

**T**O UNDERSTAND “THE GRACE OF GOD IN TRUTH” WE MUST UNDERSTAND THE DIFFERING ROLES THAT LOVE, MERCY AND GRACE PLAY IN OUR SALVATION ...

- Love and mercy have different roles than grace in God’s salvation plan. The difference is mainly between motivation and action. Love and mercy speak primarily to God’s motivation—*why* he did what he did, while grace speaks primarily to God’s actions in our salvation—*what* he did.
- We are saved **because of** God’s great love and that he is rich in mercy, but we are saved **by** his grace. (See Ephesians 2:4-5 below in the outline.)
- This is extremely important because it seems that many people misunderstand God’s grace primarily as motivation and not action. As if God is a God of “love-mercy-grace affection” which somehow makes it okay to believe what you want to believe as long as you have sincere convictions.
- But **what** we believe is neither optional nor debatable. There is only one way to access the grace of God and the standing that gives us, and that is through faith in Jesus Christ.
- To understand “the grace of God in truth” is to understand God’s divine determination to save us—to understand that he has committed his full support through his riches, his power and his authority to forgive our sins and to give us eternal life to enjoy forever with him in his glory.

**FIRST LOVE AND MERCY ... (MOTIVATION)  
THEN GRACE ... (ACTION) ...**

**MOTIVATION: LOVE AND MERCY ANSWER “WHY?”**

- (Ephesians 2:4–5 ESV) [**LOVE AND MERCY**] But God, being rich in mercy, **because of** the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we

were dead in our trespasses, [**THEN GRACE**] made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved.

Note the sequence and the function in Ephesians 2:4-5 of the respective roles of love, mercy and grace. God’s modus operandi is to love then give. Love and mercy (motivation) then grace (action).

- (John 3:16 ESV) For God so **loved** the world, that he **gave** his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
- (Galatians 2:20 ESV) I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who **loved** me and **gave** himself for me.
- (2 Thessalonians 2:16 ESV) Now may our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God our Father, who **loved** us and **gave** us eternal comfort and good hope **through grace**.

**ACTION: GRACE ANSWERS “WHAT?”**

Grace is what God does to save us—the saving action of redemption, sanctification and glorification.

- (Acts 15:11 ESV) But we believe that we will be **saved through the grace** of the Lord Jesus, just as they will.
- (Ephesians 2:5 ESV) Even when we were dead in our trespasses, **made us alive** together with Christ—**by grace you have been saved**.
- (Ephesians 2:8 ESV) **For by grace you have been saved** through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.
- (Romans 3:23–24 ESV) For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 and are **justified by his grace as a gift**, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.

# GRACE

## THE POWERFUL, AUTHORITATIVE, ETERNAL BLESSING OF GOD



• (Ephesians 2:7 ESV) So that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

### “BY GRACE YOU HAVE BEEN SAVED”

— UNDERSTANDING THE “GRACE COMMITMENT” OF GOD TO OUR SALVATION —