

## INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been employed?

But you have undertaken your job begrudgingly and only with a sense of duty?

You were treated as a number and not as a person –**just a cog in a wheel.**

In 1979 I was offered a job in with a Real Estate agent. The conditions of employment were (i) two days off during the week, (ii) every second week-end off.

After a few weeks these conditions changed. I was working seven days a week, with one Saturday off every month. My employer treated me as a number, not as a person with results based on performance.

I begrudgingly continued to go to work, with a sense of duty. There was certainly no sense of grace with my employer. Where was the “Grace” in the Real Estate agency?

### **So what is Grace?**

It is an essential part of God’s character. It’s closely related to God’s benevolence, love, and mercy through Jesus Christ.

Philip Yancey says “Grace is Christianity’s best gift to the world, a spiritual nova in our midst, exerting a force stronger than vengeance, stronger than racism and stronger than hate.”

It is about God’s generosity. It’s about his Love.

Generosity and love that empowers believers to live a holy life. It is God’s favour towards the unworthy.

Grace can be described in two ways:-

1. as a free gift
2. an understanding forgiveness

### **As a free gift**

### **An understanding forgiveness.**

**Firstly – as a free gift** – Ephesians Ch 2:8-9 Pauls says “For it is by grace you have been saved through faith – and this is not from yourselves, it is a gift of God.” The simple truth is that the perfect God loves us imperfect beings.

He loves with a love far greater than we can comprehend. In the gift of Grace we hear the voice of God. God assuring us that as we commit ourselves to walking with Christ, he will be empower us in that walk.

Paul stresses that we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling -Without presuming on the Grace of God.

As a Christian our life should be characterised by an earnest desire and sincere effort to put to death our sins.

To repent and turn to him.

Jesus Christ is the embodiment of grace, coupled with truth.

The bible repeatedly calls Grace as a gift.

The fact that grace is a gift means that nothing is owing

It cannot be earned by any effort on our part — by fasting, celibacy, acts of kindness or by prayer vigils.

It is given freely by God and not as a result on works.

I've known God's Grace in many ways.

- i. When my Auntie gave me a bible at the age of 7. I read the verse on the front page, and then put the bible on the shelf until I was about 23. This was when I started to go back to church – Narelle was playing the piano. The verse was John 14:6. where Jesus Said “I am the way, the truth and the life; no one can come to the Father but by me.” I felt humbled by her gift – like God's forever grace – humbling and wonderful! knowing that my Auntie was God's messenger to my conviction. Another time
- ii. In another job I had the conditions were similar what I mentioned earlier – a prisoner in employment - I did not enjoying life/work. I was retrenched. I knew a manager of a business and proceeded to his office. Approaching in the opposite direction was a familiar face – I quickly swung round and asked whether he had a job available. He said go and see JT – I did and started work that day. This was an example of God's grace

Grace also shows itself as forgiveness, salvation, regeneration, repentance and the love of God. It is available to all that are humble enough to seek it.

God's grace stays with us always, now, and forever and we didn't earn it.

That's the first thing about Grace – **it's a free gift.**

## And then **secondly** – **it's understanding forgiveness**

In His grace, God is willing to forgive us, to reconcile us to himself and bless us abundantly.

And this is in spite of the fact that we don't deserve to be treated so well or dealt with so generously.

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Paul said in **2 Corinthians 12:9**. "Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me." In our weakness as sinners God's Grace is in Jesus. He suffered and died and was resurrected so that we could have forgiveness. He said, "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

God's forgiveness allows believers to restore their relationship with God, which was damaged by sin. Through the sacrificial death of Jesus Christ, believers receive forgiveness. Forgiveness enables them to stand in the presence of God despite their imperfections. This act of grace signifies that God desires a personal relationship with each of us. He loves deeply.

He must do because we were born in sin ([Psalm 51:5](#)) says "Surely I was sinful at birth,"- we were unrighteous ([Romans 3:10](#)) says "There is no righteous and not even one." Spiritually, we were destitute, blind, unclean, and dead. Our souls were in danger of everlasting punishment. Our sinful nature alienates us from God – we need to be saved. And God saved us by Grace!

He declares us righteous on the basis of the real accomplished righteousness of Jesus Christ,

This righteous is credited to us for ever through faith. Because of this we are assured of forgiveness.

God has made provision for the forgiveness of our sins and the only thing we are to do is to ask for it, and then receive or accept it. To accept God's forgiveness and forgive ourselves includes the following practical steps:-

1. **Confess your sins:** by acknowledge your mistakes and confess your sins.
2. **Ask God for forgiveness:** Ask Him to cleanse you thoroughly with the blood of Jesus Christ.
3. **Believe that you are forgiven:** by faith, you must believe that God has forgiven you.
4. **Let go of guilt and shame:** approach God with a sincere heart and confidence, knowing that our guilty conscience has been cleansed through the forgiveness of our sins.
5. **Renew your mind:** focus on the truth of God's Word.
6. **Embrace forgiveness as a lifestyle:** forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

**So we see that believing in God's forgiveness means trusting in His grace and mercy.**

God's Grace saves us not just from the consequences of our sin. It means we know God's forgiveness, and will always want to be repenting.

As such our Christian life should be characterised by an earnest desire and sincere effort to put to death our sins. To repent and turn to him.

## **ILLUSTRATION**

Danny Abdallah lost his three children and their cousin to a drunk and drug-affected driver. Five years on, the grieving father and the TV interviewer met in a maximum security prison.

The father sat down with the man who took their lives — declaring he would let the killer out of prison now if he could.

Despite the devastation suffered by the two families who lost their children, Abdallah has chosen to forgive.

Abdallah and his wife Leila fronted the media shortly after the deadly crash to [publicly offer their forgiveness to Davidson](#).

“If it was up to me, I’ll bring him out tomorrow. I know the guy,” Abdallah said.

“Justice is to have my kids back. That’s all. If you’ve got one day or you’ve got a hundred years, it’s not going to change how I feel.”

Davidson praised Abdallah’s admission he would let him go free.

“That’s really going the extra mile. He is just; he’s one in a million. Just an absolutely amazing man,” Davidson said “I don’t believe I deserve any forgiveness - even talking to me was a blessing. I was just happy with that. He keeps amazing me. He’s just an incredible person and I just want to be everything like him.”

Davidson was asked if he had apologised to the grieving father. “I have. And I’ll do it again,” Davidson said.

“Danny, I’m really sorry to you and your whole family for what I’ve done and all your friends, and I’m also sorry to all the emergency services that turned up to that day and had to deal with what they dealt with. “

In response to Davidson apologising to the grieving father, Abdallah said he had already made peace with his children’s killer. “I’ve forgiven you already. Thanks, brother,” Davidson responded.

“So what do I do with that? Do I just keep hurting him? Do I keep hating him? What’s it going to do? It’s not going to do anything.”

## **Conclusion**

God’s Grace is (i) a free gift and (ii) helps understand forgiveness. And this Grace is ongoing. Without it 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](#)).

Grace transforms our desires, motivations, and behaviour. It brings salvation for all people and grounds and empowers everything in the Christian life. Grace is the cornerstone of Christian faith. It emphasises that God's love and salvation are gifts that cannot be earned. Believers are called to respond to this grace with faith, gratitude and repentance.

William Hendriksen said “God’s Grace is his active favour bestowing the greatest gift upon those who have deserved the greatest punishment”

**God’s grace tells me I’m not a number or a cog in a machine.**

We are loved and valued by God.

In the words of the Psalmist, “For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us” ([Psalm 103:11-12](#)). Let us hold on to this truth and embrace the forgiveness and grace that God has freely given to us.

**So what do we do with God’s Grace? Accept it and say thanks.**

**Video clip – Philip Yancey**