

“A Biblical Definition of Grace”

All Scripture is KJV: Ephesians 2:8-9

INTRODUCTION: WHAT DOES THE BIBLE HAVE TO SAY ON THIS MATTER.

People often says things without actually knowing what the meaning is of the words that they are using.

One such word is the word “Grace.

I have heard several renditions of the word “Grace” used from time to time.

- One such reference to Grace is :
 1. God’s Riches at Christ’s expense.
 2. God’s unmerited favour.
 3. God’s gift to certain people only?
- ✓ But today we are going to look at what the bible has to say about grace.
- ✓ Because surely if we are saved by grace then we need to know what it means.
- ✓ The word grace is used 159 times in the bible. (OT 37 times and NT 122 times).

Ephesians 2:8-9 [Full Chapter]

For by **grace** are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: **it is the gift of God:** Not of works, lest any man should boast.

How many of us today can honestly say that if we were questioned on the meaning of grace; could actually give a biblical account of the words meaning?

1. Well as far back as the book of Genesis the word has repeatedly been used by God to describe certain circumstances.
2. The word **grace first appears in Genesis 6:8** when God is speaking to Noah. In which we are told that Noah found “grace” in the eyes of the LORD.

Genesis 6:8 But Noah found **grace** in the eyes of the LORD. ⁹ These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a just man and perfect in his generations, and **Noah walked with God.**

3. This meaning is referenced to the fact that Noah found grace in the eyes of Capital LORD.
4. The Tetragrammaton is YHWH. (Jesus).
5. Remember how also in Genesis 18 when the LORD spoke to Abraham about Sodom and Gomorrah.

Genesis 18 King James Version (KJV)

13 And the LORD said unto Abraham, Wherefore did Sarah laugh, saying, Shall I of a surety bear a child, which am old? **14 Is any thing too hard for the LORD?** At the time appointed I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son. ¹⁵ Then Sarah denied, saying, I laughed not; for she was afraid. And he said, Nay; but thou didst laugh.

¹⁶ And the men rose up from thence, and looked toward Sodom: and Abraham went with them to bring them on the way.

17 And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; ¹⁸ Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?

¹⁹ For I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the LORD, to do justice and judgment; that the LORD may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him.

20 And the LORD said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; ²¹ I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know.

22 And the men turned their faces from thence, and went toward Sodom: but Abraham stood yet before the LORD.

Also.....

1. Therefore according to Genesis 18, Abraham was speaking to the LORD (Jehovah) which is Jesus here.
 2. All through this passage Abraham is calling him LORD.
 3. All through this passage we see that Abraham could see and talk to the LORD and even that the LORD ate the food that Abraham prepared for them.
- ✓ In verse 13, we see that the scripture said..... **13 And the LORD said unto Abraham**, Wherefore did Sarah laugh.....
 - ✓ This shows that it was the LORD speaking here, which is the name used in place of the Tetragrammaton which is simply the Hebrew equivalent of YHWH which is a word used to show that it is God speaking. Which in this case in Genesis 18 is Jesus who is also God.
 - ✓ Also here we see in Genesis 18:16 that the one man stays with the LORD whilst the other two go into Sodom as we continue to read in Genesis 19. These were two angels that showed up in Sodom at Lots house, and they appeared to the sodomites there as two men.

 - ✓ But let me show you also that the LORD here could not have been God the Father and therefore must have been God the Son Jesus.
 - ✓ Let me show you why?

Turn to John 1 to prove it.....

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² The same was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

Verse 14: ¹⁴ And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

✓ Here we see the members of the trinity again.

But look at verse 18 which is the key to it **not** being the Father in Genesis 18.

¹⁸ No man hath seen God at any time, the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him.

1. You see no man could have seen the Father in Genesis 18 and lived.
2. So it had to be the Son who was the one who revealed himself to Abraham.
3. In verse 18 here it is speaking about God the Father not God the Son.
4. So what this verse is teaching is that it is only the Son who could have been seen by Abraham and not the Father.
5. So could this statement have been made if it was God the Farther who walked up to Abraham?
6. No it would not make any sense according to the scriptures, because no man can see the face of the Father and still live.

✓ So now that we have established.....who the LORD is, we can continue with the grace that Noah found in Jesus.

Let's look at more scriptures on the word "grace".

Genesis 19:19

Behold now, thy servant hath found **grace** in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

Genesis 32:5

And I have oxen, and asses, flocks, and menservants, and womenservants: and I have sent to tell my lord, that I may find **grace** in thy sight.

Genesis 33:8

And he said, What meanest thou by all this drove which I met? And he said, These are to find **grace** in the sight of my lord.

Genesis 33:10

And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found **grace** in thy sight, then receive my present at my hand: for therefore I have seen thy face, as though I had seen the face of God, and thou wast pleased with me.

Genesis 33:15

And Esau said, Let me now leave with thee some of the folk that are with me. And he said, What needeth it? let me find **grace** in the sight of my lord.

Genesis 34:11

And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find **grace** in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give.

Genesis 39:4

And Joseph found **grace** in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand.

Genesis 47:25

And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find **grace** in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

Genesis 47:29

And the time drew nigh that Israel must die: and he called his son Joseph, and said unto him, If now I have found **grace** in thy sight, put, I pray thee, thy hand under my thigh, and deal kindly and truly with me; bury me not, I pray thee, in Egypt:

Genesis 50:4

And when the days of his mourning were past, Joseph spake unto the house of Pharaoh, saying, If now I have found **grace** in your eyes, speak, I pray you, in the ears of Pharaoh, saying,

Exodus 33:12

And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people: and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. Yet thou hast said, I know thee by name, and thou hast also found **grace** in my sight.

Exodus 33:13

Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found **grace** in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find **grace** in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people.

Exodus 33:16

For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found **grace** in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.

Exodus 33:17

And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found **grace** in my sight, and I know thee by name.

Exodus 34:9

And he said, If now I have found **grace** in thy sight, O LORD, let my LORD, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance.

Numbers 32:5

Wherefore, said they, if we have found **grace** in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan.

Judges 6:17

And he said unto him, If now I have found **grace** in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me.

Ruth 2:2

And Ruth the Moabitess said unto Naomi, Let me now go to the field, and glean ears of corn after him in whose sight I shall find **grace**. And she said unto her, Go, my daughter.

Ruth 2:10

Then she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found **grace** in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

1 Samuel 1:18

And she said, Let thine handmaid find **grace** in thy sight. So the woman went her way, and did eat, and her countenance was no more sad.

1 Samuel 20:3

And David sware moreover, and said, Thy father certainly knoweth that I have found **grace** in thine eyes; and he saith, Let not Jonathan know this, lest he be grieved: but truly as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, there is but a step between me and death.

1 Samuel 27:5

And David said unto Achish, If I have now found **grace** in thine eyes, let them give me a place in some town in the country, that I may dwell there: for why should thy servant dwell in the royal city with thee?

2 Samuel 14:22

And Joab fell to the ground on his face, and bowed himself, and thanked the king: and Joab said, To day thy servant knoweth that I have found **grace** in thy sight, my lord, O king, in that the king hath fulfilled the request of his servant.

2 Samuel 16:4

Then said the king to Ziba, Behold, thine are all that pertained unto Mephibosheth. And Ziba said, I humbly beseech thee that I may find **grace** in thy sight, my lord, O king.

Ezra 9:8

And now for a little space **grace** hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.

- In all of these versus what comes through very clearly about the word “Grace” is that it means “favour”.

- Finding favour in God's eyes is what the scriptures keep on speaking of in the sense of the words usage.

Esther 2:17

And the king loved Esther above all the women, and she obtained **grace** and **favour** in his sight more than all the virgins; so that he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen instead of Vashti.

- What about the Psalms definition of grace.

Psalm 84:11

For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give **grace** and glory: **no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.**

- To walk uprightly is referring to believing in God.
- So grace is given even in the OT according to the Psalms to those who walk uprightly (believe in Jesus).
- ✓ Again as we read the Book of Proverbs we come up with the definition of the word "grace".

Proverbs 3:33-35 King James Version (KJV)

³³ The curse of the LORD is in the house of the wicked: but he blesseth the habitation of the just.

³⁴ Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly.

³⁵ The wise shall inherit glory: but shame shall be the promotion of fools.

1. So according to Proverbs the kind of "grace" that the LORD (Jesus) gives is that the **"wise shall inherit glory"**.
2. This means that even the grace in the OT was administered by the LORD (Jesus) which was able to offer the inheritance of glory. (which is eternal life).
3. So grace is the favour of God for eternal life.

- ✚ What about Zechariah's comment of the LORD.

Zechariah 12:10

And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

- ✚ This is a reference to Jesus giving grace (favour) in the NT. The spirit of grace as we know it now is the Holy Spirit, once you are saved.

So.....what does the NT have to say about grace, now that we have looked at the OT.

- ✓ The first mention of grace in the NT has reference straight away to Jesus.

Luke 2:40

And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him.

1. So straight away we see God's grace or "favour" was upon Jesus.
2. Remember how the scripture says this is my Son in whom I am well pleased.
3. God the Father is well pleased with His Son.

John 1:14

And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.

1. When we look at Jesus, the bible is telling us here that it is as if we are actually looking at God the Father.
2. The bible says that when we look at Jesus we are actually looking at the same glory as what God the Father has.
3. "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.
4. The "grace" and truth (pure wisdom) is the same wisdom that Luke 2:40 just told us that Jesus has.
5. Grace is the favour of God.
6. Grace is the ability that only God (Jesus) possesses to be able to give that to a person who believes in him.
7. In other words it is only Jesus who is God, that can allow a "person to find favour" in the eyes of God. That favour being the grace of salvation.

John 1:16

And of his fulness have all we received, and **grace for grace.**

John 1:17

For the law was given by Moses, but **grace** and truth came by Jesus Christ.

1. When John 1:16 and 1:17 speaks about the fullness which we have received, it is talking about the gift of eternal life that Jesus has given through His "grace" or favour.
2. The grace for grace, is speaking about the grace that Jesus has, he has given the same to us.
3. Jesus has shared that eternal "grace" or favour with those who have believed in him.
4. The Law, which was not able to save, was not sufficient for salvation. The salvation came by "grace and truth" of Jesus.

5. It is a gift which only Jesus has to give.

✓ Such is the grace of Jesus that it was well witnessed by the Apostles.

In the very early chapters of the Book of Acts the Apostles were already speaking about this great gift that was given to those who believed in Jesus.

Acts 4:32-33 King James Version (KJV)

³² And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common.

³³ And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and **great grace was upon them all.**

1. As the Apostles witnessed with great power of the truth of God's word, **great grace was upon them all.**
 2. Meaning that "salvation" had been given as a given gift, to those who believed.
 3. That gift came in the form of "grace". A favour in which God (Jesus) had given to those **because they had believed.**
 4. Grace or favour in the sight of the LORD (Jesus) was given for no other reason but for the fact that they had "believed" as said in verse 22 of Acts 4.
- **Grace was not given because they asked for forgiveness of sin. No.....the grace was given to them because they had believed in Jesus.**

✓ Here is another verse in Acts which speaks about that salvation.....

Acts 15:11

But we believe that **through the grace of the LORD Jesus Christ we shall be saved**, even as they.

1. You see again here that in order to be saved, you have to receive the "grace" of the LORD Jesus Christ.
2. In order to be saved it is "Jesus" who has to give the grace. You cannot demand or do anything to get it.
3. The grace that Jesus gives, is a saving grace. It is the gift of God, lest any man should boast.

✓ What about this verse speaking about Gods grace for salvation.....

Acts 18:27

And when he was disposed to pass into Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him: who, when he was come, **helped them much which had believed through grace:**

1. For salvation you have to believe through grace.

2. It is the believing faith in Jesus which brings the “grace” of God.
3. Which is the gift of God.
4. The eternal gift of salvation.

Acts 4:12

Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

- ✓ Listen to this next verse about grace.....

Acts 20:32

And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to **the word of his grace**, which is able to build you up, and **to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.**

1. Did you catch what is going on here?
2. It is God’s word, which is able to build you up first? Faith comes by hearing the word of God not so.....
3. Then.....after that you have heard the word of his **“grace”** (word of salvation)
4. Then.....it is able to give you an “inheritance”.

- ✓ What inheritance is that? Well it is the inheritance of “eternal life.

5. The inheritance of salvation.
6. The inheritance of “GRACE”.
7. It is the same inheritance among all them which are “sanctified” verse 32 says.

- ✓ The word of His “grace” is a “promise” that Jesus has made already, that if you shall believe in the LORD Jesus Christ thou shalt be saved.

- ✓ Is that not.....the word of his grace mentioned here in Acts 20:32.

- ❖ There are 122 NT references to grace so to manage them all in this message is going to be impossible for the sake of a time limit this morning.

- ❖ But if we have to consider another few verses on grace, why not consider this next one..

Romans 1:4-6 King James Version (KJV)

⁴ And declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead:

⁵ **By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith** among all nations, for his name:

⁶ Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ:

1. Grace again Paul said was given to them as the apostles.
2. Even to all nations who believe grace is given he said.

3. Then there is a call from the apostle Paul to all, to be “called of Jesus”.
 4. The apostle Paul said that they had received grace for obedience to the faith, which is another way of saying because they have believed in Jesus.
 5. Grace is always given only by believing in Jesus. No other way.
- ❖ That is why the apostle Paul wrote this under the inspiration of God in Romans 3:23-25.

Romans 3:23-25 King James Version (KJV)

²³ For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

²⁴ Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

²⁵ Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

1. God has said, that Jesus was set forth to be a “propitiation” or “payment” to appease the God head for our sin.
2. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.
3. We are “justified freely” because it is Jesus who was made the offering for our sin.
4. We have been “justified freely by His magnificent grace”. The grace in which God does not see us as “outcasts anymore” but sees us as being adopted as children by Jesus Christ into His kingdom, because he paid the price, and now it is “His Grace” which is sufficient for us to be welcomed into his kingdom.
5. We have received of that grace, that free gift which he has given to everyone who believes in him.

- ❖ That why it is so wonderful to know that the LORD (Jesus) in the OT is the same LORD Jesus in the NT.

Romans 4:16

Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by **grace**; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, **but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,**

1. We are told in the scriptures right back from Genesis that Abraham was told of the seed to come in which all nations of the whole earth would be blessed.
2. And in Galatians 3 it is revealed to us that Jesus would be that seed which would come and bring redemption.

Galatians 3:16

Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith **not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.**

Romans 6:14

For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under **grace**.

- ✓ I am going to conclude this morning's message with this verse, because I think it sums up grace better than what we can even imagine it to be.

Romans 11:6

And if by **grace**, then is it no more of works: **otherwise grace is no more grace**. **But if it be of works, then it is no more grace**: otherwise work is no more work.

- When we started out the message this morning we opened up with Ephesians 2:8-9. And so we close with a very similar verse having gone full circle in the scriptures.
- 1. We cannot be saved by any work which we can do the scriptures says. And therefore I find that this scripture in Romans 11 able to confirm that again for us and for all those who think that somehow they have to be this **"very good person"** in order for them to be saved or to remain saved.
- 2. What Romans 11 tells me again is that despite our intervention in the biblical affairs of salvation it is not possible that we can change anything, but except to believe it's all Jesus.
- If it was possible then the apostle Paul would have been our first mentor, but even he said it was not possible.
- 3. So I want us to understand this morning that it is "purely the grace of God" which brings salvation.
- 4. And by "the grace of God" we mean it's is "God's gift", to be more precise "Jesus' gift" who we know is God.
- 5. But it is His gift of Grace that is doing the "saving" not anything which we do.
- **Work is what we do- and it cannot save us.**
- **Grace on the other hand is what God does. And it is the only thing that can save us.**

CLOSE IN PRAYER.....