

[A Devotional Study on God's Power for Daily Living]

LORD,
I Need
Grace to
Make It Today



KAY ARTHUR

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MAKE IT TODAY

A DEVOTIONAL STUDY *on* GOD'S POWER

for DAILY LIVING

K A Y

A R T H U R



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INTRODUCTION

At times we all wonder if we are going to make it—or if it is even worth the trying, the effort, the fight. The pressure, mental or physical, seems relentless. It's the “same ol', same ol',” and it is wearing. Very wearing. Why not just lay down and give up?

Lay down and give up? We can't—because His grace is there, offered freely, given *today* freely and lavishly for all who would take it.

Yet the problem is that we don't always know how to seek and find that grace—or after knowing how, we forget and need to be reminded. That, Beloved, is what this devotional study is all about. It's about crying out to God, “Lord, I need grace to make it today,” and then finding out how to appropriate His grace for any and every situation you will face and every feeling you will have to deal with.

That is why this book is set up this way. For the next nine weeks, you are going to immerse yourself day by day in the warm, stress-relieving water of God's Word. The aches, the pains, the tension, the stress will gradually subside as you find yourself resting in the sufficiency of His grace. On some of the days there will simply be a truth to examine and embrace; other days there will be things you want to look up, study, and write out. But always there will be application to where you are today.

This is a devotional study that will minister to you in intimate, personal ways—but it is also a book that, when shared and discussed with a group, will take on even new depth as you learn from one another—and as you help one another learn to appropriate His grace day by day.

If there's a possibility of your using this as a group study in which you would be a facilitator, then read “Guidelines for Group Use” in the “Study Resources” section at the back of this book, where you'll find other valuable tools to enhance this study.

For many, the blessing of this study has been enhanced by the companion video and audio teaching tapes. For more information on these,

simply call Precept Ministries International at our toll-free number (1-800-763-8280) and let one of our staff members help you. It would be their pleasure. We also provide training if you would like to develop your skills in handling the Word of God more accurately or in leading others in group studies designed to minister to people of all ages at any level of commitment while respecting the restraints on their time. We're known as "The Inductive Study People: everybody, everywhere, any time, any place, any language, any age. One message: the Bible. One method: inductive." Please don't hesitate to call us.

Finally, let me share my vision—it's the possibility of a new avenue of ministry for you, Beloved of God...

*A new beginning—
An avenue of ministry—
A sense of doing something that has eternal value*

These are three things I think are so important for you and for me. There's so much to learn, to know, to experience, to do—and we never want to lose sight of that. To do so would be to miss what God has for us. To fall short of the tremendous potential of our lives—a potential that is ours because we are His, because we are children of the Creator of the Universe, indwelt by His divine Spirit and given the mind of Christ. You and I, Beloved, are God's workmanship gifted by the Spirit of God and created in Christ Jesus unto good works that would absolutely stagger our minds if we were to see them before they ever happened.

And what has God put into your hands? What are you holding and reading right now? Is it an accident? A coincidence? No! You are holding a devotional study that first and foremost will be the beginning of a new depth of understanding about the sufficiency of God's grace day by day in every aspect of your life.

God is going to speak to you because through this book you are going to come face to face with the living Word of God—the Word that

not only discerns the thoughts and intentions of your heart, but becomes the means of throwing His light on the direction your life is taking so you can know with absolute confidence where you are headed. If you listen to what He says—and by that I mean ordering your life accordingly—then there is, in a sense, a new beginning...of understanding, of purpose. A new level of Christlikeness is attained. You will be, as Paul would say, pressing on and attaining that for which Jesus Christ laid hold of you.

Which brings me to my next point—an avenue of ministry. What you have learned, God intends for you to share. I have a vision, and you, Beloved, are part of that vision. Our Lord's commission in Matthew 28 was that we make disciples of all men—that we teach them to observe all that He has commanded us. Acts 1 tells us that when we are saved and receive the Holy Spirit we become His witnesses—yet the question is often, “How?”

Here is the how. This “Lord” book contains truths every human being needs to know and to apply to his or her life. These are precepts for life; through them we will gain understanding and, as the psalmist says, “hate every false way” (Psalm 119:104). We hate it because it is false rather than true, and it is truth that sets us apart, sets us free.

So what is my vision for you, my friend? It is that you go to the Lord in prayer and ask Him to direct you to at least one other person—but preferably at least ten—and that you, along with them, study this book together. You may not be a teacher, but you can be the group's facilitator. You can take the questions you'll find at the end of each chapter and use them to stimulate a discussion among those whom the Lord has brought together in answer to your prayer. These are those who will be part of your crown of rejoicing in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ. As you watch them learn and grow in the knowledge of God and of His Word, you will experience the humbling joy of knowing that you have been used of God. That what you have done has eternal value. That your life and God-given gifts have not been wasted. That your work will live on—that

the grace of God poured out on you was not poured out in vain, for you have labored in the strength of His grace.

So as you facilitate a group using this book, you need to watch for and encourage others in your group to do as you have done—to take what they have learned and impart it to another as you did with them. Think of the multiplication that will happen! Do you realize, Beloved, that this is the way we can reach our neighborhoods, our communities, our nation, and beyond? Think of the transformation that will take place among all those people today who are so interested in “the spiritual” but won’t step inside a church. Think—just think!—what is going to happen!

The time is now. The hour is short. Stop and pray right now and ask God what He would have you to do. He will show you, because He is God and because such prayers are in accordance with His will. As you step out and begin, just know that if you will step out in faith, God will give you an avenue of ministry, person by person or group by group, that will not only stagger your mind but absolutely delight your soul.

I cannot wait to hear what God does in and through you, my friend.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kay". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with large loops and a long, sweeping tail that curves back towards the middle of the name.

I FEEL SO UNWORTHY

— D A Y O N E —

Could someone who had two mental breakdowns and had attempted suicide three times ever be used of God?

Yes, because the grace of God has appeared to all men.

But after he knew God and had experienced the Spirit-filled life, if he then became depressed for over a year, could he ever again testify of the sufficiency of Jesus Christ?

Yes, because the grace of God has appeared to all men.

But could a man who had raped slaves, mocked the gospel, and tried to destroy the faith of others ever hope to know God, let alone be used of Him?

Yes, because there was grace...sufficient for all his sin.

But after he had believed in Christ Jesus, what if he was once again conquered by the lust of his eyes? What if he raped again? Could he ever hope to know the power of Christ upon his life, to know the benefits of His mercy?

Could he ever hope to be used by God? Or must he be condemned to a life without purpose?

No, for the grace of God has appeared to all men.

Neither William Cowper, the man who battled depression, nor John Newton, the rapist, would be denied renewed intimacy with God. God's grace covered all their sins and His grace would tie them to His love. Grace would forever anchor them within the veil of His presence.

William Cowper wrote: "There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn

from Emmanuel's veins, and sinners plunged beneath that flood, lose all their guilty stains." His cry in the hymn "O' for a Closer Walk with God" would become the melodious plea of generations to follow. Cowper would become one of the major poets of England in the latter half of the eighteenth century.

Cowper's life touched generations as a result of God's amazing grace. He learned of God's grace through the testimony of the slave trader John Newton in the book *Out of the Depths*. Cowper was convinced that God's salvation could never reach him. But he began to believe otherwise through the friendship of the one who wrote, "Amazing grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." God would reach William Cowper with His grace. Grace, grace, marvelous grace coming down from the Father above. Amazing grace.

Grace is our subject of study. Grace that enables you to make it...no matter your need, no matter the circumstance, no matter the pull of the flesh or its weaknesses. The Lord is there with His grace, grace sufficient to make it!

For the next nine weeks this book needs to become your daily companion. Let it take you into the Scriptures. Meditate upon His Word. Do your assignments. Apply the truths of grace until they are absorbed into your soul. As you do, you'll soon find the grace of God softening the rough, parched areas of life.

— D A Y T W O —

Have you despaired of pleasing God? Maybe you think you failed God. Maybe you didn't believe what He said. Or maybe you sinned, all the time knowing that what you were about to do was wrong.

Do you weep because you missed your opportunity of service? You made a choice—the wrong one—and now you are imprisoned in the consequences of your own way.

Or maybe you have taken account of who you are and what you have

to offer, and you are firmly convinced that your life has little, if any, purpose to the Kingdom of God—let alone to the world.

You wonder, Why live? Why try? Why keep going when I will never go anywhere anyway?

Maybe none of these things bothers you. You have settled into your routine Christianity in a routine daily existence. At times it is mundane. But then you say, Considering who I am, there isn't much more I could expect anyway.

No, there really isn't much more to expect, *except for the grace of God*. As a matter of fact, if it weren't for the grace of God which has appeared to all men, we would all face defeat and despair.

As I write these words, I cannot help but wonder where you are, my friend. Have I struck a familiar chord? Why don't you answer the questions I have just asked? Write out how you would respond if we were sitting across the table from one another. To verbalize it will be good. Also, at the end of this study you can look back and see what has happened as a result of our time together spent studying what the Bible has to say on this topic.

O Beloved, if you are going to trust God in all things—
in times of failure,
in times of sin,
in times of weakness,
in times of sickness,
in times of confusion,
in times of distress,

in times of inadequacy,
in times of frustration—

then you need to understand and walk in the grace of God, which is available for everyone.

For the victorious Christian, the one who lives as more than a conqueror, grace is more than a theological term. Grace is a reality, a fact of life. It is by grace that one becomes a Christian, and it is by grace that one lives the Christian life.

Because prior to his conversion Paul persecuted and murdered Christians, he did not consider himself fit to be called an apostle. Yet, grace conquered his feelings. If anyone understood that grace covers our past and equips us for God's future, it was Paul! Listen to his words: "By the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me" (1 Corinthians 15:10).

In Paul's writing of those God-breathed words, we see that the whole of life is to be lived in the understanding and appropriation of the grace of God. Oh, how I pray that God will grant you this understanding and that He will anoint this writing to your good and His eternal glory.

— D A Y T H R E E —

Nothing is more frustrating to me than an anonymous letter. It's a one-way conversation, and I can't respond. Little did I realize as I began reading the following anonymous letter that it was from a woman. When I got to the last desperate words, I knew I had no sure way of sharing with her the grace of God. And yet...

My heart is so heavy and my mind is weary. I am tired of the struggle. The one I have loved is dead. She took her life because of me. My sin is ever before me. How can God love or forgive me? When I read the Bible I feel so guilty and condemned!

Please warn your listeners to flee sexual sin. Tell them not even to think about it! I fell in love with my minister's wife, and she and I had an experience that drove her to suicide. I am so tempted to do the same! I can't live with what happened. Why did God allow her to take her life? Is she in hell? It would break my heart knowing this beautiful, godly woman missed out on heaven because of me.

I hate lesbianism and homosexuality...it's a perversion of what God intended. Yet God has given me a great deal of compassion for people caught up in the darkness of that lifestyle and has allowed me the privilege of ministering to many ensnared in this sin. But I wondered how I could ever minister to this woman. I knew if anyone ever needed to know of the grace of God, it was this anonymous soul.

Her letter went on to tell every detail of their night together. Why did she tell me all of the details? To defile or disgust me? No, I think it was because she was hurting desperately, and in her hurt was reliving every detail.

Her letter closed this way:

She called me everyday. Said she had to see me. I met her at a park one day. She lit up when she saw me. Came over to my car and sat down, reached over and kissed me smack on the lips!

"____," I said, "What if someone should see us?" She didn't seem to care. Said she could only think of me, that she loved me and wanted me. She told me she couldn't live without me. When I told her that would be impossible and to get help, she left. I knew she needed help, but I didn't think she'd kill herself. I didn't take her seriously. How can I live with the responsibility of her death hanging over me?

Nobody else knows about this. Confessing it to her husband or children would be cruel and senseless. What can I do? How do I cope? Answer me with a booklet or a tape. Advertise it over your radio program. I'll hear about it. I can't identify myself.

Use this story to warn others. Please don't let this be in vain. My dream and fantasy became a reality!! It has ruined my life.

How I hurt for this woman! Truly she could live as a captive to the memory of the sin and the death of this woman unless she learned where and how to receive forgiveness and strength to go on with life. How I longed to get on the radio at that moment! Yet, the programs for "How Can I Live?" are prerecorded and sent to the stations weeks in advance.

I prayed. I planned what I would say over the air. Then a second letter came. I nearly died with joy when it came. Tears flooded my eyes, and I thought over and over, *What a great and marvelous God we serve. How wondrous are His ways.*

Since I wrote you last, a tremendous thing has happened. I found a class being taught which used one of your books—*Lord, I Need Grace to Make It.*

The Lord surely knew that class is what I needed. My heavy heart has lightened. I am no longer weary, and the best part of it all is that I have learned I don't have to struggle or be afraid of God. I have accepted His loving grace to cover my awful sin with my minister's wife. Even though she is gone and I may never see her again, I can have God's peace deep within my heart and life.

The joy of knowing that I am free in Christ and His grace on Calvary for me have made such a difference to my troubled mind. What relief He has already brought. I will continue on in this course to the end. Thank you for writing this book!

She signed it—"Your sister in Christ."

Now, dear student, can you understand why the phrase, "grace to you and peace" was far more than a familiar salutation often used by Paul in his epistles? In the Roman world where Paul moved, *grace* was a common Greek greeting, while among the Jewish community the greeting was

shalom (peace). Combined in the context of Christianity, grace and peace took on a new meaning. When the grace of God appeared, bringing salvation to all men, it brought with it peace with God to a world alienated from Him by their sin (Titus 2:11-14).

The English transliteration of the Greek¹ word for grace is *charis*. In the Greek, the definition of the word was “unmerited favor.” Paul seized this word with its secular meaning and expanded its definition to describe the unmerited favor which is given to all who come to God for salvation through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. Thus, we will see that God’s grace carries with it an even deeper and richer definition than merely “unmerited favor.”

The word *grace* appears 213 times in the New Testament. In the Old Testament no single word parallels the New Testament concept of grace. When the Old Testament was translated from Hebrew into Koine Greek, the Hebrew word *hen*, which meant “to find favor,” was translated as *grace*.

In the *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia* we read, “Much nearer St. Paul’s use of *charis* is *racon*... ‘acceptance.’”²

Richards, in his *Expository Dictionary of Bible Words*, suggests that the Hebrew word *hanan* (“to be gracious,” “to be merciful”) along with *hen* come closest to the New Testament concept of grace.³ Although there is no Old Testament parallel for the New Testament concept of grace, we do see that the saints of old understood that God was always to be approached on the basis of grace and never on the basis of merit.

The Hebrew word *hanan* is used in Psalm 51 and is translated *gracious*. This is the psalm written by David after Nathan confronted him regarding his adulterous relationship with Bathsheba. Certainly David understood that he had no ground on which to approach God other than God’s grace and mercy.

Be gracious [*hanan*] to me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness;
according to the greatness of Thy compassion blot out my transgressions.
Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin....

Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, and done what is evil in Thy sight, so that Thou art justified when Thou dost speak, and blameless when Thou dost judge.... Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. (Psalm 51:1-2,4,10)

The grace of God was seen in the Old Testament too in His acceptance of a sacrificial animal to cover the sin of man.

O Beloved, do you understand, as David understood, that God alone can take care of your sin and cleanse your heart? It's all of grace! As you learn to walk in this grace, you will know His incredible peace.

Why don't you take a few minutes and write out a prayer to God. Pour out your heart to Him. Tell Him that you want to understand His grace, and then have faith to appropriate it.

Grace and peace to you, my friend.

— D A Y F O U R —

Grace in its fullest sense is not seen in the Old Testament. I cannot help but think of John 1:17: "For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ." The New Testament is the declaration of the new covenant, the covenant of grace.

Although God has always granted salvation on the basis of grace, and grace alone, still grace was not realized until "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" (John 1:14, KJV).

Until the Seed of Abraham and the Messenger of the New Covenant

—the Lord Jesus Christ—came, men were “kept in custody under the law, being shut up to the faith which was later to be revealed. Therefore the Law has become our tutor to lead us to Christ, that we may be justified by faith. But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor” (Galatians 3:23-25).

Faith releases God’s grace. Faith is the key that unlocks the door to the unmerited favor of God. And once that door is unlocked, we forever stand in the grace of God. “Therefore having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand” (Romans 5:1-2).

These truths of Romans and Galatians are vital to a life of peace and victory! Many are living defeated lives because they do not realize what it means to live by grace—by grace alone.

I am not speaking of a perversion of grace which would lead to licentiousness. I am speaking of an understanding of grace which would release the power of God upon a life, a comprehension which would bring great peace and put a person in the undisturbed eye of the hurricane as they live more and more in the knowledge and experience of the grace of God.

Grace is more than unmerited favor. It is reality. By grace you live, by grace you please God, and by grace you are freed from religion and released into a relationship with your heavenly Father. Grace is always based on who He is and what He has done. Grace is never based on who you are apart from Him or on what you can do.

In light of what we’ve shared, stop and examine how you relate to your heavenly Father. What is the basis of your relationship with Him? Verbalize it by writing it down.

Have you ever really understood that there is nothing you can do to merit or earn God's favor?

Have you seen that "no good thing dwells within" you that would commend you for adoption as a child of God? What are you trusting for your salvation? And if you are sure that your salvation is all of grace, how then do you relate to God on a daily basis—on the basis of grace, or on the basis of the Law?

O Beloved, let's pray for one another, believing that our relationship with our Father will take on new depths through this study.

— D A Y F I V E —

Grace is key to your relationship with God. The believer never comes to God on any basis other than grace. Therefore, if you are ever going to live by grace, you must understand—really understand—the grace of God which appeared and, in its appearing, brought salvation to all men. Once you have a clear, biblical understanding of grace, you will have a solid foundation upon which you can construct a life lived totally in the grace of God rather than one based on whether or not you deserve His blessing, His favor.

O Beloved, I want to pray for you now:

O Father, open the eyes of our understanding. Remove the veil of the Old Covenant so that we might see the glory of the New Covenant. I ask this for Your glory and for our peace...that it might release us into greater service for You. And I ask it in the name of the Messenger of the New Covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ. Amen and amen.

Now let me take you back to the Old Testament, right back to the beginning, to Genesis. Take a moment and read Genesis 3.

Let me ask you several questions that will be pertinent to our study. Write out the answers by observing carefully what the Word of God has

to say. You need not go beyond the Word. Simply get your answers from what you read in Genesis 3.

1. What did the serpent say that Eve could be like if she would eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

After Eve ate of the forbidden fruit, she gave it to Adam and he ate. Romans 5:12 tells us, "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned." Therefore, at the point of disobedience on the part of Adam and Eve, sin entered into the world.

2. Read Isaiah 53:6 and write it out.

3. Now, let's see how sin is defined in the Word. Look up the following verses and note what you learn about sin.

- a. 1 John 3:4

- b. James 4:17

- c. Romans 14:23

- d. Romans 3:23

4. In light of what the serpent told Eve, and after reading Isaiah 53:6, what would you say is the essence, or the root, of all sin?

Because Adam and Eve are the parents of all mankind, all mankind is born in sin. We see this truth expressed by David in Psalm 51:5: “Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me.”

You and I are sinners! How can sinners ever hope to redeem themselves when it is their very nature to sin? People didn’t have to teach you to lie, did they? Of course not! Rather, your parents had to encourage you, in one way or another, to tell the truth. Selflessness never comes naturally, does it, my friend? But selfishness does! And is obedience to God natural, or is it a challenge, a battle, from childhood on? And the wages of our sin? DEATH! What hope is there for us apart from the favor of God, apart from the gospel of grace? This gospel is first mentioned in Genesis 3. We will look at it tomorrow.

— D A Y S I X —

Have you ever done something that you wanted to do, knowing full well that you shouldn’t? At the time, the pleasure of it all might have made it seem worth it. You wanted your way, and you got it. But afterward—maybe immediately, maybe years later—how did you feel? Can you imagine how awful Adam and Eve felt once they ate of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil?

Suddenly, rather than fellowshiping with God, they wanted to hide from Him. Sin immediately affected their relationship with God—and with each other.

Did you notice how Adam and Eve each passed the blame? Adam blamed Eve for what he had done. At the same time, he passed the blame on to God as he pointed out that it was God who had given him the woman who made him stumble!

In their sinful state, neither was willing to confess responsibility for his or her own sin. That's hard to do, isn't it? It is so much easier to excuse sin in one way or another.

God had told them the consequences of their sin before they ever made the choice. Yet, how did God respond?

1. Look up Genesis 2:8-9,16-17, and answer the following questions:
 - a. What two trees are named in the Garden of Eden?

 - b. What was the clear command of God?

 - c. Why did He give the command?

 - d. What were the consequences of disobedience?

 - e. When would it happen?

2. Did Eve understand God's command? How do you know?

You have seen that Adam and Eve made a choice. The choice was to turn to their own way. They crossed over the line which God had drawn.

Walking your own way, doing your own thing, being your own god is the root of all sin. God is to be pleased. If you choose to be your own god, you make the choices, you run the show, you call the shots, you are the boss, you are lord or master! And you choose to live in ways which please yourself.

Adam and Eve immediately felt the consequence of their sin—death. The day they ate of the forbidden fruit, they crossed over the line of God’s commandment and violated His standard.

God held His line. They died, in that they were separated from God. The Spirit of God left them, and they were “dead in . . . trespasses and sins” (Ephesians 2:1). Because of sin, they someday would experience physical death. Although God had intended for them to live forever, death had entered the world, and all creation groaned (Romans 8:18-23).

Yet, God moved in grace. He did not accommodate man’s sin. Holiness held the standard. But God’s grace reached over the line to redeem man and bring him back to God. He promised a Redeemer who would deliver a deathblow to Satan, the one to whom they had sold their souls. The first promise of the coming of Jesus Christ, the woman’s Seed, is seen in Genesis 3:15. Let’s look at it.

Answer the following questions which are invaluable when observing the text of God’s Word.

1. In Genesis 3:15, who is speaking and to whom?
2. Whom will the enmity be between?
3. What will each of them have?
4. Who will bruise whom on the head and who will bruise whom on the heel?
5. Since a bruise to the head is a mortal wound, who will be triumphant?

Crucifixion is the only death that bruises the heel. Here is the first promise of the grace of God which would be realized in Jesus Christ! God made an unconditional promise in the face of man's willful disobedience. Grace, grace, amazing grace!

— D A Y S E V E N —

Have you ever looked at circumstances and said, "No way! There is no human way out"? And there wasn't, short of some sort of divine intervention!

Once Adam had made his choice to follow in Satan's footsteps and exalt himself above God, to be as God, the die was cast. Adam and Eve would reproduce after their own kind. God made Adam "in the likeness of God," but sin distorted that likeness. So Adam became the father of those "in his own likeness, according to his image" (Genesis 5:1,3).

Redemption by man for man was impossible. Sinners cannot redeem themselves. Therefore, if God were ever to reconcile man to Himself, there would have to be a new Adam—a man born without sin. Only the grace of God could provide such a one: Jesus.

Are you beginning to see why Jesus had to be born of a virgin? Romans 5:12 says, "Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned—"

Because we are born in sin, God moved in grace. He promised a Seed who would eventually triumph over the serpent of old, the devil (Revelation 12:11), by bruising his head. Oh, Satan would first bruise Christ's heel on Calvary. But the bruising of the heel would be temporary! Jesus would triumph over death! In the offering of the spotless, sinless Lamb of God, the just would die for the unjust. God's holiness would be satisfied. Thus, God would raise Jesus from the dead for our justification (Romans 4:25).

Not only was the promise given to Adam, but it was confirmed to Abraham on the day when Abraham believed God. God, in grace, counted

Abraham's faith as righteousness and made a covenant with him. This account is recorded for us in Genesis 15.

1. Read Genesis 15 and mark the following words (and/or their synonyms) distinctively from one another. You may want to use symbols to mark your words, or you may choose to use different colors, or a combination of both.

Marking words that are key to the text—or that are key throughout the Word as a whole—will help you see those words instantly. It will also help you gather information as you will be able to track key subjects and quickly identify truths throughout Scripture.*

- a. offspring, seed, or descendants (You will want to always mark synonyms in the same way.)

b. believe

c. covenant

2. Now go back to see what you can note about each word since you have marked it. What does the chapter say about each? Under each word list what you see about it. As you review your marking and construct your list, ask yourself the “5 Ws and an H” (who, what, why, where, when, how) to see what you can find.

* See page 207 for section on marking your Bible.

3. Now let's look at one pertinent cross reference: Galatians 3:16. God wants us to see that once a covenant is made, it is never broken. In this verse Paul explains the relationship of the Old Covenant to the Abrahamic Covenant, which was a covenant of grace. Read Galatians 3:16 and answer the questions that follow.

“Now the promises were spoken to Abraham and to his seed. He does not say, ‘And to seeds,’ as referring to many, but rather to one, ‘And to your seed,’ that is, Christ.”

- a. According to this verse, when God promised Abraham a seed in Genesis 15:5 (translated *descendants* in the NASB), who was that Seed?
 - b. When Abraham was declared righteous, he was saved. Was he saved by faith or by works? Or to put it another way, by grace or by law?
4. How can you apply what you have learned this week to your relationship with God?

O Beloved, we have just begun! I can't tell you what liberty, what peace, what power awaits you—if you will but continue in this study. Remember, His power, His grace is perfected in our weakness. You will learn to glory in your weaknesses so that His power might rest upon you! What a contrast to what we hear from the world and its reasonings!

MEMORY VERSE

For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ.

JOHN 1:17

SMALL-GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was the root or the basis of the sin displayed by Adam and Eve's disobedience? What is the essence of all sin?
2. When Adam and Eve were confronted with their sin, what was their response?
3. What effect did their sin have on them? What did they do? Why didn't they respond to God's call?
4. What could Adam and Eve do to redeem themselves?
5. Explain what God had said would be the consequence of disobedience on Adam and Eve's part. Did He hold the line that He had drawn against which righteousness would be measured?
6. What was God's immediate response to their sin after the consequences were realized? Did He leave them in this condition?
7. What did God do to make provision for Adam and Eve? For you and me?
8. Why did God make a provision? What does this provision show us about our God?
9. We learned that grace was not seen in its fullest sense in the Old Testament. According to John 1:17, when was the grace of God truly realized?
10. Until the Son of God came, men were living under what covenant?
11. Yet how do we know that grace existed before the Law? What did God do for Adam and Eve?
12. What can you and I do to earn God's grace?

13. What is the key that releases us into the grace of God?
14. Once we have believed in Jesus Christ, accepting God's provision, what can remove us from that standing or position?
15. What is the key to your relationship with your heavenly Father?
16. Which covenant do you and I live under today?
17. Explain what living under that covenant means to us in our daily lives.
18. Upon what basis does God always grant salvation?
19. After your study this week, how would you define grace? What does that mean for your life?
20. What will change in your life as a result of your study this week?



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