

THE BIBLE VIEW

In This Issue:

[Abounding Grace](#)

[What Is Grace?](#)

[Grace Is Sufficient](#)

[Grace Day by Day](#)

[In the Nick of Time](#)

Volume: 879 October 10, 2022

Theme: Grace

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Abounding Grace

Jay and Linda Aarseth, Missionaries in Thailand

Faith. Trust. Trusting not by what is seen, but by faith.

I thought I understood 'Hope. I have read many accounts of courageous men and women who have lived these simple words and made them embraceable. We long to be able to follow their example of godliness and strength if we are ever called upon to do so. One day, those words became our exam.

My husband, Jay, and I had been missionaries in Guam for five years. We were in love with the church and the people and had never enjoyed the ministry more. God had blessed us, and we were content, then a dreaded middle-of-the-night call came.

Our pastor reached us with news that our youngest daughter and her children had been in a house fire. Our hearts pounded as we tried to secure our home in Guam and acquire tickets to the States, a task not easily done on

such short notice. We did not know the full extent of the injuries sustained until much later that day.

Three flights and 18 hours in the air separated us from the facts. We thought the very worst. Visions of burn victims flooded my mind's eye and kept me nauseous and weak. However, God gave me rest and quieted my soul in a way I had never known.

Our pastor met us in Atlanta with a car for us to drive to Augusta, where Lindsay, our daughter, and her two children had been flown via helicopter from Chattanooga, TN. Our oldest daughter, Jessica, and her husband met us at the burn unit. They tried to gently prepare us for what we would see. We donned the sterile garb, scrubbed ourselves, and entered room #1. As it turned out, Emma had been burned over 65% of her body, Lindsay 53%, and Ewan 45%.

Jay kept me from collapsing. The three of them were swollen beyond recognition and their bodies were connected with tubes and staples.

“God? Faith? Trust? Hope?” I had never known a time that I could not pray, but there were no words. I didn't need any. God provided every ounce of emotional strength and physical ability I needed. My heavenly Father was there!

My grandson, Ewan, was taken to Heaven three days after his arrival at the burn unit. His little heart could not sustain his physical trauma. Lindsay and little Emma, age 4, spent the next 62 days in ICU. Both underwent miraculous skin

grafts and rehabilitation. Lindsay was in a drug-induced coma when Ewan died. She had to be told of his death upon awakening.

Day after day, I sat in the waiting room waiting for my 15 or 30-minute visit with each of my girls. In the hours in between, I watched for others who were there because their loved one was also on the brink of death. We sat with many family members who looked just like we did. “Can anyone live through such a trauma?” I wondered.

The doctors said, “Yes.” I did not see how any length of time could heal what I saw lying in those hospital beds.

I sought family members of other ICU patients and shared God’s grace and peace with them. For 62 days, that waiting room was my mission field. I cried and prayed with others as we shared a common pain.

I could write volumes about the love and compassion of those God sent our way. My pastor and his wife were unbelievably supportive and compassionate. They found a hospital in Chattanooga to hold our Ewan’s little body until Lindsay recovered enough to make arrangements for his burial.

We did not know from day to day if Lindsay or Emma would survive. God was there, though; I cannot say more. He was everything we needed at every moment of every day.

Many more battles and trials followed. I suppose there will always be pain and scars for my girls. They are walking testimonies of the goodness of God, and they both allow their scars to speak of the Lord's faithfulness.

I will never be the same. My God had comforted me and helped me to grow. He had given us a comfort wherewith we may comfort others.

Now we walk with a genuine sense of faith. We have learned what it is to trust with no reservations and to believe in His goodness because He cared so tenderly for each of us during those awful days.

We can now embrace whatever He allows in our lives as having been filtered through His hands. Such beauty has erupted from those ashes. To God be the glory; great things He has done!

“Grace’ means undeserved kindness. It is the gift of God to man the moment man sees he is unworthy of God’s favor.” — D. L. Moody

What is Grace?

Noah Webster, 1828

Grace is:

1. Favor; goodwill; kindness
2. The free, unmerited love and favor of God
3. Favorable influence of God
4. The application of Christ's righteousness to the sinner

Grace Is Sufficient

Author Unknown

“... My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” II Cor. 12:9

Booth-Tucker preached in Chicago one day. Out from the crowd, a burdened toiler came and said to him, before all the audience, “You can talk like that about how Christ is dear to you and helps you, but if your wife was dead, as my wife is, and you had some babies crying for their mother who would never come back, you could not say what you are saying!”

A little later, Booth-Tucker lost his noble wife in a railway wreck. The body was brought to Chicago and carried to the Salvation Army barracks for the funeral service.

After others had conducted the funeral service, Booth-Tucker stood there by the casket, looked down into the face of the silent wife and his children’s mother, and said, “The other day, when I was here, a man said I could not say Christ was sufficient if my wife were dead, and my children were crying for their mother. If that man is here, tell him that Christ is sufficient. My heart is all broken; my heart is all crushed; my heart is all bleeding, but there is a song in my heart, and Christ put it there. If that man is here, I tell you, though my wife is gone and my children are motherless, Christ comforts me today!”

That man was there, and down the aisle he went and fell beside the casket, saying, “Verily, if Christ can help us like that, I will surrender to Him.”

“The Law detects. Grace corrects.” — *Author Unknown*

Grace

Author Unknown

He giveth more grace when burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength when the labors increase;
To added affliction, He addeth His mercy,
To multiplied trials, His multiplied peace.
When we have exhausted our store of endurance;
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done;
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources;
Our Father’s full giving has only begun.
His love has no limit; His grace knows no measure,
His power no boundary known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches in Jesus
He giveth and giveth and giveth again.

“Prayer is the practice of drawing on the grace of God.” — *Oswald Chambers*

Day by Day

D. L. Moody

A man can no more take a supply of grace for the future than he can eat enough today to last him for the next six months. Nor can he take sufficient air into his lungs to sustain life for a week to come. We must draw upon

God's boundless stores for grace from day to day, as we need it.

“Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.” *Matthew 6:34*

In the “Nick of Time”

G. Campbell Morgan

“Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.” Hebrews 4:16

I am never tired of pointing out that the Greek phrase translated, “... in the time of need,” is a colloquialism of which the “nick of time” is the exact equivalent: “... grace to help in ‘the nick of time.’” God can give us grace just when and where we need it.

You may be attacked by temptation. At the moment of assault, you look to Him, and grace is there to help in “the nick of time.” No postponement of your petition until the evening hour of prayer, but there in the city street, with the flaming temptation in front of you, turn to Christ with a cry for help. The grace will be there in “the nick of time.”

“Faith is a living, daring confidence in God's grace.”

— *Martin Luther*