

We are all Mephibosheth's

Charis is the Greek word for "Grace," it is one of the most difficult Greek words to translate into English.

Words Like:

- Favor
- Beauty
- Thankfulness
- Gratitude
- Delight
- Kindness
- And Benefit

.....all derive from the root word "GRACE." If we have a tough time translating THIS word, there is no wonder that we struggle to comprehend the concept of "GRACE."

Digging through scriptures, we can come up with a picture of grace.

- Grace is ALWAYS tied to the heart and character of God.
- *In Deuteronomy*, we are told that God drove out Israel's enemies, not because Israel deserved his intervention, but because God chose...By GRACE... to fulfill His Word to His Nation.
- *In Isaiah*, we see that God longed to demonstrate His GRACE to a disobedient nation.
- *In Jeremiah* God underlined HIS GRACE by Promising to bring Israel back from captivity.

GRACE IS GOD'S CHARACTER DEMONSTRATED IN UNDESERVED LOVE!!

In fact...GRACE IS GOD!!! It is His Character illustrated in our lives with the scrawled signature at the cross.

GRACE = God giving us something we do not deserve

- Life
- Another Opportunity
- Success
- Eternal Salvation

MERCY = God not giving us what we deserve.

- Health over Aids and STD'S
- Life over death in a fatal wreck
- Piece of mind over a nervous breakdown
- Faithfulness over OUR abandonment

The Truth is... we are ALL Mephibosheth's.

WE DIDN'T DESERVE GRACE OR MERCY....

- After David became King, he had a right to kill any of Saul's remaining family
- There had been a rivalry between the two families for years.
- David now becomes king and takes the throne...let's read:

2 Samuel 9:1-11 (NIV)

David and Mephibosheth

9 David asked, "Is there anyone still left of the house of Saul to whom I can show kindness for Jonathan's sake?"

² Now there was a servant of Saul's household named Ziba. They summoned him to appear before David, and the king said to him, "Are you Ziba?"

"At your service," he replied.

³ The king asked, "Is there no one still alive from the house of Saul to whom I can show God's kindness?"

Ziba answered the king, "There is still a son of Jonathan; he is lame in both feet."

⁴ "Where is he?" the king asked.

Ziba answered, "He is at the house of Makir son of Ammiel in Lo Debar."

⁵ So King David had him brought from Lo Debar, from the house of Makir son of Ammiel.

⁶ When Mephibosheth son of Jonathan, the son of Saul, came to David, he bowed down to pay him honor.

David said, "Mephibosheth!"

"At your service," he replied.

⁷ "Don't be afraid," David said to him, "for I will surely show you kindness for the sake of your father Jonathan. I will restore to you all the land that belonged to your grandfather Saul, and you will always eat at my table."

⁸ Mephibosheth bowed down and said, "What is your servant, that you should notice a dead dog like me?"

⁹ Then the king summoned Ziba, Saul's steward, and said to him, "I have given your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family. ¹⁰ You and your sons and your servants are to farm the land for him and bring in the crops, so that your master's grandson may be provided for. And Mephibosheth, grandson of your master, will always eat at my table." (Now Ziba had fifteen sons and twenty servants.)

¹¹ Then Ziba said to the king, "Your servant will do whatever my lord the king commands his servant to do." So Mephibosheth ate at David's table like one of the king's sons.

- David Chose, that after he became King of what he would do with a longtime family feud
- It was between the House of David and the House of Saul
- Instead of killing Saul's family, which he had a right to do, he chose to respond with kindness.
- He sought after who was left in Saul's family.
- Mephibosheth, a grandson of Saul (son of Jonathon) was still living.
- He was crippled in both feet. (Age of 5)
- He was brought to David's house and to David's table to eat (He felt unworthy)

When God graciously offers us forgiveness of sins and a place in Heaven, we may feel unworthy, but we will receive these gifts if we accept them.

We will receive God's gifts through trusting Jesus Christ, not because we deserve it, but because of God's promise.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV) Paul's writing

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith— and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.

- David's kindness resembles God's Grace to us
- Even though we did nothing He still forgave us
- Even though we didn't deserve it... He gave it anyways
- Even though we persecuted Him... He still loved us...
THAT IS GRACE...

We are creatures that have been drawn to pretty and nice things. We like nice restaurants, elegant shopping malls, roomy homes and sweet smelling, happy easy-to-know people. We instinctively shun the unlovelies of life. Consequently, we have a terrible time understanding the GRACE OF GOD.

God's GRACE loves when there is nothing good even beneath an awful wrapper. When layer upon layer is removed and all that appears is more ugliness, God loves. It's not that we're such precious darlings that he can't resist loving us. No, **God Love's us because He's decided that we will be precious to Him.** He sent His Son to die on the cross for our ugliness. PERIOD!!!!

It's hard to imagine isn't it? It's even Harder to accept. We push and tug at ourselves, trying to earn love and attention when the fact is, whatever package we come in, God Loves Us. Dressing ourselves up with good deeds. Advanced degrees and charitable attitudes doesn't increase God's love for us. **He simply reaches down into our torn, misshapen, world and makes people who are ugly, precious.**

MERCY = God not giving us what we deserve

Romans 9:15-18 (NIV)

¹⁵ For he says to Moses,

"I will have **mercy** on whom I have **mercy**,
and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion."

¹⁶ It does not, therefore, depend on human desire or effort, but on **God's mercy**. ¹⁷ For Scripture says to Pharaoh: "I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." ¹⁸ Therefore **God has mercy** on whom he wants to have mercy, and he hardens whom he wants to harden.

- People are so busy trying to reach God that they completely miss the truth that God has already reached down to them.
- We cannot earn God's Mercy--- If we could, It would not be MERCY!

- Because life is uncertain, we should follow this shepherd who offers us eternal comfort.
- We will reach these places only by following him obediently.
- When you recognize the good shepherd, follow Him!

Psalm 23 (KJV)

23 The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

³ He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

⁴ Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

⁵ Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

⁶ Surely **goodness and mercy** shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.

God is seen as a caring shepherd and a dependable guide. We must **follow** God and **obey** his commands. He is our **ONLY** hope for eternal life and security.

- **I am so glad that GOD gave me His **MERCY** and **GRACE****
- **I didn't deserve it... but I obtained it.**
- **How many of you all are sitting in places today that you didn't deserve**
- **How many of you have experienced...God's **GRACE** and **MERCY**???**

