

Songs

[We will dance on the streets that are golden](#)

[Refiner's Fire](#)

[Draw me close to You](#)

Dear family at Weardale

It is such a privilege to be able to share some thoughts with you, dear friends. My sincere condolences to Jenny and Gordon and the whole grieving family. May God comfort you and ease this pain of separation.

I have been thinking, ruminating, questioning, and finally agreeing with Holy Spirit to consider GRACE!

First, I checked out the Oxford Dictionary on Grace and discovered it had much to do with ME and how I behave, my comportment, my attitudes and mostly it depended on me! Being a bit disillusioned with my ability to exhibit Grace, I Googled GRACE IN THE BIBLE which gave this interpretation: -

In Western Christian Theology. Grace is “the love and mercy given to us by God because God desires us to have it, not necessarily because of anything we have done to earn it” It is not a created substance of any kind...It is an attribute of God that is most manifest in the salvation of sinners.

Grace is favour, the free and undeserved help that God gives us to respond to His call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the Divine nature and of eternal life. It is understood by Christians to be a spontaneous gift from God to people – “generous, free and totally unexpected and undeserved” - that takes the form of Divine Favour, Love, Clemency, and a share in the Divine life of God.

After all that information I personally prefer “The unmerited favour of God in giving to us what we did not deserve and NOT giving us what we deserved”

IT IS ALL OF GOD! He gifts it, maintains it, encourages us to draw upon His Grace and wants it to become an integral part of our character in readiness to be His Perfect and Beautiful Bride.

In 2Corinthians 12:9 Paul writes ***“My Grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness!”*** Does this mean then that we have to be weak and sickly, hopeless, helpless so God’s strength is shown at it’s best? Indeed No! In that same passage from verses 7 – 10 it is clear that Paul was aware of his own pride and even pleaded with God to remove the thorn from his flesh and we see God’s reply above ***“My Grace is sufficient for you...”*** I don’t know how long it took Paul to accept this mandate from God, it seems it was immediate, but I doubt it, I know I would need much more time to take this in and agree with God, accepting God’s words, plans and reasons for denying me my wishes but perhaps you are much more obedient than I am! Anyway, Paul agreed with God and even declared ***“Therefore most gladly I would rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore, I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ’s sake. For when I am weak then I am strong.”***

The Apostle Paul recognised it was a divine exchange, his own weakness, failings, needs, etc. For the Grace Christ would impart and this made him all the more humble to be himself and let Christ reign.

Before I began to understand God's Grace, I thought it was demonstrated by zipping my lips, wearing an enigmatic smile despite my real feelings (Mona Lisa style) and somehow not buckling under the constant barrage of criticism, hurtful comments, frustrations with bringing up children with different characters and not always obedient etc. etc! That very quickly dissipated as I was married and bringing up 5 children and working!! Thankfully I heard a message from an Elder's wife who thought and behaved just like I did and she too realised it didn't work, it was like hard labour and everything but Grace was exhibited! Ok, so what do we do? How can we know and experience the Gift of Grace and it's wonder working power in our lives?

RELAX! ACCEPT I CANNOT MAKE ANY CHANGES, RECEIVE GOD'S GRACE AND HIS APPROVAL THAT I AM NOT PERFECT AND TAKE SLOW BABY STEPS LEARNING FROM HIM AND OTHERS. After almost 46 years of walking with the Lord I am slowly getting there and I am certain my experience with Ken in Romania made a big contribution in this learning curve. Not because of Ken but our experiences together!!

Consider how many years Paul (as Saul) believed he was so right yet he persecuted the believers until he too came face to face with Jesus Christ and was transformed. Like you and me Paul had to learn how to be thankful in plenty or in little, in persecution or acceptance... He is the most prolific user of the term Grace in the New Testament. I did a quick check in my concordance and found that Grace did not appear very often in the Old Testament – 8 times - but 124 times in the New Testament (your sources may or may not agree with these figures since I could only count them in my concordance, by the grace of God. If anyone has a quicker method, please share it with me)

I believe Paul was so grateful to God for his salvation and the revelation given to him, for the trust God placed in him and the calling upon his life, that he quickly learned to revel in his weaknesses and infirmities knowing the sheer delight in God's Grace. Brothers and Sisters in Christ, this is our portion too! We can ask for Grace daily but have to accept giving up our solutions, even our plans at times to receive from Father's gracious hands not only Grace but Wisdom, Discernment, Agape love and so much more. His Grace causes us to lift our heads up, not in pride but utter joy that Our Father loves us and loves that we are willing to trust Him more and more each day. God's Peace comes with His Grace to keep our minds on Him and to remember this is NOT OF OURSELVES! Our Helper, Holy Spirit, will lead us and guide us daily with this Grace IF WE ALLOW HIM!

God's Grace is mentioned throughout the New Testament with many books and chapters beginning with Grace and Peace to you; Called by His Grace; Notable differences occur in 1 and 2 Timothy where Paul prefaces with "My true son in the faith – Grace" (1 Tim.1:2) and "To Timothy my dear son, Grace..." (2 Tim. 1:2). God is so sure that we need His Grace, it is included in the very last verse of the Bible in Revelation 22:21 **THE GRACE OF OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST BE WITH YOU ALL. AMEN**

Let us pray together. Father God, thank you for this precious gift of Grace that is ours for the exchange. You have done so much for us and given us so much sometimes we are ashamed to ask for more but Father we know Your Grace is so necessary in our lives so will you please help us to receive this beautiful Grace. Holy Spirit thank you that you will show each of us what we must surrender in exchange. We trust you as our dearest Friend, Holy Spirit and thank you for your infinite patience with us. We agree today to obey as you speak to each of us. Thank you for your sweet Presence with us today.Amen!

Can we end with Merciful God. No problem if you listened to it at the beginning of the programme, God's Grace is sufficient for us to sing it again! Have a blessed and fulfilled week.

[Merciful God](#)