

The Faith We Sing

April 11, 2021
“Amazing Grace”

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the wonderful hymns that illuminate hope for us today and teach us the history of our faith. We thank you for preserving this ancient text that Paul wrote 2,000 years ago. Thank you for how liberating it has been for many of us. And Father, I pray it will be liberating for all of us as we stop trying to earn your favor with deeds and that we would recognize that You are the perfect, heavenly Father who wants good things for your children. And we just need to ask and then trust you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES:

Ephesians 2:1-5, 8 (NIV)

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ²in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

⁸For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God

INTRODUCTION

John Newton and the Apostle Paul experienced transformation in their lives by the amazing grace of God. John Newton responded by writing the lyrics of the beloved hymn “Amazing Grace,” and the Apostle Paul wrote about the theology behind the grace of God. We are all familiar with the words to the song, but what is God’s grace?

Sometimes we believe that we have to earn God’s favor through our actions and behavior. But, Christians believe that God made the first move in our relationship with Him. Christians believe that God so loved the world he gave his one and only Son. When you receive that gift by faith, the stress of trying to earn that favor ends and the relationship begins. Obedience to God is a voluntary response of gratitude for what he’s given you.

QUESTIONS

- 1) Talk about a time when someone let you off the hook or forgave a debt. How did it make you feel?
- 2) Read Ephesians 2:1-5, 8 on page 1. How do you define grace?
- 3) Do you see yourself as a person who needs God’s grace? Why or why not?
- 4) Why does our behavior matter if we are saved by Grace?
- 5) On the cross, Jesus said to the criminal next to him “today you will be with me in paradise.” Do you think it is fair that a criminal gets the reward of eternal life with Christ? Is it fair to people who served God their entire lives? Why or why not?

FINAL APPLICATION

What is one thing you can do this week to show gratitude for what God has done for you?