

The Versus Series - Part 3

Mercy Vs. Grace

“When God our Savior revealed His kindness and love, He saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of His mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit. He generously poured out the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Savior. Because of His grace He declared us righteous and gave us confidence that we will inherit eternal life.” —Titus 3:4-7

*God’s **Mercy**—saves us from His wrath, the punishment for sin, as well as Satan’s plans to kill, steal, and destroy.*

Whereas,

*God’s **Grace**—goes further and delivers us to an abundant, over-coming life with joy and peace, and an eternal destiny with Him.*

Mercy and grace are the two sides of the same marvelous coin—the coin of God’s relentless, inexhaustible love. Mercy is God’s love that reaches out to draw the heart and turn the head, saving us from a treacherous destiny without Him. Whereas, grace is God’s love that anoints the head and secures the heart to inherit His wonderful glory and the majesty of eternal life with Him.

When in a desperate, despicable state, the prodigal son’s heart turned toward his father. It was the father’s love that gave the son his epiphany—he was a good father. While staring into the pig trough, the son remembered his father’s love and his rebellious head turned toward home. The destitute son had no expectation of sonship—he had given it up to live a riotous life. He could not fathom anything beyond the status of a servant... if his father would allow it. The son’s heart’s cry, “If only my father will give me mercy.”

The father’s heart was broken for his wayward son—his love reached into the far country where his son was wasted—mercy at its best. Our Father’s heart is broken too, for His mercy reaches out to us when we are yet sinners. The son mumbled and fumbled his rehearsed repentance speech, while the father embraced him with his relentless, inexhaustible love—mercy was indeed given. But the father had more in mind, he wanted to bestow a greater love upon the son, a love so deep and so wide that it is hard to imagine—Yes, the father released his pent-up grace and poured out pure love on the unworthy son. The father wanted to lavishly restore the prodigal son to his former position in the family. “How can it be” the son confessed, “I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”

Not everyone understands how God can love so deeply. The older son was angry, and in many eyes, rightfully so. One might ask, “Does a vile sinner deserve God’s mercy?” A benevolent person could possibly muster a “yes” reply. But the average person cannot fathom how God can extend His mercy and then lavish it further with His grace, giving joy, peace and forgiveness where it’s not deserved—from a human perspective, not so. Nonetheless, God is God, and God is love.

“But God is so rich in mercy, and He loved us so much, that even though we were dead because of our sins, He gave us life when He raised Christ from the dead. ...He raised us from the dead along with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms because we are united with Christ Jesus” —Ephesians 2:4-6



Mercy means *being saved from the penalty of sin, something we do deserve*. God offers His mercy even before we come to the cross to ask for forgiveness. —“*Even when we were dead in our trespasses, God showed us His mercy*”—He first loved us!

Mercy defines and embodies redemption and reconciliation. God purchases us (redeems us) from the slave market of sin, and settles our deficient account (reconciles). God so loved the world that He gave His Son to be crucified so we could be *redeemed* and *reconciled* to the Father. Receiving God's mercy means a believer is eternally secure.





"I pray that your hearts will be flooded with light so that you can understand the wonderful future He has promised to those He called. I want you to realize what a rich and glorious inheritance He has given to His people." Ephesians 1:18

Grace is God's love saving us to something we don't deserve. God wants to take you beyond His provision of mercy. He wants to elevate you to the abundant life through His infinite grace. Like the prodigal son, God doesn't just forgive you with His mercy and then hire you as a servant. He wants to restore you to sonship and make you whole. God doesn't just deliver us from the wages of sin. Jesus had more in mind when He said plainly, *"I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly."*

Grace defines and embodies restoration and renewal—to be made whole. God, the Father, through Jesus, redeemed mankind with His love by extending His mercy. Yet there is more—through His grace, His love persists beyond human comprehension. God will redeem any person who yields to His offer of mercy, but then, through His amazing grace, He offers to *restore* and then *renew* the whole man, spirit, soul and body. We do not have to wait for heaven to experience God's overflowing provision and goodness. Experiencing God's grace means a believer can enjoy an overcoming life for the here and now, too.

In review: God's love draws man to the cross. This is where His **Mercy** delivers us from the penalty of sin. God's **Love** crucifies the "old man" on the cross, and then God's **Grace** resurrects the new man to a New Life in Him—*"He made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."* The moment you confess Jesus as your Savior, your Salvation experience includes God's full measure of mercy, love and grace. However, God's grace is applied experientially day-by-day. Every Christian should desire to walk-in God's grace and therefore experience the "here and now" blessing of God's unfathomable love. Why? Because doing so brings God glory.

 Information and Revelation
 Transformation

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your extreme love that sent Your Son to die for me. Thank You for Your mercy that saved me when I didn't deserve it—Your love overpowered Satan's attempt to drag me to hell with him. LORD, it was my transgressions that sent Jesus to the cross, I'm broken before You knowing that truth. I am left undone by the miracles You have worked in me, despite my rebellion and sin.

Thank You for Your amazing grace that delivers me and redeems me for Your Kingdom purposes, and to restore mankind to relationship with You. Thank You for emptying Your wonderful life-giving grace upon me, even in times that I feel I don't deserve it. LORD, help me diligently seek You day-by-day for You are a reservoir of grace always filling me to overflowing with Your love, peace and joy. LORD, keep me in the bonds of grace for I so much want to enjoy sweet communion with Jesus as the oil of grace is given to me. Help me abide in the Vine, recognizing that You are my daily source of grace. LORD, I ask You for the desire, ability and the courage to walk in my inheritance of grace for Your glory. I proclaim Your promise of grace, and ask these petitions in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

By David E McFadden

"Let's Make Disciples Together!"