

Grace Upon Grace
John 1:14-17
February 22, 2026

Intro:

Over the past 8 weeks, we have been in a sermon series titled **“That’s My God”** where we have been introduced to God’s character—His love, His unchanging nature, His power, His all-knowingness, His holiness, His mercy, and today, His grace.

As we experience God’s nature, **His holiness, His love, His mercy and His grace** and recognize that we are recipients of the gifts He generously gives us, we become more aware of the places where we fall short in showing His gifts to others, leading us to humble repentance and asking God to give us more of His good gifts, **grace upon grace**, and trusting that He always gives grace in abundance.

Pastor Greg summed it up well in his sermon last week saying: **“You should consider where what you know about God is misaligned with what you practice.”** Growing in knowledge of God presumes us to experience transformation in our lives.

“Knowledge about Him will not do. Work for Him will not do. We must have personal, vital fellowship with Him; otherwise, Christianity becomes a joyless burden.”¹

As we look at God’s attribute of grace this morning, I pray that He will change our lives so we can say what the Apostle Paul said—“Look at me, follow my example, do as I do”—and that each of our lives will be so filled with His grace that it impacts our relationship with God and others in ways where we will never be the same.

Read – John 1:14-17

Mercy – “Mercy and grace are closely related. While the terms have similar meanings, grace and mercy are not exactly the same. Mercy has to do with kindness and compassion; it is often spoken of in the context of God not punishing us as our sins deserve.”

Grace – “Grace includes kindness and compassion but also carries the idea of bestowing a gift or favor. It may help to view mercy as a subset of grace. In Scripture, mercy is often equated with a deliverance from judgment and grace is always the extending of a blessing to the unworthy.”

J. I. Packer suggests that grace is simply God’s love demonstrated toward those who deserve the opposite. God’s grace is His gift-giving life, and the gift is Himself.²

¹ John Piper, *Desiring God* (Multnomah Books, 2003) pg.???

² Mark Olivero, “God’s Grace,” in *Lexham Survey of Theology*, ed. Mark Ward et al. (Lexham Press, 2018).

Grace is given (John 1:14)

A. W. Tozer has said, “In olden times men looked forward to Christ’s redeeming work; in later times they gaze back upon it, but always they came and they come by grace, in faith.”³

Our picture of grace today is brought to its fullness in the person and work of Jesus. Word becoming flesh—God becoming man—showing us how to live full of grace and truth and giving us the free gift of eternal life when we trust His saving work on the cross and the conquering power over sin and death that was demonstrated at the resurrection.

This gift of grace is freely given, it’s impossible to earn, and yet, sometimes, we become so casual with grace that we forget it’s costliness. Grace and truth—that’s costly grace. Grace so amazing that it demands my soul, my life and all.

Grace is received (John 1:10-12, 15)

Grace is given freely and abundantly—we cannot earn it, argue for it, or demand it. His grace is sufficient for anyone. And, while most of us are willing to accept gifts, are we truly willing to receive the gift of grace?

One of my spiritual heroes is Dietrich Bonhoeffer who wrote in his book *The Cost of Discipleship* about **Cheap Grace** vs. **Costly Grace**:

“Cheap grace is the deadly enemy of our Church. We are fighting day to day for costly grace...Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance...grace without discipleship, grace without the cross, grace without Jesus Christ...”

...Costly grace is a treasure hidden in the field...such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus...Grace is costly because it compels a man to submit to the yoke of Christ and follow him; it is grace because Jesus says: ‘My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.’”⁴

³ A. W. Tozer, *Knowledge of the Holy: The Attributes of God* (Harper Collins, 1992), 148-49.

⁴ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (Touchstone, 1995), 41-56.

The Apostle Paul writes so strongly about costly grace Romans 6:1-2:

**“What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means!
How can we who died to sin still live in it?”**

Jen Wilkin says, “If grace is seen only as a free gift to cover our sins, and not also in a means to grow in holiness, we will grow lax in our obedience.”⁵

Grace upon Grace (John 1:16-17)

Every day is a battle to submit our lives to costly grace. Receiving grace is commitment to transformation. As our lives receive his grace upon grace, we conform to the word of God, recognize His presence in our lives, and allow grace upon grace to be our gospel power for living.

How should my desire to receive **grace upon grace** impact my relationship with God?

How should my desire to give **grace upon grace** impact my relationship with others?

⁵ Jen Wilken, *In His Image: 10 Ways God Calls Us To Reflect His Character* (Crossway, 2018), 91.