

Grace Unleashed!

Ephesians 3.1-13

The more we learn about grace, the more wonderful it becomes. As Charles Wesley put it – it is ‘immense and free’! But receiving such a gift brings with it the responsibility to pass it on to others. Grace, by its very nature, must be given away. Time to ‘unleash’ grace!

1. Grace = A Gift

- Greek: χάρις (*cháris*)/χάρισμα (*charisma*)
- Meaning: grace, gracious deed, gift
- Divine or human gifts (Rom. 3.23; 1 Cor. 16.3)
- A gift → *something given away!* (Rom. 11.6)

2. Grace: Given to us to be given away (Eph. 3.1-13)

- The message of grace was given to Paul
- The message of grace was for him to pass on

Practical Application: Completing the ‘Cycle of Grace’

- Understanding grace is one thing; living it is the goal.
- Keeping grace to ourselves aborts God’s plan.
- Unleashing grace means passing it on to others.



1. A ‘grace thing’ is a gift; that is, it is something that you give to someone without cost to them. What grace things – gifts – has God given to you? If you have a little time, get a piece of paper and start listing them (start with *life* itself!). What things in life do we often think we have produced ourselves, but on further consideration, recognize they have come from the Lord? Read 1 Chron. 29.14 and 1 Cor. 4.7: What truth do they affirm? Do you recognize it every day? What do the psalmists thank God for in Ps. 40.5; 71.15; 139.17-18? How do you feel knowing that God’s ‘thoughts’ are with you (see Ps. 8.4)?
2. Read Ephesians 3.1-6. Paul introduces in v.2 what he calls *the stewardship of God’s grace*. A ‘stewardship’ is a responsibility to supervise or take care of something. *New Living Translation* reads, “the special responsibility of extending his [God’s] grace to you Gentiles.” In vv.3-4 Paul refers to a *mystery*; that doesn’t mean something mysterious, but something never known, what we might call a ‘sacred secret’ known only to God (Eph. 3.9b). What is that ‘mystery’? (See Eph. 2.11-22 and 3.6.)
3. Read Ephesians 3.7-12. In verses 7-8 Paul refers to the ministry of preaching the gospel as ‘the gift of God’s grace’ which was given to him. Have you ever thought of your ministry as a *gift of God’s grace*? What has God ‘gifted’ you to do?
4. When Paul wrote Ephesians, he was in prison (Eph. 6.20), but in Eph. 3.13, he tells the Christians in Ephesus *not to lose heart* (to get down and dejected) about his imprisonment. Why? How can knowing that we are doing God’s will help us when we are facing trials?
5. Who does God want you to show grace to? (Hint: Who is it hard for you to show grace to?) Why is it hard to show grace to other Christians? Why is it hard to show grace to those who are not Christians?