

Grace Gets the Credit

Key Scripture

1 Corinthians 15:9–10

“For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God. But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace toward me was not in vain...”

Big Idea

Everything we are and everything God does through us happens because of **His grace**.

Grace gets the credit.

Opening Thought

The Dunning-Kruger Effect

A cognitive bias where people with **little knowledge** think they know **more than they actually do**.

Why?

Because **you don't know what you don't know**.

This becomes dangerous when someone:

- Overestimates their ability
- Refuses correction
- Rejects authority

Humility fixes this problem.

Marks of a Humble Person

1. Teachable

Humility understands we **don't have all the answers**.

Psalm 25:9

“He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way.”

A teachable posture includes:

- Open ears
- A willing heart
- Asking questions
- Accepting correction without defensiveness

2. Self-Aware

Humility means having an **honest view of yourself**.

This includes:

- Recognizing your strengths
- Admitting your weaknesses
- Understanding your need for God

Humility says:

“I don’t have all the answers, and I need God—and others—to teach me.”

I. Humility Remembers Where Grace Found You

Paul begins with honesty.

“I am the least of the apostles... because I persecuted the church of God.”

Before Paul was a missionary...

Before the miracles...

Before the letters...

He was a **persecutor**.

He:

- Approved of Stephen’s death
- Dragged Christians from their homes
- Tried to destroy the church

Paul **never forgot who he used to be**.

Reflection Question

Where did God find you before He changed your life?

II. Humility Recognizes What Grace Has Done

Paul says something powerful:

“By the grace of God I am what I am.”

Paul didn’t deny the work that had happened.

Churches were planted.
The gospel spread across the Roman world.
Miracles happened.

Paul even said:

“I worked harder than any of them.”

That isn’t arrogance.

That’s honesty.

Humility isn’t pretending you did nothing.

Humility is recognizing **who made it possible**.

Paul finishes the sentence:

“Yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me.”

Where have you seen God’s grace working in your life?

III. Humility Realizes the Deeper You Go, the Smaller You Feel

Psalm 8:4

“What is man that you are mindful of him?”

The closer someone gets to God, the more aware they become of His holiness.

Isaiah's Encounter with God

Isaiah 6:4–5

When Isaiah saw God's holiness, his response was:

“Woe is me! For I am lost.”

The more clearly we see God,
the more clearly we see **our need for grace**.

Paul's Growing Humility

Paul's humility deepened over time.

Early Ministry

1 Corinthians 15:9

“I am the least of the apostles.”

Later Ministry

Ephesians 3:8

“I am less than the least of all saints.”

Near the End of His Life

1 Timothy 1:15

“Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the chief.”

The closer Paul got to God,
the smaller Paul felt about himself.

Why?

Because the miracle of grace became clearer.