

God's Amazing Grace

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As students of the Word of God, we are all aware of David's wonderful testimony in Scripture, wherein, he is called, "a man after God's own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14; Acts 13:22). However, at the same time, many of us are confused by it. We wonder, how could one who committed adultery and murder be worthy of such an incredible title or description?

These well-known and Scripturally documented sins of David, taken by themselves, present no reason whatsoever for David to receive this title. However, let us keep in mind, that David's life consisted of more than his sin with Bathsheba. How would any of us like our whole character and life to be judged, based upon one or two sins? Overall, David's life was one of dedicated service to God. Notice how God Himself described David's life, to David's son, Solomon:

"If you walk in My ways, keeping My statutes and commandments, as your father David walked, then I will prolong your days" (1 Kings 3:14 Emphasis mine).

God says David walked according to His ways and kept His commandments. This is how David obtained the testimony of being a man after God's own heart. David lived a faithful (though not perfect) life. Even more, because he lived an obedient life, David was the recipient of God's amazing grace.

God's grace gives us what we do not deserve. Grace is a gift. What it gives is not earned (Eph. 2:8). This is what makes it so amazing!

Prior to his conversion, the apostle Paul (previously known as Saul) was a violent persecutor of the church (Acts 7:58; 8:1-3; 9:1; 22:4-5; Gal. 1:13). Listen to how Paul himself described his former manner of life:

12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service,

13 even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor. Yet I was shown mercy because I acted ignorantly in unbelief;

14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus.

15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.

16 Yet for this reason I found mercy, so that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life (1 Timothy 1:12-16)

Paul, though a well-known and violent persecutor of Christians, obtained grace and mercy from God. He became an apostle of Jesus Christ. Despite his past life, he became the inspired author of thirteen New Testament letters. How was it possible for one like Paul to receive so many wonderful blessings from God? Because Paul submitted in obedience to the Gospel (cf. Acts 22:16). After his conversion, Paul lived a faithful (though not perfect) life. As such, just as with David, Paul became a recipient of God's amazing grace.

The Bible tells us, "all (not just David and Paul) have sinned" (Rom. 3:23). Knowing we all have sinned, and knowing by personal experience the embarrassing and shameful nature of those sins, how is it that we can be counted worthy to wear the name, "Christian"? Think about it! We have lied, hated, cheated, slandered, gossiped, cheated, coveted, committed murder and adultery in our hearts, and the list of our sins could keep going, on and on and on.

How is it possible that we, as Christians, with our awful pasts, can be in a saved relationship with Almighty God? Because we have submitted to the obedience required by the gospel. And, as with David and Paul, and countless others, we are striving to live a faithful (though not perfect) life. The one thing that has made all of this possible for us, is God's amazing grace. The song says it well, "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."