

## How Grace Provides for Us

Introduction to Ephesians Chapter 2

How Grace found us in verses 1-3

How Christ provided for us verses 4-7

**Ephesians 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,**

**But.** This contrast is between How Christ found us as the children of wrath, and how God in Christ saved us. We did not find the Lord, the Lord found us. It is wrong to think and say “I found the Lord,” the Lord found us!!!

Who found us? **but God**

When He found us, He had total capacity for love. When God found us we were completely without the ability to love. When He found us we could not love Him but He loved us. When He found us He was faithful, we were faithless, useless, hopeless, and helpless. This is how we were when He found us. Now, stop and think about this, because this is very important! And God found us with nothing, but God wants to make us something wonderful. Through His Spirit and His Word is how God does it, how God makes us everything wonderful and valuable. When God found us we were miserable creatures. Now God wants us to be joyful and peaceful as He is always joyful. There never was a time, and never will be a time when God is not happy. He wants us to have His capacity for love. God has perfect happiness and perfect love and He wants us to have perfect happiness and perfect love. The day God saved you, He wanted to make you happy and full capacity for love. Now, here is the key to all this He wants you to have these things now! not in eternity.

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Why? Because in eternity we will each have complete happiness and full love. But in time, it is up to you. You have to make a volitional decision for God to make you happy, for God to give you capacity for love. Verse one started with and you, Now, verse 4 starts with but God.

And you (Verse 1)...but God (Verse 4)

You began spiritually dead; under the control of Satan and then in verse 3 you with a sin nature...but God came with a graceful change! Here is the simplicity of the testimony of everyone one of us: **And you and but God**. Every member of the human race gets a crack at salvation and every believer has the opportunity of all the blessings from God.

**But God being rich.** This means to be rich or wealthy.

Rich refers to the essence of God. The Greek word comes from a root word meaning 'to fill or to be filled' meaning to be full of material possessions, therefore to be rich. Riches can often have a negative impact as in

**Matthew 19:23 And Jesus said to His disciples, "Truly I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven."**

Believers are not to put their hope in their riches but to put their hope in God for God alone is truly rich! Jesus Himself warns of riches:

**Luke 6:24 But woe to you who are rich, for you are receiving your comfort in full.**

This applies to those who trust their wealth instead of trusting in the Lord. The book of James has several things about how God loves the poor, with the idea being that the rich exploit the poor. (James 2:5ff and James 5:1). In the book of Revelation, God is mindful toward the poor in Smyrna. In Revelation 3:17 Laodiceans are warned of their wealth over

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trusting in the Lord. The rich are among those judged at the sixth Seal of Terror.

**But God is rich in mercy.** Ok, it should take us hours to cover *mercy* in the Bible. Mercy is a rich word for the mercy of God!

I. The word *mercy*

A. English: *Mercy, charity, clemency, grace, leniency*; In English this word means compassion or forbearance, esp. to an offender.

B. Biblical Hebrew

1. *hesed* three main synonyms: mercy, compassion, and pity. Psalm 117:2.
2. And: *raham or ruhamah* a feminine womb, compassion, mercy, affection. The Old Testament thought of the womb as the seat of warmth and tender emotions. The writer had in mind the ideal of compassion, tenderness or just mercy.

### **Psalm 116:5 Gracious is the Lord and righteous; Yes our God is merciful**

3. *Kapporet* a lid or propitiation. The word refers to the lid that covered the ark of the Covenant. It is associated with the 'mercy seat' The mercy seat is where God came before Israel to teach them of His Propitiation. Jesus Christ became the all time acceptable sacrifice and satisfied the wrath of God as the guilt offering. Exodus 25:17.
4. *Hanan* means to be gracious or to have mercy; several translations translate this word accurately mercy or

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merciful as in Psalm 123. the Psalm that prays for mercy in verses 2 and 3; Exodus 33:19; Numbers 6:25; Psalms 26:11; 27:7; 119:58.

### C. Biblical Greek:

1. *eleeo and eleos* has the same three synonyms mercy, compassion, pity. Hebrews 4:16.
2. *Oiktirmos*. pity, mercy, compassion. This is found on the familiar passage of

**Romans 12:1 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.**

- II. In the Complete Word Study Dictionary: Old Testament. In describing the character of God as: *truth, faithfulness, **mercy**, steadfastness, justice, righteousness*. Mercy is from the *patience of God*, He does not owe mankind mercy. Mercy cannot be owed. Once we see and understand our sins, our trespasses, we become so thankful to God for His mercy.
- III. Here we learn more about God. The Grace of God. The grace of God often is spoken before His Mercy. The Grace of God contemplates mankind as in consequence of sins. Then, the mercy of God takes pity on mankind as in need of forgiveness of sins. In looking at God, we may define the mercy of God or the goodness or even His Love toward those who are in misery or even distress. At this point He looks and sees the helplessness of mankind in his sins. In His mercy God shows forth His compassion. God is now moved to supply relief for their distress. So God in His tender mercy to

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forgive them their sins sends His own Son to the cross. Now, this removes the agony of sin but does not provide eternal salvation.

Take the word *mercy* out of the Bible and there is no Bible: there is no salvation, no Savior, no eternal life! Take the word *mercy* out of the Bible and you take the God of the Bible out and He is no longer needed!

Just think for a few moments of what your life would be like, if there is no *mercy*. The mercy-passion of the cross where He offered His life—remember when you speak of the life of Christ you are speaking of *sinless perfection* – He offered His life for each individual for his/her sins.

This is where the Grace of God freely offers His own perfect Righteousness to anyone, everyone who will express faith in His Son and receive His righteousness.

So, to mankind we see the Grace of God, who sees our need of forgiveness, and the Mercy of God to remove the barrier of sins. And the Grace of God who now saves anyone who believes in Jesus Christ.

**Psalm 86:5 For you Lord, are good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in Lovingkindness (mercy) to all who call upon you.**

This is why in Ephesians 5:18-19 it speaks

**Ephesians 5:18 ...of being filled with the Holy Spirit,**

**Ephesians 5:19 speaking to one another in psalms, and hymns and spiritual songs,**

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**singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord**

**2 Chronicles 7:6 The priests stood at their posts, and the Levites also, with the musical instruments for the Lord, which King David had made for giving praise to the Lord—“for His faithfulness is everlasting”—whenever he gave praise by their means, while the priests on the other side blew trumpets; and all Israel was standing.**

**Psalm 136:1 Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. Mercy endures forever**

**Psalm 136:2 Give thanks to the God of gods, For His faithfulness is everlasting. Mercy endures forever**

**Psalm 136:3 Give thanks to the Lord of lords, For His lovingkindness is everlasting. Mercy endures forever**

**Psalm 136:4 To Him who alone does great wonders, For His faithfulness is everlasting; Mercy endures forever**

**Psalm 136:5 To Him who made the heavens with skill, For His Lovingkindness is everlasting; Mercy endures forever**

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**Psalm 136:6 To Him who spread out the earth above the waters, For His faithfulness is everlasting; Mercy endures forever**

**Psalm 136:7 To Him who made the great lights, For His lovingkindness is everlasting: Mercy endures forever**

**Psalm 136:8 The sun to rule by day, For His faithfulness is everlasting, Mercy endures forever**

**Psalm 136:9 The moon and stars to rule by night For His lovingkindness is everlasting Mercy endures forever**

And, you should read on from verses 10-26.

Some scholars believe that Jesus sang this great praise with His disciples when they went out to the Mount of Olives after the Last Supper before his crucifixion.

IV. In the New Testament *mercy and grace* often go together.

**1 Timothy 1:2 To Timothy, my true child in the faith; Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.**

V. Also read 2 Timothy 1:1 and Titus 1:4

A. A working definition of *mercy*, but by no means the completeness of the understanding of this word can be something like: *mercy relates to forgiveness or withholding punishment that is due to all mankind.* But God's *mercy-*

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*lovingkindness* through healing where there is suffering. What is so amazing about God's *compassion-mercy* is that God is merciful to a multitude of people who do not even know they are in need of His mercy. They do not even know they are in need of His punishment. In fact, a multitude of people become angry when talking about the mercy of God.

- B. A refraining from harming or punishing offenders, enemies, persons in one's power; kindness in excess of what may be expected or demanded by fairness; forbearance and compassion kind or compassionate treatment; relief of suffering.
- C. A disposition to forgive, pity, or be kind.
- D. Another aspect of mercy is under blessing: A blessing, something to be thankful for, we should be ever so thankful for the mercy from God.
- E. Once we grasp the mercy of God toward us, we should be forgiving since we have been forgiven. We can really not even understand mercy but we are so to be thankful for it...

Grace contemplates humans as sinful, guilty, and condemned. Mercy sees the human race as miserable and needy and coming to remove the need by His great love.

We need so much to spend time in the Word of God on His *mercy-love*.

- F. God's Mercy and God's wrath meet at the cross of Christ.

VI. Dawn Wilson teaches that Adam and Eve first learned of God's mercy was when God covered their shame with the skins of a sacrificed animal. Genesis 3:21. That is when God sacrificed the



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animal to take the skin of the animal to cover them from their sins. This was the first teaching of the cross.

VII. Stephen Charnock in 1797 wrote in *The Existence and Attributes of God* that the Goodness of God is the same as the *mercy of God*. “Goodness extends to more objects than mercy. Creation is an act of Goodness not of mercy. Mercy extends only to a miserable object. The mercy of God is exercised about those that merit punishment.” This of course applies to everyone of us. We were originally, that is Adam and Eve, created not in need of mercy, but once man sinned he was in need of the mercy of God.

VIII. For Mercy in prayer. Remember that God does not owe us mercy. Mercy is not something that God owes us. We can ask for mercy to God. Jesus Christ is our High Priest and as our high Priest He knows our weaknesses and He sympathizes with us in our weaknesses. Now in the power of the Holy Spirit we can pray to God with confidence in regards to our needs.

**Hebrews 4:16 *Therefore let us draw near*** (let us keep on praying: keep on drawing near—not far off but close to Him) **with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help at the time of our need.**

Note the two things we pray to Him for:

1. *That we may receive mercy.* We do not deserve this but our High Priest knows of our needs
2. That we may find grace in time when we are in need. Always remember that we do not earn nor deserve anything from our High Priest, Jesus Christ but out of His mercy and lovingkindness He hears and responds to our prayer request. Remember, we have not

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because we ask not. But, when we come to Him in prayer in the power of the Holy Spirit we receive mercy.

In prayer for mercy: Psalm 123: 2-4; Numbers 6:25

Quick thoughts on mercy:

1. Quick definition: mercy relates to forgiveness or withholding punishment that is due to all mankind.
2. God does not owe anyone mercy.
3. It is a character of God to be merciful Psalm 136:
4. Jesus Christ is our High Priest and He is merciful and He may give you His mercy. Hebrews 4:15-16 His *mercy-passion* is what sent Him to the cross.
5. Pray for His mercy Hebrews 4:15.
6. The Grace of God sees our need and the Mercy of God meets that need.
7. Take the word *mercy* out of the Bible and there is no Bible, there is no salvation.
8. Give thanksgiving to God for His mercy.
9. Rich verses on mercy: The center of the Bible: Psalm 117: 116:5; 123; 136; Hebrews 4:16; Romans 12:1; Psalm 86:5.

### **Ephesians 2:4 But God, being rich in mercy because of His great love**

If you think of God's Grace it takes you to His great love.

If you think of God's Mercy it takes you to His great love.

If you think of God's Salvation it takes you to His great love.

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The Mercy of God emphasize His love!

His Mercy goes into action on the Love of God. His mercy sees the need for the love of God.

He is *rich in mercy and great in love*.

His *great* connotes greatness in magnitude, quality and quantity! In quantity God has enough love for of us. God's love is great in quality in that God's love reaches everyone with what is exactly needed.

**But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us.** We now come to the Love of God after looking at the mercy of God. Here is the quality of His love in that His love brings about enough love to bring all mankind who desires it to make everyone *alive*. We were dead, spiritually dead, but God's mercy sees us all dead and His love wanted to do something about it for all mankind.

### **Love**

Many people wished there were different words for the different categories of love. But I believe that all categories of love have some of the elements of love in them.

We have all kinds of love in the Word of God; we have *eros* (from which we get erotic; or sexual love.

Then there is *phileo* this describes an emotional connection what goes beyond acquaintance or casual friendship. It is different than erotic love. Phileo is a deeper level of connection but it is not as deep as the love within a family and not as intense as romantic or erotic love.

But we will spend our time on the Love of God.