

Growing in Grace

Key Scriptures

2 Peter 3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

Romans 11:36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen.

Acts 17:24 ^{NET} The God who made the world and everything in it, who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by human hands, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives life and breath and everything to everyone.

Hebrews. 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

Titus 2:11-14 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men.¹²It teaches us to say "No" to ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright and godly lives in this present age,¹³ while we wait for the blessed hope--the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ,¹⁴ who gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good.

Jeremiah 2:13 "For My people have committed two evils: They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, And hewn themselves cisterns-- broken cisterns that can hold no water.

Key Point: Growing in grace occurs as we obey and behold Jesus.

TALK IT OVER

Start talking: Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- What skill have you developed in the last five years?

Start thinking: Questions to get your group thinking.

- What does Jeremiah 2:13 mean by the metaphor "broken cisterns that can hold no water"? What are some examples of broken cisterns that are common among us?
- While Romans 11:36 and Acts 17:24 don't specifically use the word "grace," how is the concept of grace taught in these two passages?
- What does Hebrews 2:9 tell you about God's grace?
- What does grace teach us in Titus 2:11-14?

Start sharing: Questions to create openness.

- Discuss J. C. Ryle's Five Characteristics of grace. How would you diagnose your spiritual health in light of that statement?
"When I speak of a man growing in grace, I mean simply this—that his sense of sin is becoming deeper, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, his love more extensive, his spiritual-mindedness more marked. He feels more of the power of godliness in his own heart. He manifests more of it in his life. He is going on from strength to strength, from faith to faith and from grace to grace."
J. C. Ryle, Holiness
- As you walk through the following introspective questions together, share any areas where you have seen growth in your life, and any areas you would like to see more growth.*
Am I more aware of areas of sin in my life that I did not previously recognize as sin? Am I truly grieved by my sin? Do I rationalize or trivialize certain sins?
In which areas of my life am I truly trusting and depending on God? In which areas of my life do I tend to act out of my own resources or depend on idols rather than trust God?
Do I long to be with Jesus? Am I overly attached to any things of this world?
Do I demonstrate my love for God in the way I spend my time and expend my resources? Do I demonstrate genuine concern for the well-being of others?
Am I prayerfully attentive to God throughout the day? Do I habitually take my concerns before the Lord? Does the reality that God is present and active in my life make any practical difference in the way I live each day?

Pray: Spend time praying together about what you shared tonight.

* Questions adapted from DTS Spiritual Formation: "Integrity," p. 5-8