

Please Pass the Grace

Have you ever squirted hand cream into your hand from a tube, only to have far more plop out than you could ever work into your skin? If you're like me, after you've rubbed some into your hands – and elbows - you look for a friend or two with whom to share the abundance. Hand cream for everyone!

God's grace is like that hand cream. He gives His children more than we could possibly use ourselves. Here's how the apostle Paul describes the abundance of God's grace in his letter to the Christians in Ephesus:

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us. Ephesians 1:7-8a, NIV

My favorite word Paul used to describe the nature of God's grace is found right here in the eighth verse of the first chapter of Ephesians. "Lavished." God is not stingy with His grace! He lavishes it on His children.

According to *Mounce's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words*, the Greek word translated as "lavish" in the NIV and "abounded" in the KJV means "to abound, be in abundance, overflow." God doesn't give us just enough grace to get by. He doesn't even give us a "generous" amount. He gives us grace in such abundance we cannot hold it all. It overflows our ability to contain it. It abundantly floods our lives and spills out all around.

Praise God for this abundance of grace! More than we need. More than we can use for ourselves. Yet often we hoard His grace, refusing to share it. How could we, who've received such glorious, undeserved grace, dare withhold it from others?

God longs for us to be *channels* of His unbounded grace, not just stagnant pools. He lavishes us with His grace so we can generously share it in word and deed with those around us. Let us reflect on the grace God freely pours out on us so we can in turn be people of grace. Lavish, abundant, unbounded grace flowing from the heart of God, through us, to others. Please pass the grace!

This post is adapted from Kathy Howard's new Bible study Lavish Grace: Poured Out, Poured Through, and Overflowing. Lavish Grace is a 9-week journey with the apostle Paul that helps readers discover God's abundant grace for their daily lives and relationships. You can find out more about Kathy, her speaking and writing, and find free resources at www.KathyHoward.org.