

You Can Do It! 3

Please refer to chapters 5 and 6 in the *Extraordinary* book, along with session 3 of the teaching series.

“We have everything it takes to live a life that pleases our heavenly Father. So settle this in your heart and don’t ever let this knowledge slip away. God is the One who spoke these words through Peter. His Word is true and unchangeable. Never, at any time, accept the lie that you don’t have what it takes to please God. The fact is that you do!”

JOHN BEVERE
adapted from chapter 5

1. No matter how difficult it may have been (or is) to please your *earthly* father or mother, you have what it takes to please your *heavenly* Father. God Himself has given you the ability!

- a. What kind of behavior, achievements, etc. do you feel God expects from you?

- b. *Get quiet before the Lord.* Read your answer from the previous question aloud in prayer and ask the Lord to confirm in your heart what He really expects from you.

Heaven's

APPEAL

...he has told you what he wants,
and this is all it is: to *be fair*,
just, *merciful*, and to walk
humbly with your God.

—Micah 6:8 TLB

2. The parable of the minas and the parable of the talents are actually *not* one and the same. The biggest difference between them is that in the parable of the minas everyone was given an *equal* amount, and in the parable of the talents each was given *different* amounts.

- a. In the *parable of the minas*, what does the mina represent? Give some practical, real-life examples of the “minas” God has given you.

- b. In the *parable of the talents*, what does the talent represent? Give some practical, real-life examples of the “talents” God has entrusted to you.

- c. What do you believe God wants you to do with the “minas” He has given you? How about the “talents”?

Check out the parable of the minas in Luke 19:11-26 and the parable of the talents in Matthew 25:14-30.

“A person’s ability to write, teach, preach, sing, compose music, design, manage, organize, lead, interact well with people, and so forth are all gifts given by God. If I keep that in mind, it guards me from the deadly traps of pride and envy. Pride, in thinking I’m better than others; envy, in coveting what another person has.”

JOHN BEVERE
adapted from chapter 5

3. According to Ephesians 4:7 TLB, "...Christ has given **each of us** special abilities—whatever he wants us to have out of his rich storehouse of gifts." These special abilities, or gifts, are His *grace*. *Meditate on the message* of the following scriptures and answer the questions that follow:

...A man can receive nothing [he can claim nothing, he can take unto himself nothing] except as it has been granted to him from heaven. [A man must be content to receive the *gift* which is given him from heaven; there is no other source.]

—John 3:27 AMP

Who made you superior to others? Didn't God give you everything you have? Well, then, how can you boast, as if what you have were not a *gift*?

—1 Corinthians 4:7 TEV

...Every desirable and beneficial *gift* comes out of heaven. The gifts are rivers of light cascading down from the Father of Light...

—James 1:17 The Message

- a. Have you ever desired a gift or ability that someone else had? What was it? In a way, what are you saying to God when you covet what someone else has?

- b. Have you ever measured your success with someone else's? How did it make you feel? Did God speak to you about it?

- c. How do these verses shed new light on *comparing* and *competing* with the gifts in others?

Heaven's

APPEAL

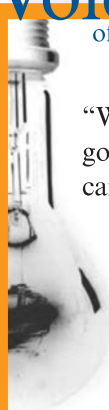
For it is by free **grace** (God's unmerited favor) that you are *saved* (delivered from judgment and made partakers of Christ's salvation) through [your] faith. And this [salvation] is not of yourselves [of your own doing, it came not through your own striving], but it is the gift of God; not because of works [not the fulfillment of the Law's demands], lest any man should boast. [It is not the result of what anyone can possibly do, so no one can pride himself in it or take glory to himself.]

—Ephesians 2:8-9 AMP

4. As John Newton's ageless hymn declares, God's grace is truly amazing! Not only is it amazing, it is also *multifaceted*. Read Ephesians 2:8-9 and, in your own words, explain what it means to be *saved by grace*.

5. Many people from all walks of life and religious backgrounds are struggling to *earn* their salvation and entrance into heaven by the works they do. Even many Christians, after they get saved, attempt to stay in God's good graces by being "good enough." (See Isaiah 64:6.)

- a. In what ways, if any, have you fallen into the trap of trying to maintain right standing with God through good behavior?

Voice
of the Ages

"While we are zealous for good works, let us be careful not to put them in the place of Christ's righteousness, and not to advance anything which may betray others into so dreadful a delusion."

—Matthew Henry¹

- b. Read Galatians 3:1-9; 5:4 and share what the Lord shows you about constantly trying to *work your way* into right relationship with Him or earn His blessings.

“When we are at the judgment seat before God and He looks at us and says, ‘Why should I admit you into My kingdom?’ our answer will not be because we lived a good life or because we worked hard in ministry or because we touched people’s lives. It will be purely because of what Jesus did at the cross of Calvary—shedding His blood, dying, being buried and being raised to life again! That amazing ransom that was paid by His life is what saved us—*nothing else*.”

JOHN BEVERE
adapted from session 3

FASCINATING FACT: SAVED BY GRACE

Billy Graham has ministered to people throughout the world for five decades. He has preached to over 110 million people in 84 countries. In addition to these who have heard him in person, he has been heard by countless others through radio and television. Three million people have responded to his invitation to receive Christ or make a recommitment. There is no question that Billy Graham has made a significant impact for Christ. Yet, all of these efforts will not gain him entrance into the presence of Christ. *Every person is saved by the grace of God*, not good works (Ephesians 2:8-9).²

6. While we were still sinners, God’s grace was given to us in the form of *saving grace*. *Meditate on the message* of the following scriptures and explain what the Holy Spirit reveals to you about the different aspects of God’s saving grace.

Acts 15:11 • Romans 3:21-24; 5:14-17 • Titus 2:11-12; 3:4-7

7. Have you ever done something that seemed so awful you thought for sure you lost your salvation? You're not alone; most believers have experienced this one or more times in their lives.

- a. Briefly explain a situation like this in your life and how God brought you out of it.

Check out 1 John 1:9, Acts 13:38 and Ephesians 1:7 for a glimpse of His heart toward you.

- b. Read Romans 6:1-2, Galatians 5:13 and 1 Peter 2:16 and explain the one thing you should *never* do with the freedom of God's grace.

Heaven's

APPEAL

O my soul, bless God. From head to toe, I'll bless his holy name! O my soul, bless God, don't forget a single blessing! He forgives your sins—every one...
—Psalm 103:1-3 The Message

8. When it comes to forgiveness, it is a great encouragement to know that God will forgive us of anything we've done wrong when we humbly confess it to Him. In the same way, He requires us to forgive others.

Voice of the Ages

"Where would any man or woman be this very hour were it not for the **grace of the Lord Jesus Christ?**

Grace greater than all our sins—grace greater than all our shortcomings.

I am reminded of God's grace when someone confides, 'I wasn't worthy of this healing or of God's blessings. I am not worthy to be called an heir of God and a joint-heir with Christ Jesus.'

It isn't a matter of being worthy, for no man is worthy! It isn't our perfection or our penitence, or a matter of our labors to reach the place of perfection or worthiness. *It is God's grace alone!*"

—Kathryn Kuhlman³

- a. In Jesus' discussion with Peter about forgiveness in Matthew 18:21-22, what is He actually saying about how often we are to forgive others? Why should it be this way?

Check out Matthew 6:14-15 and Ephesians 4:32.

MERCY

The Hebrew word for "mercy" is *hesed* or *chesed*. It describes not just the emotion of pity, much less the ignoring, excusing, or indulging of wrongdoing; it implies *kindness* and *compassion* and that one can be depended on to faithfully carry out the promises made in a covenant or agreement. By this, God "[kept] covenant and mercy" with His people, the Jews, in terms of showing loyalty to them—even when they didn't deserve it. In the same way, God calls those who fear Him to show mercy in their dealings with others.⁴

9. God's *extraordinary* forgiveness is inseparably linked to the richness of His grace and *mercy*. As Psalm 136 overwhelmingly declares, His mercy and love endure forever! In the same way, He commands us to extend mercy to others. (See Luke 6:36.)

- a. Briefly share a situation in which you were shown mercy and how it impacted your life.

Hint: Think back to past situations with teachers, coaches and your parents.

- b. Whom do you feel God is asking you to show mercy to but you would rather not? Why is it hard for you to do?

Pray and ask the Lord for grace to give mercy to those who need it, just as He has given it to you.

FASCINATING FACT: GRACE & PEACE TO YOU!

In all of the Apostle Paul's epistles, he starts by greeting his readers with "grace" and "peace." Why did he use these two words so frequently? First, he used them because he was an apostle to the Gentiles, or Greek-speaking world, and it was necessary for him to greet his Greek readers in their customary way. During New Testament times, the salutation of "grace" was the customary greeting exchanged between Greeks when they came near each other. Just as we say, "Hello, how are you doing?" as a polite way of greeting someone we meet, the Greeks would say, "Grace!" when greeting one another.

The word "grace" is the Greek word *charis*, which means *grace* but also carries the idea of *favor*. So when a person greeted someone with this salutation, it was the same as saying, "I greet you with grace and favor."

But Paul wasn't only addressing the Greek world. As a Jew, he also desired to greet the Jewish world that would be reading his letters. When the Jews met each other, their customary way of greeting one another was to say, "Shalom!" (or "Peace!"). In fact, this is still the customary greeting exchanged between Jews in Israel today.

By using both *grace* and *peace* at the start of his letters, Paul brilliantly reached out and embraced both the Greek and the Jewish world at the outset of his writings. One scholar has said that by using both terms, the doors were thrown open for the whole world to read his letters. It is obvious that Paul deliberately addressed those letters to both the Gentile and Jewish worlds.⁵

For Paul's greetings of "grace and peace," **check out** Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 1:2; Galatians 1:3; Ephesians 1:2; Philippians 1:2; Colossians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 1:1; 2 Thessalonians 1:2; and Philemon 1:3.

Grace is not just God's favor that cannot be earned; it is His empowering presence that gives us the ability to live like Jesus. Grace gives us the ability to exceed our own ability! It gives us the ability to live extraordinarily! God didn't just rescue us, but He empowered us so that we can live successfully here in this world.

JOHN BEVERE

adapted from chapter 6

10. According to 1 John 2:6, "Whoever claims to live in him must walk as Jesus did" (NIV). Indeed, as followers of Christ we are to "...walk *worthy of God*" (1 Thessalonians 2:12 NKJV). What is the good news about this command, as well as every other command God gives us in the New Testament?

11. It is very important to remember that grace not only saves us, but it also gives us the ability to live our Christian life the way God has called us to live—*extraordinarily*.

a. Before this session, what was your understanding of God's grace?

b. How has this study, including the analogy of Island Man, reshaped your view?

the bottom line

You have what it takes to please God. He, Himself, gave you the power to do so, and that power is His *grace*. In addition to being God's unmerited favor, grace is also God's power to live like Jesus. Without truly understanding the multifaceted gift of *grace*, you can never function to your full potential and live the extraordinary life God has planned.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

KNOWING THAT YOU ARE SAVED

Acts 16:31
Romans 8:16; 10:9-10
Titus 2:11-12
1 John 2:3-6; 4:7-8,13-15

GOD'S MERCY

Psalms 51:1-2
Proverbs 16:6
Lamentations 3:22-23
Titus 3:5

GRACE

2 Corinthians 9:8
2 Timothy 2:1
Titus 2:11; 3:7
Revelation 22:21

UNVEIL YOUR HERO

...sold his Volkswagen
to build 50 circuit boards

Steve Jobs—Founder and
CEO of Apple

Journal Your Journey

...**Grace** and peace to you many times over as you
deepen in your experience with God and Jesus, our Master.
Everything that goes into a life of *pleasing God* has been
miraculously given to us by getting to know, personally
and intimately, the One who invited us to God.

The best invitation we ever received!

—2 Peter 1:2-3 The Message

EYE-OPENERS

Prayerfully, you are learning many new things as you explore the empowering grace of God. What new, eye-opening revelation(s) of truth has the Holy Spirit made real to you in this session?

REVOLUTIONARY YOU

Through your new understanding of God's grace, what is He challenging you to change in your life? How is He asking you to go up higher in your way of living?

PRAYER

*Father, thank You for the awesome gift of Your grace—grace not only to save me and keep me saved but also to **empower** me to live like Christ. I ask You to give me a greater revelation of what Your grace is. Flood my entire being with the power of Your grace—grace to think like Jesus, believe like Jesus, talk like Jesus, and act like Jesus every day and in every way...in Jesus' name, Amen.*

GRACE IS Power!

But He gives us more and more grace (**power of the Holy Spirit**, to meet this evil tendency and all others fully).

That is why He says, God sets Himself against the proud and haughty, but gives grace [continually] to the lowly (those who are humble enough to receive it).

—James 4:6 AMP

God's grace is awesome! It is an intangible gift that cannot be earned or bought but can only be received by faith in the one who gives it. God willingly and lovingly chose to save you—forgiving you of your sins and transferring you from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. This divine favor from our great Creator is definitely unmerited (undeserved and unwarranted).

However, the meaning of God's grace goes far beyond salvation. Grace is His *power*, the supernatural *strength* of His Holy Spirit living in us, transforming us into the very image of Christ. To better understand, read this excerpt on grace and the new birth from **John Wesley**, one of the men of God who helped usher in America's First Great Awakening in the 1700s:

The born-again person feels in his heart the mighty working of the Spirit of God. This feeling is not in the carnal sense, as the men of the world mistakenly understand the expression, although they have been told again and again its meaning. The meaning is only this, he feels or is inwardly aware of the *graces* which the Spirit of God works in his heart. He feels and is con-

scious of a *peace* which passes all understanding. He many times feels a *joy* in God that is inexpressible and full of glory. He feels the *love* of God shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Spirit which has been given to him. All of his spiritual senses are used to discern spiritual good and evil. He is increasing daily in his knowledge of God and understanding about the inward Kingdom of heaven.

...God continually *breathes*, in a manner of speaking, upon his soul. His soul is continually breathing to God. **Grace** is descending into his heart. His prayer and praise ascends to heaven. By this conversation between God and man, a life of spiritual respiration is set up. Through this, the life of God in the soul is sustained, and this fellowship with the Father and the Son grows. In this manner, the child of God grows up until he comes to full measure of stature in Christ. It clearly appears what the new birth is. Its nature is the great change which God works in the soul when He brings it to life.

...No matter how much a man has attained, or in what high degree he is perfect, he still needs to **grow in grace**. He needs a daily advancement in the knowledge and love of God, his Savior.⁶

Heaven's

APPEAL

But grow in grace (undeserved favor, spiritual strength) and recognition and knowledge and understanding of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (the Messiah). To Him [be] glory (honor, majesty, and splendor) both now and to the day of eternity. Amen (so be it)!

—2 Peter 3:18 AMP

What role does grace play from the time you receive salvation until you stand before God?

GRACE

As mentioned previously, the word *grace* is derived from the Greek word **charis**, which in a general sense means “favor, benefit, or graciousness of manner.” It also carries with it the meaning of a “divine influence (*power*) upon the human heart, and its reflection (*manifestation or mirror image*) in a person’s life.”⁷ Grace is a dynamic force that does more than just affect our standing with God by crediting us with righteousness; grace affects our experience as well. It is marked always by God’s enabling work within us to overcome our helplessness.⁸

[words in parentheses are synonyms added for clarity and understanding]

God’s grace is also often described as His *anointing*, *strength* and *power*. It is the supernatural ability of His Spirit that makes the seemingly impossible things possible. Looking back over your life, can you recall a time when you sensed God’s grace, His holy ease, reflected in your life? Share your experience and what God’s grace gave you the power to accomplish.

Meditate on the message of James 4:6 (see page 39) and 1 Peter 5:5. What is the one thing that will cause God to cut off His power supply of grace to you? What attitude must you maintain?

Paul acknowledged that it was only by God's grace that he was able to do *anything*, and the same is true for us. Read 1 Corinthians 15:10 and write what it speaks to your heart.

Also **check out** 1 Corinthians 3:10.

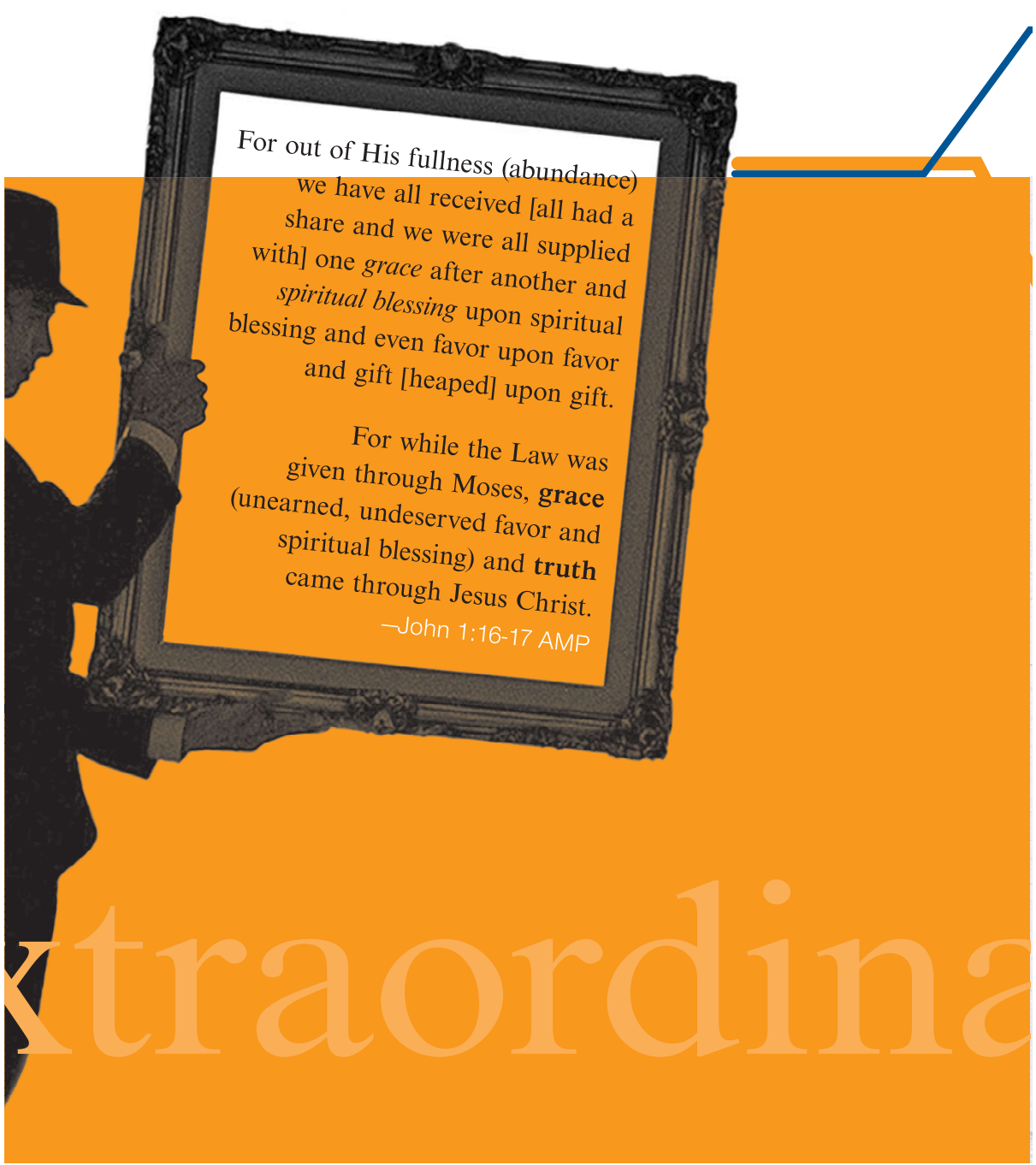
How do you receive grace? Simply by asking! Read Hebrews 4:16 and write what you can do to put into practice this powerful truth.

-
1. Quotes on *Salvation* (retrieved 3-19-09, www.dailychristianquote.com).
 2. Raymond McHenry, *McHenry's Quips, Quotes & Other Notes* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc. 1998) p. 220.
 3. Quotes by *Kathryn Kuhlman* (retrieved 3-20-09, www.kathrynkuhlman.com/godsgrace.html).
 4. Adapted from *The Word In Life™ Study Bible*, Copyright © 1993, 1996 by Thomas Nelson, Inc. Used by permission, p. 337.
 5. Rick Renner, *Sparkling Gems from the Greek* (Tulsa, OK: Teach All Nations, 2003) Adapted from p. 848.
 6. John Wesley, *The Holy Spirit & Power* (Gainesville, FL: Bridge Logos, 2003) pp. 66, 174.
 7. Adapted from *Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, James Strong, LL.D., S.T.D. (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, Inc., 1990).
 8. John Bevere, *Extraordinary* (Colorado Springs, CO: WaterBrook Press, 2009) p. 54.

NOTES

43

YOU CAN DO IT!



For out of His fullness (abundance)
we have all received [all had a
share and we were all supplied
with] one *grace* after another and
spiritual blessing upon spiritual
blessing and even favor upon favor
and gift [heaped] upon gift.

For while the Law was
given through Moses, **grace**
(unearned, undeserved favor and
spiritual blessing) and **truth**
came through Jesus Christ.

—John 1:16-17 AMP

xtraordinary