

# AMAZING GRACE

## PART 1

*Does the thought of God's grace seem too hard to understand, to find or to accept as amazing?*

*Do you blame God for your circumstances?*

*Do you think God would never accept you because of what you have done or who you are? Do you have joy, contentment and a meaningful purpose in life? Do you think you do?*

*Are you satisfied with your life or does it seem to be an endless routine of activity that never completely measures up to your hopes and dreams?*

*Even if you think life is going great, what happens when your circumstances change? And they always do!*

If you would like to know the one constant, never changing, one hope amidst ANYTHING life sends your way, then read on. Read with an open mind, willing to be challenged and changed by discovering the ONLY solid foundation life has – a personal relationship with our Creator, God, through His Son Jesus Christ. He is the door to God's amazing grace!

### **Life Is A Struggle**

Demands come from everywhere. It can be from work, home or society in general. Some find themselves struggling just to get by each day while others struggle to achieve or measure up to someone else's expectations. Two things are certain: the struggles you have are either self-inflicted or they are caused by others.

When you make decisions or choices apart from the direction God gives you in His Word, there are consequences you will face as a result. Those resulting struggles are the self-inflicted ones. Sometimes you will make decisions contrary to God's best for you because you just don't know what His Word says. Other times you choose to ignore what He says because you think your way is better or you don't have the

patience to wait for Him to work out the details in your life. Most people have heard of the Ten Commandments and may even know some of them. Still, many choose not to follow them or to twist the true meaning to fit what they want. They basically try to justify their sinfulness. Biblical examples are no different. (See Part 1, Note #1.)

One example found in the Bible is the religious leadership in Jesus' time (read the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Jesus lived a simple life as a carpenter before He started His public ministry at age 30. Because He performed many miracles, healed the sick, helped the poor and challenged the religious leaders of His day, they sought to kill Him to protect their status and position. Eventually they succeeded in killing Him. But the story doesn't end there because Jesus' death and resurrection were part of God's plan to save the world. (See Part 1, Note #2.)

### *Thoughts to consider*

*Do I believe there is an answer to life's problems?*

*Is there a place in my life that needs help?*

*Can I trust God for the answer?*

### **Everyone Is Searching For Something**

Some people are caught in an endless search hoping that one day they will find the one thing that truly satisfies. Some people believe life is as good as it can get or that things are going so well, what more could they need? Others find themselves looking for peace, joy and contentment through a possession, career or even drugs and alcohol. Still others just want stability and their basic survival needs met. They are searching to fill a void God created in them. Examples in the Bible (See Part 1, Notes #2A, 2B, 2C.) confirm what God's plans are for you.

He loves you! He created an emptiness inside you that could only be filled by a relationship with Him through His Son Jesus Christ. Only through this relationship can you be fulfilled and find true purpose in your life. Then you can stop struggling in your own strength and stop looking for something that will never satisfy you.

God is so interested in having a relationship with you that He sent His only Son to earth to give you this opportunity. Jesus willingly gave up everything available to Him in heaven and humbled Himself to live an ordinary life on earth. He experienced your difficulties, and then allowed Himself to be crucified to bridge the gap between your sinfulness and holy God. His death not only bridged the gap, but opened the door to God's amazing grace. He loves you! (See Part 1, Note #3.)

### Thoughts to consider

Do I believe God intended for the world to be a better place before sin entered the world?

Can I look back over my life and recognize how there has always been something missing that caused me to search for something that would satisfy?

What is the path to the place where I can finally have peace, joy, contentment, purpose and satisfaction?

### Answer – God's AMAZING GRACE

Regardless of what you have done or what others have done to you, God's love and amazing grace are large enough for you. You are never so bad, so low, so hurt or so far from God that He won't accept you with open arms. God's grace is a gift to you. The grace He gives you also means He gives you His kindness, favor, mercy and blessings. He offers you this grace regardless of your past. God is willing to offer His grace to all who believe in His Son. The grace He offers will never be kept from you by His choice, only by your unwillingness to accept the gift of grace. (See Part 1, Note #4.)

*God's Word:* God's grace is shown in many examples throughout the Bible even though the word "grace" is not specifically used. To understand a little more about God's grace, look at some examples in His Word where the word "grace" IS used. It is only by accepting Jesus into your life (faith) that you gain access to God's grace. Once you receive His grace and begin to live in it, you will always be surrounded by God. God actually blankets you with His grace in every area of your life to totally saturate you with His love and presence. Just the thought of it can give you the strength, hope and comfort you cannot find anywhere else. God's Word says His grace is available to you when you follow Him. When you have Christ in your life, you are rich regardless of your circumstances, while living this short, temporary existence on earth. (See Part 1, Note #4A.)

*God's power:* The power of God is more than sufficient to provide you the grace you so desperately need. As you walk with God each day, the power of His presence in your life helps you to live for Him regardless of your circumstances. His power can help you to recognize the hope you have through His Son Jesus Christ. God is all powerful and always with you to help you overcome the attacks of Satan. (See Part 1, Note #4B.)

*Faith in Jesus Christ:* The payment for your sins was made by Jesus Christ. God wanted to bring you back into a right relationship with Him. Why? Because God loves you so much that when you believe in what Jesus did for you on the cross, you will gain eternal life with Him. You must accept that Jesus is the only way into fellowship with God. Only Jesus can bridge the gap to God! You won't understand everything when you decide to follow Jesus. Through faith, when you accept His Word as true, He will begin to reveal Himself to you. Then you will be able to overcome the difficulties and sinfulness of this world! (See Part 1, Note #4C.)

*To begin a life of grace:* You need a personal relationship with God through Jesus. To begin a relationship with Jesus, you must understand you are separated from God by your sin. Your sin keeps you from God. It's as if you were on one

side of a canyon and He was on the other, with no way to get across. You are a sinner because of the sin nature Adam gave to you (and every person) through birth. It's like a disease you can't get rid of and is a part of who you are. The penalty you pay for being a sinner is death.

Death without accepting Jesus is like stepping off the edge of the canyon trying to get to God, but falling to the bottom of the canyon instead. You could end up being eternally separated from God. Because God is holy and you are sinful, you can't be in His presence until you are forgiven of your sins and your penalty is paid. (See Part 1, Note #4D.)

### How Do I Get to Know This Christ?

There is a huge difference between knowing about God and knowing Him. Many people know about God through the religions they practice. They may go to church for many, many years and still only know about Him. Eventually they may realize that to have their lives transformed and to find true hope, they must begin to know Him through a personal relationship.

You know about people on the surface, but when they become your friends or spouse, you begin to know them more closely. The more time you spend with them, listen to them, talk with them, and go through life with them, the closer you become to them and the more you know them.

The same is true with God. You can't just sit in a church pew each week and hear a story or watch a performance about God. You must ask God to be the center of your life and then spend time with Him. You can do this by reading His Word, praying to Him and listening for Him to guide you in your daily decisions.

In order for you to move across the canyon from knowing about God to knowing Him, you must accept His Son and what He did for you on the cross. Jesus becomes the bridge across the canyon. Then you can begin to develop a personal relationship with God through His Son, Jesus Christ. So what are the basic steps to asking Him into your life?

### Basic Steps To Salvation

*You must understand that you are separated from God by your sin. God is holy, you are not. You are a sinner. The best you could ever do on your own is still just filth compared to God's holiness. You need God. You need Jesus! (See Part 1, Note #5.)*

*You must believe that Jesus died for your sins and was raised from the dead. You must say that Jesus is now the Lord of your life and believe in our heart that He was raised from the dead, then you will be saved. You must accept that Jesus is the only way back into fellowship with God and that only Jesus can bridge the gap to God! (See Part 1, Note #5A, 5B, 5C.)*

*God's promise: God offers His grace, mercy, hope, forgiveness and eternity with Him as a FREE GIFT! You can't earn it. He gives it to you because He loves you. (See Part 1, Note #5D.)*

### Things To Consider

- Will you accept God's gift of eternal life?
- Will you accept Jesus' payment of your sins?
- Will you accept His hope and help in a difficult, constantly changing world?
- Will you look to Him to provide the only peace, joy, satisfaction, purpose and security available to you?
- Will you accept His AMAZING GRACE?

If you're ready to accept God's AMAZING GRACE, then:

*Ask God to forgive your sins. Ask Him to come live in your heart, to change the way you've been living and to be in control of your life. (See Part 1, Note #5E.)*

*Pray a simple prayer: Lord Jesus, please forgive me of my sins. Please come to live inside me so that I can start a new life with You in control. I thank You for paying my sin penalty and ask You to be the Lord of my life. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen!*

*Your decision:* Will lead to acceptance of Christ and fellowship with God for eternity, or rejection of Christ and eternal separation from God in hell. If you still have doubts or questions, please continue to search for the answers. God wants you with Him in eternity. The steps are simple and the path is clear. If you ignore His truth and invitation to accept Him into your life, you will be forced to pay for your own sins, because there WILL be a judgment day.

### *Think About It ...*

If we are unwilling to accept Him into our lives while on earth, why would He want us with Him in heaven after we die?  
*(See Part 1, Note #5F.)*

We pray you will choose life with God and begin a relationship with Him that will change your heart and actions and give you a purpose that will last throughout eternity.

### **What's Next?**

*Your future is eternal life with God.* But what do you do NOW, while you are waiting to enter eternity? By accepting Jesus into your life, you have become a new person. You still have the same body, but God has transformed your heart, renewed your mind and given you new desires.

He has also begun to change you from the inside out so that you develop new habits and pattern of

living. Some of these changes and desires will be seen immediately. Others will be seen over time as you begin to walk toward God and develop the Christ-like character He wants you to have.

Finally, live each day filled with new hope as a child of God. Concentrate on growing in your relationship with God through Jesus.

### *Remember ...*

You were placed here  
**ON PURPOSE ... FOR A PURPOSE.**  
*(See Part 1, Note #6.)*

As you begin to read God's Word you will grow spiritually and begin to live out His Word in different areas of your life. You will always be growing spiritually, even into eternity. The more you grow, the more your character and areas of your life will become more like Christ.



In our desire to encourage your spiritual growth and keep you walking toward Christ, we want to include some additional spiritual insights from a believer in his ongoing walk toward maturity. We pray these will help you in your own walk and be an encouragement to seek out all God has for you.