

Follow Along Advent Readings, Day 6



Today we are considering Day 6 of a Painted Advent devotional. Thank you for joining us for the past several days. Let's jump in!

Jesus coming to earth made a personal relationship with God possible.

No longer do we need an intermediary priest to act as a go-between for us. It's now possible for us to have a one-to-one relationship with God. When we confess our sins and accept

Jesus' sacrifice of His life to cover the penalty of our sins, we can stand righteous before God. He even calls us his sons and daughters.

The era of the keeping the law handed down to Moses is gone, swept out the back door for the front-door welcome to the era of grace.

Good News To Be Shared

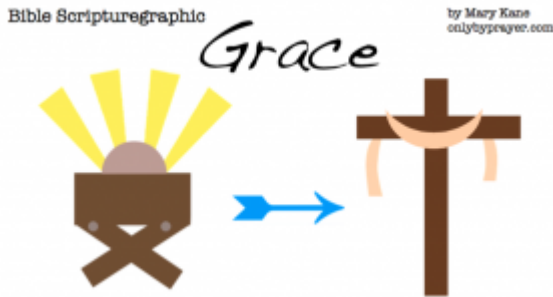
Verse 16 tells us that up to this point no man has seen God at any time, but now Jesus tells us that if we have seen Him, we've seen God. Being part of the grace-era means we should be living out this amazing relationship in a way that draws others to it. It's not a secret to be hoarded but good news to be shared.

Just like the shepherds, we have the joy of spreading God's grace to those around us. And we certainly live in a culture today that could use a bit of grace to smooth frayed emotions and ragged relationships.

Where has God placed you in this season of life? How can you be a speaker of grace to those around you? Share your thoughts below.

Jane

Scripturegraphic: Christmas Grace



Bible Scripturegraphic: Christmas Grace

During the “*most wonderful time of the year*” the phrases *joy to the world* and *peace on earth* are ever on our lips. Joy and peace fill our hearts as we reflect upon Emmanuel *God with us*. But what about *amazing **grace***? Usually this phrase is reserved for Easter and the **grace** of the cross. However, there would be no grace of the **cross** without the grace of the cradle. Jesus humbled Himself and took on flesh to tabernacle among us. From the cradle to the cross, it’s all about **grace, Christmas Grace!**

To do the Scripturegraphic Bible Study, *Christmas Grace*, please click on the link below.

Bible Scripturegraphic: Christmas Grace

Need a little more Christmas? Click on one of the links below!

Day 1: Believe Him

Day 2: Make Room

Christmas Presence: The Collection

Follow Him this Christmas.

Mary Kane

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12 Days of Thanksliving: Cleansing

Day 2:



Cleansing

"These men called together their fellow Levites, and they all purified themselves. Then they began to cleanse the temple of the Lord, just as the king had commanded. ... The priests went into the sanctuary of the Temple of the Lord to cleanse it, and they took out to the Temple courtyard all the defiled things they found." 2 Chronicles 29:15-16

cleansing [klenz] verb

1. to make clean
2. to remove by or as if by cleaning "to cleanse from the soul.

Thanksgiving: Cleansing

Being clean is something that many of us take for granted. Running water and soap make it relatively easy to wash away dirt. It doesn't take too many days of camping, however, before we have a new appreciation for a hot shower and a dishwasher. A few years ago my son went on a fundraising hike across America to raise money for the burn unit of a local children's hospital. As he backpacked his way from California to Florida, he often went several days without a shower or being able to wash the few clothes he had. Dirt was a fact of life, and as his mom I was dismayed at what became acceptable standards of "cleanliness" to him.

A clean body can help protect us from disease and discomfort. A clean home makes for a healthy environment for family and friends. Likewise, regularly confessing our sin keeps our hearts clean before God. Jesus is the One who purifies us permanently from our sin by taking that punishment upon Himself. Being thankful for His sacrifice is a wonderful way to celebrate Thanksgiving.

Pray for Thanksliving cleansing.

After the fall of man due to sin, God instituted many rules that the people had to follow to purify themselves from defilement and sin. In today's verses, King Hezekiah of Judah purges the nation from idolatry and reintroduces the people to true worship. As you can see, this begins with a major cleanup of the people and The Temple of the Lord, as per Old Testament rules. Today please take a moment and give thanks to God for the cleansing He provided for us through the cross and the blood of Christ.

Just as Hezekiah purged the Temple of the Lord from the idols that the people had brought in, we may have to get serious about our temples. In 1 Corinthians 6:19, God tells us that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit and that we are not our own. Jesus bought us for a very expensive price – His own life. Keeping that in mind, we may need to throw out some junk to make room for the holiness God desires.

1. Pray and ask God to show you if there is a habit or pattern of sin in your life that needs to go.
2. Find a verse of scripture that pertains to this struggle and begin praying it into your life.
3. Thank God for how He is already at work cleaning up and redeeming this area of your life.

More Thanksliving: Cleansing

If you'd like to explore this theme further, please read [The Cleansing of My Temple](#).

Comment

Please leave a comment below in the **Speak Your Mind** section on what God teaches you today about **cleansing**.

Previous Links

- [Introduction](#)
- [Day 1: Light](#)

“cleansing.” *Dictionary.com Unabridged*. Random House, Inc. 16 Nov. 2014. <[Dictionary.com
http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/cleansing](http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/cleansing)>.

How To Measure Up to God's Standard, Part 2

***“Therefore, this is what the Sovereign LORD says:
‘Look! I am placing a foundation stone in
Jerusalem, a firm and tested stone. It is a
precious cornerstone that is safe to build on.
Whoever believes need never be shaken. I will test
you with the measuring line of justice and the
plumb line of righteousness.” (Isaiah 28:16-17a
NLT)***

In Part 1 of this post, we left Israel in limbo waiting through 400 years of silence from God. I can't imagine living my whole life without any sign or word from God. Finally, God breaks His silence, and He does it through a series of spectacular angelic visitations.

- The angel Gabriel appears to Zacharias the priest when Zacharias is burning incense in the temple of the Lord. Gabriel explains that Zacharias and Elizabeth (who are elderly and childless) will be blessed with a baby who will turn many of the children of Israel to the Lord their God. (Luke 1:5-25)
- Appearing with even more astounding news, Gabriel also

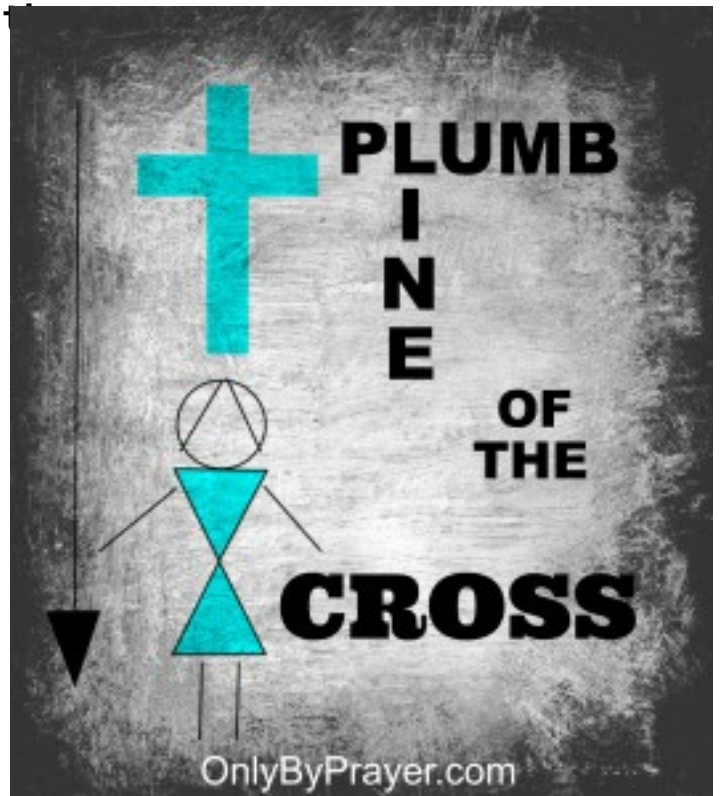
visits a virgin Mary to tell her that she is blessed among women because she has found favor with God and will bear the Son of the Highest. (Luke 1: 26-38)

- An angel of the Lord appears to Mary's fiancé, Joseph, in a dream and tells him to not be afraid to take Mary as his wife, because the child she carries is conceived by the Holy Spirit. (Matthew 1:18-25)
- An angel of the Lord appears to shepherds in a field to tell them of the Savior's birth, and then a whole host of angels lights up the sky before them rejoicing. (Luke 2:8-20)
- Three wise men from the East are divinely warned in a dream not to return to Herod after they have seen the baby Jesus. (Matthew 2:12)

Exit Law Enter the Grace of the Cross

To our eternal benefit, God sends a heavenly baby to earth and in that action He does away with the law as a means of forgiving sin. No one had been able to keep the law until, that is, Jesus came to earth and lived a sinless life. Jesus did what no one before Him was able to do and no one after Him will ever be able to do. God put the penalty of the world's sin on Jesus. His death on the cross included payment for my sin and your sin. God then forever broke the power of sin and death with Jesus's spectacular Resurrection three days after His death.

We now have a new plumb line:



When we confess our sins and accept Jesus' payment for them on the cross, we are forever in true with God because of the plumb line of the cross! And each day, we can align ourselves with Jesus and the Holy Spirit to make sure we are continually transformed into the image of Christ (2 Corinthians 3:18).

God has always provided a plumb line for us. For the rest of history, that plumb line is Jesus and the cross.

No matter how crooked your life may look right now, the plumb line of the cross can straighten you out with God. You can start your journey with God by praying this simple prayer:

Dear God,

I admit that I am a sinner. I ask that you forgive me for my sins. I realize on my own I can do nothing to make up for them. I accept Jesus' death on the cross as payment for my sins, and I ask Him to take charge of my life. Amen.

If you just prayed that prayer and you are able to do so, please leave us a message below in the comments. God bless

you.

Pray on!

Jane

Take 5! I Am Because He Is



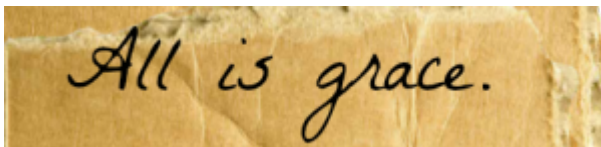
Have you ever wondered if God would use a person like you to help spread His **Gospel**? The answer is yes! To do the Take 5! Bible study, ***I Am Because He Is!*** please click on the link.

“Image courtesy of photostock/ FreeDigitalPhotos.net

Simple Thanks: Session Three, All Is Grace

"To console those who mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they may be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified."

Isaiah 61:3



Jane and I welcome you back to Week Three of Simple Thanks! Thanksgiving breathes life into our dark, hard places.

Thanksgiving also dares us to live fully in the moment. Let the habit of thanksgiving permeate your heart and mind as God continues to shower His grace upon you. Give Him your ashes of bitterness and ingratitude and in return accept one thousand gifts of beauty and grace. Life is a gift—rejoice and give thanks!



Here is our introduction video to Week 3:

Community Call

Here is our Community Call for All Is Grace to listen to AFTER you finish the weekly homework: All Is Grace

Weekly Homework

Below you will find homework for each level of study. Feel free to change between Level 1, Level 2, or Level 3 as your schedule allows! **Remember, there is no pressure to complete every activity. These are just options for your growth. They can be accessed at any time, even after the study ends.**

Level 1, Study: Weekly Goals

- For Week 3, watch *SESSION 3: All is Grace*.
- Continue to add to your *One Thousand Gifts* journal.
- Complete the study guide and *between sessions* homework PDFs.
- Feel free to do any of the other activities from Levels 2 and 3 as your time allows.

Level 2, Community: Weekly Goals

- For Week 3, watch *SESSION 3: All is Grace*.
- Continue to add to your *One Thousand Gifts* journal.
- Complete the study guide and *between sessions* homework PDFs.
- Answer the question on the *Speak Your Mind* comment section at the bottom of this post.
- Join the *Community Call*, Wednesday night at 7:00 p.m. EST on Talk Shoe (Information on *TalkShoe* is in your weekly email.)
- Listen to the *Podcast* for information on walking in the grace of God:

Level 3, Opportunity: Weekly Goals

- *For Week 3, watch SESSION 3: All is Grace.*
- Continue to add to your *One Thousand Gifts* journal.
- Complete the *study guide* and *between sessions* homework PDFs.
- Answer the question on the *Speak Your Mind* comment section at the bottom of this post, join the *Community Call* on Wednesday night on *TalkShoe*, and listen to the *Podcast* at the link provided up above.
- Don't forget to check out our private Facebook page. Leave your comments about this week's study, post your prayer requests, or share any insights/questions you may have. Only members of our Bible study group will see these posts.
- In the evening, do devotions 11-15 in the *One Thousand Gifts Devotional* journal.
- Read chapters 6-7 in *One Thousand Gifts trade book* by Ann Voskamp.
- Take advantage of the Extra Simple resources by clicking on the links below:



Give Thanks



Count Your Blessings

"Image courtesy of Stuart Miles / FreeDigitalPhotos.net".

As we count the many blessings that God has bestowed upon us,

please enjoy this beautiful music by Paul Cardall:

Questions of the Week (Please respond in the *Speak Your Mind* section at the very bottom of this page) .

How has God turned the ugly to beautiful in your life?