

The priestly blessing given in Numbers 6 is a great example of the grace that God not only wants us to talk about but live outwardly in our relationships with others

Numbers 6:24-26

24 ""The Lord bless you and keep you; 25 the Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you; 26 the Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace.""

Paul said that his life's purpose was to "testify" to God's grace. Again we testify to it by not just speaking about it but by living it out

Acts 20:24

24 However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.

Does grace flow out of your life? Do you bestow favor, blessing, love, thoughtfulness, and goodwill? Or does opposition, cursing, dislike, hatred, inconsiderateness, and hostility show up in more abundance?

I have often said that one of the ways we measure ourselves regarding the level of grace with which we treat others is to remind ourselves that when we get to heaven we will never hear the Lord say to us "You know, there was just way too much grace in your life. You should have been a little tougher on people, a little more skeptical, shown a little less favor, blessing, love, thoughtfulness and goodwill."

We will NEVER hear those words. But we might hear, "Why didn't you show more grace to others? The same grace that I showed you?"

I don't know about you, but I would rather hear the Lord say, "Your life was FULL of grace. You were always giving it out. Thank you for being like me."

2. Is given as a Gift

Grace is a gift... There are no strings attached and we may never be repaid in like manner; but we give it anyway because He gave it to us.

Ephesians 2:8

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—

Matthew 10:7-8

7 As you go, proclaim this message: 'The kingdom of heaven has come near.' 8 Heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse those who have leprosy, drive out demons. Freely you have received; freely give.

And what did we receive? We received His grace... A grace that heals us, that forgive us, that saves us, that delivers us

What gifts of grace can you give out this week?

3. Is Unmerited, Unearned and Underserved

Ephesians 2:4-5

4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, 5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

Romans 5:8

8 But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

That is the very definition of grace

4. Is Sufficient

2 Corinthians 12:9

9 But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.

We could win so many battles, conquer so many giants with grace, because grace is sufficient

2 Corinthians 9:8 (ESV)

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

5. Maintains a soft tongue and an even softer heart

James 3

3 Not many of you should become teachers, my fellow believers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly. 2 We all stumble in many ways. Anyone who is never at fault in what they say is perfect, able to keep their whole body in check.

3 When we put bits into the mouths of horses to make them obey us, we can turn the whole animal. 4 Or take ships as an example. Although they are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. 5 Likewise, the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great

boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. 6 The tongue also is a fire, a world of evil among the parts of the body. It corrupts the whole body, sets the whole course of one's life on fire, and is itself set on fire by hell.

7 All kinds of animals, birds, reptiles and sea creatures are being tamed and have been tamed by mankind, 8 but no human being can tame the tongue. It is a restless evil, full of deadly poison.

9 With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse human beings, who have been made in God's likeness. 10 Out of the same mouth come praise and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this should not be. 11 Can both fresh water and salt water flow from the same spring? 12 My brothers and sisters, can a fig tree bear olives, or a grapevine bear figs? Neither can a salt spring produce fresh water.

13 Who is wise and understanding among you? Let them show it by their good life, by deeds done in the humility that comes from wisdom. 14 But if you harbor bitter envy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast about it or deny the truth. 15 Such "wisdom" does not come down from heaven but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. 16 For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder and every evil practice.

17 But the wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere. 18 Peacemakers who sow in peace reap a harvest of righteousness.

6. Requires extreme Love and Forgiveness

Hebrews 12:15

15 See to it that no one falls short of the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many.

Consider these verses

In the sermon on the mount at the end of the Lord's prayer

Matthew 6:14

14 For if you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

And in Matthew 18 at the end of the parable of the unmerciful servant

Matthew 18:35

35 “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother or sister from your heart.”

John Piper responded to someone's question about these verse in this way...

The way I would put it is like this: If the forgiveness that we received at the cost of the blood of the Son of God, Jesus Christ, is so ineffective in our hearts that we are bent on holding unforgiving grudges and bitterness against someone, we are not a good tree. We are not saved. We don't cherish this forgiveness. We don't trust in this forgiveness. We don't embrace and treasure this forgiveness.

We are hypocrites. We are just mouthing. We haven't ever felt the piercing, joyful wonder that God paid the life of his Son. I mean, how in the world could I hold a grudge against somebody when I have not been offended nearly like God has been offended — so highly that he has to pay the life of his Son in order for me to be forgiven?