

# Amazing Grace, Part 2.

John 1: 14-17

**14 And the Word became 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.**

**15 John bore witness of Him and cried out, saying, "This was He of whom I said, 'He who comes after me is preferred before me, for He was before me.'"**

**16 And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.**

**17 For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.**

**Review:**

**WHAT IS 'GRACE'?** "God's unmerited favor" or "God giving to us what we do not deserve."

John makes the point that grace and truth are what Jesus is all about. Although John does not use the word, grace, again. He does demonstrate the meaning of grace throughout his gospel. What can we learn from the gospel of John about grace? Last week we saw that:

**Grace Is Extravagant. (John 2:1-11)**

**Grace Cannot Be Earned. (John 3:1-21).**

**Grace Does What We Cannot Do for Ourselves. (5:1-14).**

Today, I want to share a couple more stories from the Gospel of John that illustrate the amazing grace of Jesus. The first one is in chapter 4.

**Grace Saves. (4:3-26).** The story of the Samaritan woman at the well is a story of salvation. Jesus reaches out to a lonely, sinful woman and offers her eternal life. John narrates the story for us starting in verse 3. About Jesus he writes:

**3 He left Judea and departed again to Galilee.**

**4 But He needed to go through Samaria.**

**5 So He came to a city of Samaria which is called Sychar, near the plot of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph.**

**6 Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied from His journey, sat thus by the well. It was about the sixth hour.**

**7 A woman of Samaria came to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give Me a drink."**

**8 For His disciples had gone away into the city to buy food.**

**9 Then the woman of Samaria said to Him, "How is it that You, being a Jew, ask a drink from me, a Samaritan woman?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.**

**10 Jesus answered and said to her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, 'Give Me a drink,' you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water."**

Jesus is traveling from Judea in the south to Galilee in the north. Verse 4 says, **“But He needed to go through Samaria.”** Most Jews would not travel through Samaria, in fact they would usually go out of their way to avoid Samaria because as verse 9 says, **“For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans.”**

But Jesus is different. Jesus has a divine grace-appointment in Samaria with a woman at a well. While Jesus’ disciples go to town for food, Jesus has an unusual conversation with this woman at the well. First He asks her for a drink of water, then He offers her a drink of living water.

I want you to notice verse 10 especially because Jesus uses grace-language here. Look at the phrase **“the gift of God.”** Jesus said to her, **“If you knew the gift of God, and who it is who says to you, ‘Give Me a drink,’ you would have asked Him, and He would have given you living water.”** The word gift in this verse is *dorea*, meaning a gratuity:--gift. (*dorea* comes from *doron*, meaning a present; spec. a sacrifice:--gift, offering. Most of the time *doron* is used in the NT to describe an offering, or a sacrifice).

Paul uses that word (*doron*) in Ephesians 2:8 when he writes, **“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,”** (Eph 2:8 NKJV). Paul says that the faith to be saved is by grace, it is the gift of God.

Here in our story of John 4, Jesus calls this gift of God, **“living water.”** What is living water? Jesus gives the woman, and us, a clue in verses 13-14, **“Jesus answered and said to her, ‘Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again, but whoever drinks of the water that I shall give him will never thirst. But the water that I shall give him will become in him a fountain of water springing up into everlasting life.’”** Living water has to do with everlasting life, eternal life, the same kind of life that Jesus spoke to Nicodemus about in 3:16 when He said, **“For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”**

We don’t have to guess what living water means, because later in John’s Gospel he tells us. In John 7, Jesus is in Jerusalem for the feast of Tabernacles, and starting in 37 it says, On the last day, that great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, **“If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.”** Sounds a lot like what Jesus told the woman at the well, doesn’t it? Then John explains in 7:39, **“But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.”**

The gift of God is the Holy Spirit that God gives to those who believe in Jesus. We see this demonstrated in the book of Acts. In his sermon on the day of Pentecost in Acts 2, **“... Peter said unto them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.’”** (Acts 2:38 NKJV). The book of Acts refers to the Holy Spirit at least three more times as **“the gift of God,”** (8:20; 10:45; 11:17).

Grace saves because grace was given through Jesus Christ, **“grace and truth came through Jesus Christ,”** (John 1:17). Grace reaches out to sinners like the woman at the well, and offers to them the gift of God, living water, the Holy Spirit, by whom we are born again, and our salvation is secured.

Another picture of this comes in John 8.

**Grace Forgives. (8:1-11).** The Pharisees bring a woman to Jesus who was caught in the act of adultery and say, **"Now Moses, in the law, commanded us that such should be stoned. But what do You say?"** (8:5). Again we have the contrast of the Law and Grace. Remember what John said at the beginning of his gospel, **“For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.”** The Pharisees want to follow the law and stone the woman to death. But their real agenda is in verse 6, **“This they said, testing Him, that they might have something of which to accuse Him.”** They want to trap Jesus into breaking the law. Roman law said that the Jews could not carry out the death penalty. The law of Moses in the Old Testament said that they must. Either way Jesus chooses, they think they have Him trapped. Jesus first seems to ignore them as the second half of verse 6 says, **“But Jesus stooped down and wrote on the ground with His finger, as though He did not hear.”**

Finally after they kept bugging Him about it, Jesus stands up and says, **"He who is without sin among you, let him throw a stone at her first."** Jesus would not take the bait. They could not trap Him. Jesus does not ignore the law, He says they can stone her. But first He makes them look at their own sin. They could not face their own sin and not be condemned, **“Then those who heard it, being convicted by their conscience, went out one by one, beginning with the oldest even to the last.”**

Only Jesus and the woman are left. Will Jesus use the law to condemn her? No! He follows another law, the law of grace. Grace forgives and does not condemn. Jesus Verse 11, **“And Jesus said to her, ‘Neither do I condemn you; go and sin no more.’”**

Grace does not condemn. Grace forgives. Grace does not take life. Grace gives life. Grace does not gloss over sin, but atones for sin. Grace does not excuse sin, but says, **“go and sin no more.”**

Jesus came to our world on a mission of grace. It's seen in all His actions and all His words. Most clearly we see His grace through His death on the cross. Hebrews 2:9-10 says, **“But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone. For it was fitting for Him, for whom are all things and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons to glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings.”**

By the grace of God Jesus went to the cross. He tasted death for everyone so that by grace He could bring life to all who believe in Him.

Will you receive His grace today? Take your sin to Jesus. He paid for it with His blood. He tasted death for you so you could have the gift of eternal life.

And If you have received His grace, will you then extend His grace to others?  
We're called to follow Him.

Every Sunday members of the Landisville (Pa) Mennonite Church have prayed for a son of their congregation. Every month they send him a small sum of money, and every month some of them visit him.

Prayer, money, and visits. These sound fairly typical for a care-giving church. BUT THIS SITUATION IS NOT TYPICAL AT ALL. Far from it.

A few years ago, after a meal with relatives on a calm Sunday afternoon, 14-year-old Keith Weaver killed his parents and his sister. The horror of the crime and the loss of lives rocked the Weavers' family, the church, and the community to the core.

In the midst of their grief and disillusionment, however, members of the Landisville Mennonite Church got busy. They helped clean the house where the murders occurred, established a legal support committee to care for Keith's needs so that the surviving brother and sister wouldn't have to, and founded a "seventy times seven" fund to collect money for his expenses.

They studied grief, forgiveness, and victimization in Sunday School and sermons, calling on the expertise of area chaplains and counselors. And a year after the tragedy, they held a memorial service to lament the loss of their loved ones and TO RECOMMIT THEMSELVES TO THE JOURNEY OF FORGIVENESS.

Landisville Pastor Sam Thomas said, "Forgiveness is an act of God's grace. You don't forgive and forget. You forgive again and again and again."

What we need is more grace! More grace from God and more grace working through us to bless the lives of others! When people are touched by the grace of God they become gracious people. They become an actual extension of the grace of God. Grace goes beyond the law. It gives, forgives, and heals.