

IMPACT

I **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.
Proverbs 3:5-6

Passage: Ephesians 2:4-10 “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (*by grace you have been saved*), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show *the exceeding riches of His grace* in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. *For by grace you have been saved through faith*, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”

Quote: At 82, John Newton said, ‘My memory is nearly gone, but I remember two things, that I am a great sinner, and that Christ is a great Savior.’

Against the backdrop of God’s righteous wrath against sin, His grace towards sinners is truly amazing! Grace is God’s goodness “directed towards human debt and demerit.”¹ “Grace is His voluntary, unrestrained, unmerited favor toward guilty sinners, granting them justification and life instead of the penalty of death, which they deserved.”² To bestow gifts upon the miserable is bounty; but to bestow them upon rebels is grace. The greatness of the gifts contrasted with the characters of those who receive them, displays the exceeding riches of the redeemer’s grace. He came to save not the unhappy only, but the ungodly. He gives pardon, peace, and eternal life to His enemies; whose minds are so entirely alienated from him that, until He makes them willing, in the day of His power, their minds are determined against accepting favor from him.” So said former slave trader, John Newton, who referred to himself as a wretch, and who authored the beloved hymn, **“Amazing Grace”!** “Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost, but now am found, *was blind, but now I see. ’Twas grace that taught my heart to fear, and grace my fears relieved.* How precious did that grace appear the hour I first believed....” In Christ’s day, secular Greek defined grace as “a favor done without claim or expectation of

return, and finding its only motive in *the bounty and free-heartedness of the giver.*”³ It was limited to friends and never bestowed upon enemies. *Christ changed all of that!* “And you, who once were *alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works*, yet now He has reconciled in the body of His flesh through death, to present you holy, and blameless, and above reproach in His sight—if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard.”⁴

Dread thought is this that escapes words—I had no hope, no help, no plea. Enslaved, ‘entombed,’ estranged and doomed, God’s righteous wrath awaited me. *Blind to that realm beyond the grave, I did not know my lost estate, nor did I crave the things of God, nor could I understand my fate.*⁵

But grace abounded more than sin, and love applied the Master’s plan. *His Spirit brought to me new life* predestined e’er the world began. Christ’s finished work, naught left undone, secured God’s pardon for His own. No more a debtor to the Law, God has declared my sin atoned!⁶

Though spared from wrath, with soul set free, corrupt desires still war within. The new man must e’er fight his flesh—that humanness so drawn to sin. Renew my mind, transform my heart, and make me pleasing in Thy sight. Ne’er let the flame of gratitude forget the wrath that was my plight.⁷

Glad slave of sov’reign love, I give myself a living sacrifice—not for my pardon, but His praise Who purchased me at awful price. I can but lift both heart and voice in praise to God Who doth sustain. Though foes assail and pain prevail, secure in Christ I will remain!⁸

May God grant all of us who are entrusting our souls to Christ the compassion to declare and to display the gospel of His amazing grace to the religious who merely know facts about Him and the rebellious who defy Him!
Jesus saves!

1 A.W. Tozer 2 H. Bavnick 3 K. Wuest 4 Colossians 1:21-23a 5 Psalm 14:1-3; Romans 3:11; I Corinthians 1:18-24; 2:11-14 6 Ephesians 1 & 2; John.17 7 Romans 6, 7 8 Romans 12; John 10; Eph.3:1; 4:1; 2 Tim.1:8