



# ▶ DAILY DEVOTIONAL.

**Saturday/Sunday, 2/23-24/19**

**“Grace”**

**Hosea 11:1-11**

*When Israel was a child, I loved him,  
and out of Egypt I called my son.  
But the more they were called,  
the more they went away from me.  
They sacrificed to the Baals  
and they burned incense to images.  
It was I who taught Ephraim to walk,  
taking them by the arms;  
but they did not realize  
it was I who healed them.  
I led them with cords of human kindness,  
with ties of love.  
To them I was like one who lifts  
a little child to the cheek,  
and I bent down to feed them.*

*“Will they not return to Egypt  
and will not Assyria rule over them  
because they refuse to repent?  
A sword will flash in their cities;  
it will devour their false prophets  
and put an end to their plans.  
My people are determined to turn from me.  
Even though they call me God Most High,  
I will by no means exalt them.*

*“How can I give you up, Ephraim?  
How can I hand you over, Israel?  
How can I treat you like Admah?  
How can I make you like Zeboyim?  
My heart is changed within me;  
all my compassion is aroused.  
I will not carry out my fierce anger,  
nor will I devastate Ephraim again.  
For I am God, and not a man—  
the Holy One among you.  
I will not come against their cities.  
They will follow the Lord;  
he will roar like a lion.*

*When he roars,  
his children will come trembling from the  
west.  
They will come from Egypt,  
trembling like sparrows,  
from Assyria, fluttering like doves.  
I will settle them in their homes,”  
declares the Lord.*

**Family Activity:** Grace is an important part of our relationship with God, but it can also be an important part of our relationships with our friends, neighbors and family. God loves us even before we know God. This week, take time to do something kind and loving for someone. If you can, make it a surprise and don't tell them it was you.

Discuss:        How did it feel to surprise someone with a kind act?  
                      Why do you think God loves us even before we can love God back?  
                      How can you show God's love and grace to others daily?

**Monday, 2/25/19**  
**"Showing Grace"**  
**Matthew 9:27-34**

*As Jesus went on from there, two blind men followed him, calling out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!"*

*When he had gone indoors, the blind men came to him, and he asked them, "Do you believe that I am able to do this?"*

*"Yes, Lord," they replied.*

*Then he touched their eyes and said, "According to your faith let it be done to you"; and their sight was restored. Jesus warned them sternly, "See that no one knows about this." But they went out and spread the news about him all over that region.*

*While they were going out, a man who was demon-possessed and could not talk was brought to Jesus. And when the demon was driven out, the man who had been mute spoke. The crowd was amazed and said, "Nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel."*

*But the Pharisees said, "It is by the prince of demons that he drives out demons."*

- Most of us would probably like to believe that if we witnessed a miracle we would respond with amazement. Jesus, however, faced judgment and criticism, especially from the religious people and leaders of the time. Where do you find yourself leaning toward criticism and judgment? When do you feel you give grace when others lean towards judgment?
- In this passage we see Jesus giving grace to those that others would have rejected. Those who were blind or mute would have been labeled "sinners" and excluded from society. Who do you see being rejected from society? Who do you see rejected by Christians? Who is God calling you to show grace to today?

**Prayer:** Holy God, we thank you for your grace and mercy. We pray today specifically for those that we are finding it easy to judge. Grant us your eyes to see them the way you do and help us to show your grace to everyone we met. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

**Tuesday, 2/26/19**  
**"The Gift of Grace"**  
**Ephesians 2:8-10**

*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.*

- Most of my school years I worked very hard to try to earn good grades. In my final year of seminary, I took a class and elected for it to be pass/fail. With the pressure of a letter grade removed, you might think that I didn't try hard, but the opposite was true. It was one of my favorite classes and so I wanted to do my best, even if the grade wasn't being recorded for my GPA. God gives us the gift of grace so that we do not have a need for a "spiritual GPA." We have no need to compare or boast, because we have all been given the same gift. How have you struggled to compare yourself to others lately? How can the knowledge of this scripture free you today?
- Even though we do not rely on doing good works for salvation, we are still created by God to do good works. What good work do you believe that God has created you for? How are you able to live that out today?

**Prayer:** Dear God, we praise you for the gift of grace that you have given us. Release us from all of the ways that we are comparing ourselves to others so that we might be free to serve you. Help us today to be strengthened to live out the calling you have placed on our hearts. In the name of Jesus we pray, Amen.

**Wednesday, 2/27/19**

**"Be Humble"**

**James 4:1-6**

*What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your desires that battle within you? You desire but do not have, so you kill. You covet but you cannot get what you want, so you quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.*

*You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world means enmity against God? Therefore, anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God. Or do you think Scripture says without reason that he jealously longs for the spirit he has caused to dwell in us? But he gives us more grace. That is why Scripture says:*

*"God opposes the proud  
but shows favor to the humble."*

- We might wish that this letter written by James was addressed to someone else, but his letter was to Christians everywhere. They may also come a little too close for comfort for us. Which statement do you feel challenges you today? Which statement comforts you today?
- Who do you know that defines humbleness for you and why?

**Prayer:** Good and gracious God, we thank you for the gift of this day. Grant us a humble spirit so that we may glorify you. Help our pride be solely in you. In the name of Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit we pray, Amen.

**Thursday, 2/28/19**

**“Weakness”**

**2 Corinthians 12:9-10**

*But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me. That is why, for Christ’s sake, I delight in weaknesses, in insults, in hardships, in persecutions, in difficulties. For when I am weak, then I am strong.*

- How have you experienced God’s power through your weakness?
- Most of the time when I think of weaknesses, I would not name them a delight. 2 Corinthians encourages us to reconsider how we view weakness. How does this passage challenge your current understanding? How might this passage encourage you to live differently today?

**Prayer:** Powerful God, we thank you for your all sufficient grace. We pray that your power is shown through our weakness. Help us to boast of our weaknesses so that your glory and goodness may be known. In the name of Jesus Christ we pray, Amen.

**Friday, 3/1/19**

**“Offering Salvation”**

**Titus 2:11**

*For the grace of God has appeared that offers salvation to all people.*

- In the United Methodist Church, we believe that we can experience God’s grace in different ways on our faith journey. Prevenient grace is with us even before we know God, justifying grace gives us freedom and pardon for our sins, and sanctifying grace helps us draw closer to God and continue to become more and more like Christ. How have you experienced God’s grace? How would you name that grace (prevenient/justifying/sanctifying)?
- The gift of grace and the gift of salvation is one that we can share with others. Who do you know in your life that you could pray will someday know God? How would you pray to grow in grace?

**Prayer:** Holy God, we praise your name and thank you for your gift of salvation. Go before us in all of our interactions today and continue to free us from the things that keep us from a full relationship with you. Help us to continue to grow closer to you and help us to become increasingly more like Christ each day. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit we pray, Amen.

***This week’s devotional was written by  
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