

40 Days of Fitness

A daily devotional by Rev Garry Hardingham

DAY 9 – Grace....or is that favour?

But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen
2 Peter 3.18

The word, 'grace' is found 83 times in NRSV translation of the Bible. But it gets a guernsey some 134 times in the King James. Why? Well, mostly because in the Old Testament the Hebrew word, חֵן, (chen) is mostly translated as 'favour' in the NRSV. So, for instance, where the King James says, "But Noah found *grace* in the eyes of the Lord." in Genesis 6:8, the NRSV says, "But Noah found *favour* in the eyes of the Lord."

So, what really is the difference between 'grace' and 'favour' and does it matter?

Well, I for one, reckon it makes a huge difference. According to www.difference.wiki which is fun site if you want to find the subtle difference between words, "The main difference between Favour, and Grace is that Favour is a known proof that a person has the consent of God in his deeds, whereas Grace is when God blesses one despite being of him or unworthy of this blessing."

So, in our example about Noah, the question can be asked, "Was Noah chosen by God because, unlike all of humanity, he had a special bond with God; or was Noah chosen by God despite who Noah was?" We find the answer in the following verse, "Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his generation; Noah walked with God."

So, in this example, Noah found *favour* because he walked with God in his life. So the King James Version got this one definitely wrong because it appears Noah deserved God's favour.

So, what then does this say about 'grace'?

Grace is what God does because God is gracious. Grace is a gift of God. Not because we deserve it or did enough good works. But instead, because God is good. Grace is a result of the love of God. It's the unmerited favour of God.

We earn favour.

We can never earn grace.

And this is what makes grace so amazing.....as per the hymn "Amazing Grace".

PRAYER (based on Amazing Grace)

Holy God,
how amazing is Your grace
and how sweet the sound is to our ears;
for You have saved wretches such as us.
We were once lost but now we're found;
once blind but now we see.

Oh God,
may Your grace continue to teach our hearts to fear
that our worldly fears may be relieved.
Oh how precious You grace indeed is,
from that very moment we first believed.

And despite the many dangers, toils and snares
that will certainly come our way,
Your amazing grace will continue to lead us home;
as You have promised good to us
and thus, through Your most trustworthy word,
our hope is secure, all our life long.

And when we have been worshipping You,
in Your holy courts for 10,000 years,
we will have no less days to praise you
than when we first begun.
Amazing grace, how sweet the sound.

All praise, honour and worship be to You,
Holy God,
through Christ Jesus our Lord,

Amen.

<https://heartofapastor.blog/2016/02/21/amazing-grace-a-prayer/>