

Mercy, Grace Or Both?

*"Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort,
who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the
comfort we ourselves receive from God..."*

1 Corinthians 1:2-4 (NIV)

*"But he gives more grace.
Therefore he said, God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble."
James 4:6*

When studying the Bible, we come across two very important words, "grace" and "mercy". Which is most important? Our verses today speak about both. As I have said before, grace addresses us as needy and mercy addresses us as miserable. Let us consider the teaching in today's verses and accept what the apostle teaches us.

First, we learn that grace comes from the Lord. We do not have in our own resources the wisdom and strength to live well and cope with the very difficult issues life brings to us. For example, suicide rates are expected to rise during the covid-19 pandemic. People are in great distress as they lose income, cannot pay their rent, have to choose between buying meds and buying groceries. Very major decisions indeed.

Jesus knew what it was like to be poor. He possessed nothing more than the clothes on His back. He once said He did not have a place to lay his head (Matt. 8:20). Further, Jesus had

a thief among the apostles who stole money designated for the expenses of the ministry. Speaking of Judas we read, "...he was a thief; as keeper of the money bag, he used to help himself to what was put into it." (John 12:6)NIV) SO when we pray we are talking to someone Who understands from personal experience what we are talking about.

We have an amazing description of our heavenly Father. He is called the Father of mercies and God of all comfort. Could we have a more magnificent description of the Lord? I think not! Do these titles not encourage you to run to Him and pour out your complaint? Why do you linger? Why are you hesitant? Come to Him and come now.

...He giveth more grace...
James 4:6

He giveth more grace
when the burdens grow greater,
He sendeth more strength
when the labors increase;
To added afflictions
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
is only begun.
Fear not that thy need
shall exceed His provision,
Our God ever yearns
His resources to share;
Lean hard on the arm
everlasting, availing;
The Father both thee
and thy load will upbear.
His love has no limits,
His grace has no measure,
His power no boundary
known unto men;
For out of His infinite riches
in Jesus
He giveth, and giveth,
and giveth again.

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