

## Grace

### *Two Families*

*“But the gift is not like the trespass. For if the many died by the trespass of the one man, how much more did God’s grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!” Romans 5:15 (NIV)*

How do you tackle seemingly huge problems? I remember back to my days in the anatomy lab. Many hours were spent learning the attachments and insertions of muscles and the names of blood vessels that supplied those muscles. As a first-year veterinary student, that seemed like an insurmountable task. As I became a practitioner, my troubles changed to juggling incoming emergencies, caring for office call appointments, and making phone calls. There were plenty of days when those assignments were daunting.

As followers of Jesus Christ, we must consider some much larger questions and concepts. If God is good, why is there so much suffering in our world? Why are all our hopes and dreams eventually defeated by death? C. S. Lewis is credited with the thought: “The statistics on death are very impressive – it’s one on one.”

Just as death for all is inevitable, a much more beautiful image to ponder, digest, and place deeply in our hearts and minds is God’s grace. Even as believers, we will take a lifetime to learn about God and His marvelous grace.

Humanity’s story begins with our first parent, Adam. We are all interconnected through our family history of being Adam’s children. God created Adam to represent the human race. Humanity was created free – freely able to respond to God’s love or reject it. We know Adam’s choice. He chose to eat the fruit, he chose to disobey God, and the results were disastrous.

Adam’s rebellion and sin caused an epidemic that is far worse than any we could imagine today. Adam opened the door and sin came into the world. Death is the devastating consequence of Adam’s rebellion. Because of his choice, his sin, we are infected with a disease that condemns us all. Sin is saying “yes” to what I want and “no” to what God wants. It is my will be done, not God’s will. If we consider that sin is a disease rooted in ALL of us because we are all born into Adam’s family, we can start to see and comprehend why there is so much unbearable suffering all around us. We are all condemned because we are all born of Adam and born with the disease of sin.

BUT GOD, has given us THE cure for this condemnation – it is His grace. God’s son – the One who was fully God, yet fully man – Jesus Christ, came in obedience to His father to be our rescue. This may help us to read **John 3:16-17 (NIV)** in a light that we never have before!

*“For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”*

The family of Adam is the default into which we are born. But we DO have the choice of the family in which we remain. Jesus Christ is the head and representative man of God’s family. We can transfer into God’s kingdom of marvelous light through our faith in Jesus Christ. Just as we

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are born blamed for Adam's sin, we can obtain credit for Jesus' perfect obedience and righteousness when we repent and turn to God. THAT is the FREE gift of God's grace.

The consequence of God's grace is thus far greater than the consequence of our sin. Apart from God's grace, none are saved. But the beautiful thing that *John 3:17* and **2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)** tells us, is that he WANTS to save us.

*"The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance."*

When we repent, we are taken out of Adam's family and placed into Christ's family by faith through God's grace. This grace abounds infinitely more than our sin. God's grace is not like a bucket – pouring some out here, some out there and it eventually runs out. No, grace outdoes sin. It supersedes our sin. When you come into Christ's family, grace is abundant. It is the free cure. Adam, through his disobedience, closed the door of paradise. Jesus, through His obedience, opened the door of paradise. Jesus trumps Adam! These words to the old hymn are so sweet now!

*Grace, grace, God's grace,  
Grace that is greater than all our sin*

*Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace,  
Freely bestowed on all who believe...*

We can go out in victory to boldly live and share the news about the free gift of grace that all people can receive. We are the body of Christ – the representatives of God to the world.

- **Define "trespass" as it pertains to Romans 5:15.**
- **How would you explain the suffering seen in the world to a classmate or colleague who might want to know more about Jesus?**
- **List ways that you can give grace to others specifically on your campus or in your workplace.**



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