

# Amazing Grace

## *Favorites*



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### *About This Book...*

Since the first issue in January, 1963, the monthly Bible study/devotional booklet "Amazing Grace" has been consistent. Edited by Pastor Win Johnson until he went Home in 1993, it was his conviction that the way Saints could become established and increase their 'devotion' to the Lord was to spend time studying the Word every day.

The monthly booklet has been unique in that the writers have been committed to the preaching and teaching of "Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the Mystery" [Romans 16:25]. We are grateful for their faithfulness to God and His Word as they have shared their insight with all of us.

In looking back through forty-eight years of articles, we have been encouraged, inspired and blessed again and again.

Now as we present a one-year book with 366 'favorites', it is our prayer that the Lord will use it to bring blessing to *your* life in a special way.

*Ron Achtyes*

“Study  
to show thyself  
approved unto God,  
a workman that  
needeth  
not to be ashamed,  
rightly dividing  
the word of  
truth.”

II Timothy 2:15

**DIVINE ENLIGHTENMENT**

*Scripture Reading: Ephesians 1:8-12*

"Having made known unto us the mystery [secret] of His will..." This is how the riches of God's *grace* hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence! Mark well that it is to the praise of His grace we have the adoption in verse 5; we have been graced into the Beloved One in verse 6; we have redemption through His blood...the forgiveness of sins through the riches of His grace in verse 7; and it is in grace He has abounded toward us by making known the mystery of His will in verses 8 and 9. No wonder this is called the dispensation of grace!

The divine enlightenment of the mystery of His will, however, concerns the dispensation of the fullness of times which, of course, is based upon His grace but of which the present mystery (secret) of the Body of Christ is but a part!

Contained in the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the revelation of the mystery (Ephesians 3:1-6) is the fullness of revelation and the truth as to how all of God's purposes will be fulfilled—whether the dispensation of the kingdom or the dispensation of grace or the grand union of all the family of God after the establishment of the new heavens and the new earth in the dispensation of the fullness of times!

And how has God made known these truths to which He has enlightened us? Solely through the man who was called in light above the brightness of the sun, at a place where the chosen people [Israel] were set aside, where the chief of sinners was aborted from his destructive course (I Corinthians 15:8), by him who declared "that by revelation He [Jesus Christ] made known unto me the mystery"—yea, the Apostle of the Gentiles...Paul!

*Donald Webb*

*Notes:*

**CHOSEN IN HIM**

*Scripture Reading: Ephesians 1:4, Romans 8:28-30*

Does God have the right to select some of His creation for special favor? Was it fair for Him to choose Abraham, Moses, and David above all of their contemporaries? "Is there unrighteousness with God?" Those who are God-taught recognize that some deep things of God given in the Holy Scriptures cannot be adequately explained. Some things must be left in the realm of quiet patience. Some day we will know more than we know now.

If God is truly known as the sovereign Creator (as the Bible reveals Him to be), there can be no effective and eternal challenge to His authority and His purposes. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonour?"

Ephesians 1:4 tells us that the believers were chosen "in Christ" before the world began. It does *not* tell us about those God did not choose. It does *not* tell us that God looked ahead and saw that we would choose Him and on the basis of "works," then elected us to eternal salvation. It does say that "He hath chosen us *IN HIM* before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." This whole matter must be settled by the words, "the good pleasure of His will" and "the counsel of His own will" and "the purpose of God" and "according to His purpose." (See Ephesians 1:5, 9, 11 and Romans 9:9-24 and 8:28.)

Now knowing that the believer is chosen according to His good pleasure which He hath purposed in Himself, we should also know that the believer "in Christ" has a perfect standing (official position) before the Lord. Live holy and without blame!

*John McKay*

*Notes:*

**THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT**

*Scripture Reading: Romans 8:16*

If we believe in the redemptive work of our Lord Jesus Christ, that He died for our sins, was buried, and was raised for our justification, then we are children of God (I Corinthians 15:1-4, Galatians 3:26). The Holy Spirit Himself bears witness to this fact. If we have the Holy Spirit within us, we are children of God; if not, we are children of wrath (Romans 8:9, 16).

The Holy Spirit's role in salvation often is misunderstood today, partly due to the rise in popularity and confusion of the Charismatic Movement. The saints at Pentecost were baptized by Christ with the Holy Spirit after their salvation (Matthew 3:11, Acts 2:38). Not only were they empowered to do signs and wonders, the Holy Spirit actually controlled them (Acts 2:42, 4:32). All of this was to bear witness to the fact that Israel had slain her Messiah and that repentance was being offered so that the Messianic Kingdom could be ushered in (Acts 3:19-20, 5:32).

Instead of merely receiving Holy Spirit power after we are saved, in this age of grace, we are saved because we are sanctified by the Holy Spirit to believe the gospel, baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ, and sealed with the Holy Spirit (II Thessalonians 2:13, I Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 1:13). We do not have to wait for the Spirit to come upon us, and we cannot pray to receive His filling. The Holy Spirit is in our lives at the very moment of salvation and intercedes for us from that point on, bearing witness to our position as children of God (Romans 8:26).

*Dick Johnson*

*Notes:*

**NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME**

*Scripture Reading: II Corinthians 6:1-2*

"We, then, as workers together with Him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain. (For He saith, 'I have heard thee in a time accepted, and in the day of salvation have I helped thee': behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.)"

The Apostle Paul used a portion of Isaiah 49:8 to make a point. Israel's national salvation and the inheritance of their promised kingdom is the context in Isaiah 49. However, Israel turned its back to God and did not receive its promise by rejecting the witness of the Prophets, Apostles, and its own Messiah. Israel still is waiting for its acceptable time and its day of salvation, but the nation is set aside and blinded for a time (Romans 11:25).

One might say that Paul is telling us not to do as Israel did by casting aside what God has offered to us. If we look back to the passage preceding our text (II Corinthians 5:14-21), we see what God accomplished for us through Christ. We find that "Christ died for all" and "that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses against them." To believers specifically, Christ "died for them, and rose again" and God "reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ."

Therefore, we are urged not to receive the grace of God in vain but to accept His offer of salvation. God's special offer of salvation to Jews and Gentiles without distinction is good, right now. In a nutshell, God wants us to believe that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and was raised again on our behalf (I Corinthians 15:1-4, Romans 4:25, 5:8-11).

*DJ*

*Notes:*