

From the West Meadow
Pastor Wes Higgins

As a Christian we talk a lot about God's grace and that good because without God's grace we would have no relationship with Him. But I find it interesting the word grace appears only four times in the gospels (at least in the New King James). And even more interesting that Jesus is never quoted using the word.

Of course, Jesus didn't have to talk about grace He is grace personified. Jesus lived and modeled grace so perfectly that we can learn what grace is by looking at His example.

Notice what John says in chapter 1, verse 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." By focusing on Jesus' example of how He interacted with others we may be able to better understand what grace is and what it looks like. So let's take a brief look at grace as it is personified through Jesus by the apostle John.

When Jesus asks Philip to follow Him, Philip is so excited that he tells his friend Nathanael. Nathanael comes back with a slur about Jesus' hometown, which Jesus overheard. Instead of reacting negatively, Jesus simply says, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no deceit!" (John 1:43-51) That is showing grace.

In John chapter 2, Jesus is at a wedding celebration. The host runs out of wine, which is quite an embarrassment for both the host and the families involved. Though it wasn't His concern, Jesus intervened at the request of His mother and turned water to wine, thereby allowing the party to continue, and save the families from public embarrassment. Grace shown.

In John 4, Jesus does the unheard of: thirsty, He approaches a Samaritan woman at a well. Samaritans were despised by the Jews, and this woman had a questionable lifestyle. Instead of correcting her, Jesus shared the word of life with her, offering her the way to peace and fulfillment. Grace shown.

In John 5 is the story of the pool of Bethesda, where Jesus heals a man who has been infirm for 38 years. The man never asked Him for healing, didn't even know who He was. Grace shown.

In John 6, Jesus miraculously feeds 5000 so they would not go away hungry. Grace shown.

In John 8, Jesus doesn't condemn a woman caught in adultery, only tells her to sin no more. Grace shown.

In John 9, Jesus heals a man blind from birth. In John 11, He comforts Martha and Mary at their brother's death—then raises him from the dead. In John 13, Jesus washes the disciples' feet. In John 18, at Jesus' arrest, Peter cuts off Malchus' ear—and Jesus heals him (recorded in Luke 22:51-52). Jesus deals with Pilate with respect and dignity at His "trial" in John 18. And in all these cases, Jesus sets the example showing grace.

Grace as shown by Jesus is not just a word; it is not just by definition "unmerited pardon"; it is an action—a way of life.

"I am the way, the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6) Now that is grace!

Pastor Wes Higgins
West Meadow Ministries
Celebration Church of God
celebrationchurchofGod.org