

40 DAYS of PRAYER



**WEEK
THREE**

Theme: Grace and Forgiveness

Song for Reflection: "Forgiven" (Crowder)

Suggested Video: www.bit.ly/RCC40DAYSWK3

Day 15 – Wednesday, July 31

Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."

(Matthew 26:27-28, NIV)

Our forgiveness cost God something. Forgiveness always costs something to the one who is forgiving. But because of the high cost that God paid for our forgiveness, we can rest in the assurance that we are forgiven through trusting our lives to Jesus Christ.

Have you never received God's forgiveness? Turn to Him, talk to Him, and tell Him you choose to place your trust and your life in Jesus' hands. If you've already given your life to God and received His forgiveness, then today is still a good day to talk with Him and re-affirm in your soul the reality of His forgiveness for you.

Day 16 – Thursday, August 1

The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth...For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. (John 1:14-17, NIV)

The words here go deeper than we tend to see – the law was "given" through Moses as an acting agent; but grace and truth "came through" – it literally means "originates from" – Jesus Christ. Jesus is the originator and the source of all grace and truth. Do you need more grace today? Do you need to be changed by God's Truth today? Spend time seeking Christ.

Day 17 – Friday, August 2

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:8-10, NIV)

[For additional reading: Romans 11:6, Galatians 2:21]

Grace is the unmerited favor of God. God takes sinners like us, and rather than giving us the judgment we deserve, puts that judgment on Jesus' shoulders and then gives us the favor that Jesus deserves! Some have said that "Grace" can be summed up as "God's Riches At Christ's Expense." And it's not based on anything we can do – only on what God has done for us.

Prayer for today: Thankfulness to God for the blessings and favor that he generously gives us through our relationship with Jesus Christ!

Day 18 – Saturday, August 3

But by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace to me was not without effect. No, I worked harder than all of them--yet not I, but the grace of God that was with me. (1 Corinthians 15:10, NIV)

One writer once said, "Grace is not simply leniency when we have sinned. Grace is the enabling gift of God not to sin. Grace is power, not just pardon." God wants to strengthen us by his Grace. Do you need strength today? Lean into God in prayer and ask Him to strengthen you by his Grace.

Day 19 – Sunday, August 4

What then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law but under grace? By no means! (Romans 6:15, NIV)

In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead. (James 2:17, NIV)

One Christian writer spoke of "cheap grace", the kind of attitude where we act like we can live any way we want because God has saved us. That is not what God tells us in His word. While there is no way to earn God's grace – it is a gift, pure and simple – someone who truly receives God's gift of grace *will* be changed and respond to it with a changed life. Sin will lessen, and actions that align us with God's will will increase. Anything else, and our claim to have "faith" rings hollow and dead.

Are the choices and actions of your life demonstrating a heart that has been truly changed by God's grace, one that is seeking to do His will?

Day 20 – Monday, August 5

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:9, NIV)

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. (Hebrews 4:16, NIV)

But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says: "God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble." (James 4:6, NIV)

Entering into a *relationship* with God that lasts for eternity (what we call 'salvation') is received by His grace through our faith & trust in Him alone, and is not depending on anything we can add to it. So *relationship* with God is His gift – but the strength of our ongoing *fellowship* with God depends on whether we seek Him for forgiveness and mercy when we go astray. He promises that if we do this with a humble heart, we can do it confidently, and He will provide grace, mercy and forgiveness in our time of need.

Is there anything in your life that you need to seek God for grace, mercy and forgiveness today? Talk to Him in prayer.

Day 21 – Tuesday, August 6

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32, NIV)

Jesus once told a story of a man forgiven of a debt he could never repay; who then turned around and wouldn't forgive another for a debt owed to him. The story ended with the man locked up for the debt he originally owed, and the point was clear: If we are not willing to forgive, then God has no interest in forgiving us. That's a principle He expects us to deeply live by. Forgiving someone doesn't always equate to *trusting* them; you can forgive someone in your heart without entrusting yourself or others to them. And if someone is not truly repentant, it may be impossible to restore fellowship with them. But maintaining a heart of forgiveness is still important. Forgiving others should be a natural and compelling response from someone who knows deep down in their heart how much God has forgiven them.

Is there someone you need to forgive today? Talk with God about them, and forgive in your heart. If the situation merits, seek reconciliation.

