

St. Matthew AME Church
Orange, New Jersey
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Women's Bible Study
January 10, 2026

Winter Series: "The Wonder of Amazing Grace"

Series Scripture: "From the fullness of His grace, we have all received one blessing after another."

John 1:16 NLT

Session I: "Because of Jesus"

"For the law was given through Moses, grace and truth came through Jesus Christ."

John 1:17

I. Introduction

- Grace isn't just a theological concept. It is the very heartbeat of how God relates to us. It is also the model for how we extend love to others.
- Grace is God's kindness toward humanity, without regard to the worth or merit of those who receive it, and without their deserving it.
- Grace is not just doctrine; it's a person. And grace has a name: Jesus Christ, our great God and Savior.
- What does it mean to receive grace upon grace (John 1:16)? John explains: The law was given through Moses. This was a good gift to Israel, revealing God's righteous character and His will for their lives. The problem was that the law couldn't enable people to keep it. It highlighted their sin but couldn't transform their sinful hearts. But grace and truth came through Jesus Christ (John 1:17)
- When we personally receive the substitutionary atoning death of Christ on the cross, our sins are forgiven, and eternal life is imparted. THAT'S AMAZING GRACE!

The gospel, then, does what the law couldn't do. Through Jesus, we have access to the unmerited and unlimited favor of God.

- God will provide the riches of His grace to us without interruption. He lavishes His grace on us.

II. "Grace is Possible Because of Jesus"

"The Word became flesh and made His dwelling among us. We have seen His glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." John 1:14

“The Word became flesh” means becoming human. By doing so, Christ became:

1. The perfect teacher-in Jesus’ life, we see how God thinks and therefore how we should think.

“Your attitude should be the same as that of Jesus Christ.”

Philippians 2:5

2. The perfect example, as a model of what we are to become, he shows us how to live and gives us the power to live that way.

“To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in His steps. He committed no sin, and no deceit was found in His mouth. When they hurled their insults at Him, He did not retaliate; when He suffered, He made no threats. Instead, He entrusted Himself to Him who judges justly.” I Peter 2:21-23

3. The perfect sacrifice- Jesus came as a sacrifice for all sins, and His death satisfied God’s requirements for the removal of sin.

“Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your mind because of your evil behavior. But now He has reconciled you by Christ’s physical body through death to present you holy in His sight, without blemish and free from accusation, if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard, and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.”

Colossians 1:21-23

- The One and Only who came from the Father” means Jesus is God’s only and unique Son. The emphasis is on unique. Jesus is one of a kind and enjoys a relationship with God unlike all believers who are called “children” and said to be “born of God.”
- When Christ was born. God became a man. He was not part man and part God; He was completely human and completely divine. All of God was in Christ’s body.

“For in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.” Col.2:9

- Before Christ came, people could know God partially. After Christ came, people could know God fully because He became visible and tangible in Christ.
- Christ is the perfect expression of God in human form. The two most common errors people make about Jesus are to minimize His humanity or to minimize his divinity. Jesus is both God and man.

“For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” John 1:17

- Law and grace are both aspects of God's nature that he uses in dealing with us. Moses emphasized God's law and justice, while Jesus came to highlight God's mercy, love, and forgiveness. Moses could only be the giver of the law, while Christ came to fulfill the law.

"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have come not to abolish them but to fulfill them." Matthew 5:17

- God's moral and ceremonial laws were given to help people love God with all their hearts and minds. Throughout Israel's history, however, these laws had often been misquoted and misapplied. By Jesus' time, religious leaders had turned the laws into a confusing mass of rules. When Jesus talked about a new way to understand God's law, He was actually trying to bring people back to its original purpose. Jesus did not speak against the law itself, but against the abuse and excesses to which it had been subjected.
- If Jesus did not come to abolish the law, does that mean all the Old Testament laws still apply today? In the Old Testament, there were three categories of law: ceremonial, civil, and moral.
 - 1.) The ceremonial law related specifically to Israel's worship (Leviticus 1;2-3, for example). Its primary purpose was to point forward to Jesus Christ: these laws were therefore no longer necessary after Jesus' death and resurrection. While we are no longer bound by ceremonial laws, the principles behind them -to worship and love a holy God-still apply.
 - 2.) The civil law applied to daily living in Israel (Deuteronomy 24:10,11, for example). Because modern society and culture are so radically different from those of the time and setting, none of these guidelines can be followed exactly. But the principles behind the commands are timeless and should guide our conduct. Jesus demonstrated these principles by example.
 - 3.) The moral law (such as the Ten Commandments) is the direct command of God. The moral law reveals the nature and will of God, and it still applies today. Jesus obeyed the moral law completely.

III. "The Gift of God"

- The power to live this Christian life is the grace of God, His inexhaustible supply of God's goodness by which He does for us what we could never do for ourselves. Some of us live under the misconception that we have the power to pull off this Christian life.
- But God has supplied every true believer with a magnificent/amazing provision: His inexhaustible supply of goodness called grace. We can't earn it, we don't deserve it, but God has made it abundantly available.
- One reason most people have problems understanding grace is that they have a misconception about God. Because people don't see God as a holy God, who is pure, set apart from all sin, and therefore He owes sinful man nothing. They don't see where they need His grace. They expect to

wake up tomorrow morning the way they did this morning, because they think that's the way life operates. But many people were here yesterday and aren't here today. Anything we get from God is because of His grace.

WE HAVE TO UNDERSTAND THAT GOD OWES US NOTHING. YET IN GRACE, HE HAS GIVEN US AN INEXHAUSTIBLE SUPPLY OF HIS GOODNESS.

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." Ephesians 2: 8-9

- It is no small wonder that these two verses are frequently memorized. They sum up the gospel of grace. Every person's heart's desire is grace.
- We surely don't want justice. If we got what we deserved for our sin, we would all be condemned. We want what we don't deserve, and that is grace.
- Ephesians 2:8-9 teaches that our salvation has nothing to do with our works. Salvation is a gift that we receive by faith. Even the faith to believe comes from God, so it is grace from start to finish. Grace is not something that we work up or even something we work on. Works have nothing to do with it. If that were not the case, we could boast, "I did this," or "I did that." ONLY GOD CAN SAY, I DID THIS; "I PROVIDED ALL THAT THESE SINNERS NEEDED THROUGH MY SON."
- No religious, intellectual, or moral effort can give us salvation. It comes only from God's grace. Without God's grace, no person can be saved. To receive it, we must acknowledge that we cannot save ourselves, that only God can save us.

IV. We are Never Outside God's Grace

- God lavishes His forgiving love on us after we have thoroughly blown it. We are never outside God's grace.
- Most people hear the gospel many times before they receive the Lord Jesus. THAT IS GRACE. God does not give up on wooing us to Himself. You see, He is the God of the second chance-and oftentimes a hundred chances. He sends someone our way to tell us of the Savior. We reject the message. Because He is the GOD OF GRACE, He sends yet another. Sometimes this process goes on for years, until one day -because of pursuant grace- we become children of God. This should encourage us to pray for unsaved people. God's grace is pursuing them. We may give up. GOD DOES NOT!
- Some of us were saved early in life, and some of us were saved late in life. But the wonderful fact is that it takes the same amount of grace to save a twelve-year-old as it does a sixty-year-old. Grace is abundant no matter the age.

- God's love for us flows from His character, not ours; it is not dependent on anything we have done or will do. In fact, if you do nothing to serve Him for the rest of your life, He will not love you any less. We can't pay God back for His grace. No amount of good works can pay the debt of love we owe. You can't do anything to make God love you anymore. And you can't do anything to make Him love you any less.
- We serve God because we love him and because of a heart of gratitude.

V. The Riches of His Grace

1. The riches of the grace of God are bestowed by God the Father.

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.” Ephesians 1:3

2. These riches are freely given to us.

“to the praise of His glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One He loves.” Ephesians 1:6

This means we don't merit these riches; they are extensions of His character of grace.

3. This grace is given to us in abundance.

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.” Ephesians 1:7

Nowhere is stinginess hinted at. He has given immeasurable grace.

4. His grace is given to us instantly. (Ephesians 1:3) The verb tense in verse 3 indicates once and for all completed action. Everything we need, God gave us the moment we were saved. Our capacity to enjoy these riches and to experience them grows as we know more about our God of all grace, but we have His riches from the moment we were born into God's family.

5. The riches come simultaneously. God does not justify you here, redeem you later, forgive you over there, reconcile you down the line, and sanctify you later. Simultaneously, all these things and more of God's grace become yours when you were saved.

6. These riches are totally on the merit of what Jesus did, not on any of our merit.

“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace.” Ephesians 1:7

THIS IS WHAT GRACE DOES

1. Grace brought us to the Savior, often after we rejected Him on many occasions.
2. Grace brings us back to God when we fail.
3. Grace lavishes us with all the things we need to live for God.
4. Grace implores us to do good works, out of sheer gratitude.
5. Grace displaces us when we test the limits. Grace provides a way out of temptation.
6. Grace is more than what we need when we suffer.
7. Grace superabounds where sin abounds.
8. Grace invites us to a throne where we find One to help in times of need.