

Give Grace or Be Forgiving?

1. What observations of the apostle John's statement that explains the association between grace and truth? What observations explain the apostle John's meaning of "grace upon grace?"

And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of **grace and truth**. (John bore witness about him, and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, 'He who comes after me ranks before me, because he was before me.'") For from his fullness we have all received, **grace upon grace**. For the law was given through Moses; **grace and truth** came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:14-17, ESV)

2. In the above question, God responds with grace when Old Testament "Believers" constantly disobeyed and irrevocably broke their covenant promise to follow His word. In same manner, despite false accusations, torture, and ultimate death by crucifixion by human beings, Jesus responds with grace; God sacrifices His only Son and Jesus sacrifices His life so that the means of salvation is available for all. What do your observations of these biblical passages inform you about responding to others, whether Believer or not, who sin against you?

Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be **gracious**, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. (Col 4:5-6, ESV)

For this is a **gracious** thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly. For what credit is it if, when you sin and are beaten for it, you endure? But if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a **gracious** thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might follow in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly. He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed. (1 Pet 2:19-24, ESV)

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. (Matt 6:14-15, ESV)

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times. (Matt 18:21-22, ESV)

Give Grace or Be Forgiving? Teacher Notes

1. What observations of the apostle John's statement that explains the association between grace and truth? What observations explain the apostle John's meaning of "grace upon grace?"

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Help the student with his observation of the text by asking questions.

"Full of grace?" "Word became flesh?"

God's "word became flesh and dwelt among us" is a reference to God's last covenant mentioned in the Bible – the New Covenant, which promised a Savior for mankind's sin, re-establishes the holiness of God's name so that the nations will know that God is Lord (Ezek 36:22-25). Jesus is the manifestation of God's grace, as the only Son of God, provided as the means of salvation.

"And truth?" What is truth?

The apostle John associates truth with reality, because he bore witness of Jesus Christ. Note carefully that the apostle John links grace to truth. God's grace reflects His genuine existence and is embodied in the living person of Jesus Christ.

"Grace upon grace?"

God's grace provides His only Son as the only opportunity for human beings to completely reconcile with God, and Jesus Christ's grace provides His life as the only means to complete reconciliation.

2. In the above question, God responds with grace when Old Testament "Believers" constantly disobeyed and irrevocably broke their covenant promise to follow His word. In same manner, despite false accusations, torture, and ultimate death by crucifixion by human beings, Jesus responds with grace; God sacrifices His only Son and Jesus sacrifices His life so that the means of salvation is available for all. What do your observations of these biblical passages inform you about responding to others, whether Believer or not, who sin against you?

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Ask the student: does the Bible ever tell you to give grace when someone offends you? Are we capable of giving grace?

This rhetorical question is cause the student to consider the distinctions of grace. Grace is more than “giving someone something they don’t deserve.” Out of agapē love, God’s grace cost Him His only Son, and Jesus Christ’s grace, cost Him His life. What does it cost you to forgive another?

Ask the student: What does Jesus tell you to do when someone offends you?

Jesus Christ commands Believers to forgive.

Ask the student: what does it mean to be gracious? What do you observe of the text? Discuss.

“He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth.”

“When he was reviled, he did not revile in return”

“When he suffered, he did not threaten, but continued entrusting himself to him who judges justly.”

Being gracious is about your response to another person’s offense and specifically following Jesus Christ’s example. It is a reflection of your attitude. Being gracious in this manner **recognizes** the magnitude and supremacy of the grace of God and Jesus who provided the means of salvation to one so undeserving and impossible to achieve and places a trust in “Him who judges justly.”