

## **Becoming a Grace-full Woman**

*Presented by Mary Lowman*

Air Dates: January 22 - 26, 2024

### **Day One**

I have to admit I am not a graceful person. In my first year of college, during Christmas break, my mother lined me up for private lessons with a woman who coached me on how to be graceful. Now, for my mother to spend money on such lessons was an indication of how much help I needed! I was not then—still am not to this day—graceful.

This woman tried hard to make me more graceful, but unfortunately, I am like a bull in a china shop. If it can be bumped into, I bump into it. If it is fragile, I break it. If it can be tripped over, I trip over it. I've come to the conclusion if you're not naturally a graceful person, there's just not a whole lot you can do about it.

I'm happy to report to you that though I may never be graceful, I can be grace-full—full of grace. That is not contingent on my agility or nimbleness or any physical attributes. It is, instead, contingent on my openness to the grace of God and my willingness to let it fill my life.

In writing of our Savior, John says,

*The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth (John 1:14).*

Jesus was full of grace. As believers in Jesus Christ, you and I are in the process of being transformed into his likeness with ever-increasing glory. We are to be filled with his Spirit, and therefore, we have the incredible opportunity to be filled with grace. Like Jesus, we can be full of grace.

When asked what was the one thing about Christianity that sets it apart from all other religions, C. S. Lewis responded, "Oh, that's easy. It's grace." No other religion offers God's love and redemption coming to us free of charge, as a gift, no strings attached, no performance required, no standards to meet. Only Christianity dares to make God's love unconditional. That's because Christianity has the only qualified Savior, Jesus Christ.

This week I want to encourage you to become very intentional about becoming a woman—or a man—who is grace-full, full of God's grace. It must become more than a cliché, more than words we say or songs we sing. God's grace needs to permeate every corner of our being so that we are living examples of his grace.

### **Day Two**

The song, Amazing Grace, is sung all over the world by people who have no understanding of its message of salvation through Jesus. But the idea of grace appeals to everyone.

What does it mean for you and me in our world today to live grace-full lives? What does that look like? I'd like to give you the ABCs of grace-full living. Here is "A":

## A- Abundant

Jesus said: "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full." Jesus wasn't talking about being full of money, or earthly success, or freedom from problems. He was talking about a life that is grace-full!

In 2 Corinthians 9:8 we read: *And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work.* When the grace of God fills us, then it must flow out to others in the form of good works. What good works? The good works that you were created to do. Ephesians 2:10 says: *We are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.*

Here are a few examples of how we dispense grace to others:

- Someone is sick; you minister to their needs.
- Someone is rejoicing over good news; you rejoice with them.
- Someone has a broken heart. You cry with them, listen to them, console them.
- Someone is wandering away from God. You confront them in love, admonish them, help them to come back into fellowship.
- Someone is lost in sin, without Christ. You share the gospel in every way you can, lovingly planting seeds of truth in their life.
- Someone needs financial help. You give out of love and concern.
- You teach the Word of God in a small group; you organize prayer for your company; you begin a Bible study at work or at home; you invite others to hear the Word of God.

These are just a few ways that we overflow with grace to others, abounding in good works.

I can testify to you from personal experience that grace-full living is knowing God is using you in the lives of others. There is nothing more fulfilling than that.

## Day Three

What does it mean to live a life that is full of God's grace—a truly grace-full life? We're looking at the ABCs of graceful living, and yesterday we saw A is abundant living. The abundance Jesus came to give us is abundant joy and peace, and that should overflow into abundant good works.

## B- Bitterless

Grace-full living is living without bitterness. Consider this passage from Hebrews:

*See to it that no one misses the grace of God and that no bitter root grows up to cause trouble and defile many* (Hebrews 12:15).

Allowing bitter roots to grow in your heart will cause you to miss the grace-full life. There are many bitter roots that can become ingrained in the garden of our hearts. Consider these:

- The bitter root of rejection  
It's very easy to allow the pain of rejection to take root in your heart and bloom into bitterness.
- The bitter root of unfulfilled dreams  
Unfulfilled dreams create a fertile ground for bitter roots.
- The bitter root of loss  
What have you lost lately? Your job? Your pride? Has death robbed you of a loved one? Or divorce? Loss makes us vulnerable to bitterness.

This verse teaches us several things about bitter roots:

First, they grow. You can't hold onto one little bitter twig. It won't stay that size. It always grows.

Second, they cause trouble. Any little bitterness will cause you trouble. A great many of the emotional and mental breakdowns we see today have their beginnings in bitterness that was never dealt with.

Third, they defile many. Bitterness spills over to everyone around you. As parents we can transfer that bitter spirit to our children; as managers and employees we can transfer it to our co-workers. It is a poison that affects everyone it touches.

If you're struggling with some bitterness today, I pray you will ask God to help you dig up those bitter roots so you can enjoy the grace-full life Jesus came to give you.

## Day Four

We're examining the ABCs of grace-full living and what it looks like to be a truly graceful person. As we have seen, A is abundant living, B is bitterless living, and today we look at C.

### C- Contented

Grace-full living is contented living. The dictionary says that a contented person is one who is satisfied with what they are and what they have; they want nothing more or anything else.

Does that describe you? I have to tell you there are far too many days it does not describe me. I see a new house being built, and I think how nice it would be to have it. I peruse those catalogs that flood my mailbox, and I can convince myself I can't live without something I saw in the catalog.

And we can lose our contentment by wishing we were a different person, with a different life, in a different place, having different gifts and abilities. Ever go there?

Living a discontented life will suck the grace of God right out of you. It will cause you to be restless, self-focused, resentful, envious.

*Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you' (Hebrews 13:5).*

This is something we must become intentional about doing. We have to work at it, if you please. We have to pray it into our lives. It doesn't just happen.

The enemy of your soul will trip you up with discontent if you give him the opportunity. He knows a discontented Christian is not going to dispense grace. He whispers those lies to you, convincing you your life cannot be complete or full or good unless you have something or someone that you don't now have.

But we can learn contentment. The Apostle Paul wrote:

*I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want (Philippians 4:12).*

Contented living is freedom—and it is grace-full living.

## Day Five

In his marvelous book, *Knowing God*, J. I. Packer says many church people "pay lip-service to the idea of grace, but there they stop. Their conception of grace is not so much debased as non-existent" (p. 116-117).

I've been examining what it means to live a grace-full life, to truly understand God's grace to us, which equips us to dispense grace to others. I find I must be intentional about living a grace-full life. I have to think about it, pray about it, and make choices each day that lead me to be a grace-full person.

We've looked at the ABCs of graceful living this week:

- A – Abound in generosity, in good works.
- B – Live a bitter-less life. We must pull up those weeds of bitterness as soon as they start to grow, because bitterness chokes grace out of our lives.
- C - Learn to be content. Contentment is a trademark of a grace-full life.

This is a good description of grace-full living, though not exhaustive. But where do we get this grace? We can't find it in ourselves; we can't obtain it through good works or trying harder.

*Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need (Hebrews 4:16).*

We find grace at the throne of God, which is a throne of grace. God is enthroned in grace. And the incredibly good news is we can approach the throne of grace with confidence. We can be absolutely confident we will be accepted there if we go in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And we can be absolutely confident grace will be given to help us.

Maybe, like me, you are not a terribly graceful person, but would you like to be a grace-full person—full of God's grace, which you can give to others? It is available to anyone who will be intentional about living in the ABCs of God's grace and making regular visits to the throne of grace.