

Title: How do you respond to grace?
Text: 2 Samuel 7.18-29
Theme: Enjoying grace
Series: 2 Samuel
Prop Stmt: God is gracious that we might know him and enjoy him forever.

When my kids were small, Cathi and I would pray with them before tucking them into bed and saying goodnight. My last words to them were, "I love you. I will always love you and there is nothing that you can do that will ever make me stop loving you." I wanted to be a dad who gave them a taste of the love of God. I taught them to respect and obey me and Cathi, but respect was not the goal. Love and enjoyment were the goal because that is God's goal with us. God delights in us that we might delight in Him and enjoy him forever. Fear is a powerful motivator in parenting, but love is deeper and so much sweeter. Imagine that you have children or the think about the ones that you have. What do you want that relationship to be like? Do you want everyone to walk on eggshells? Do you want stress from unresolved fights, frustration from unfulfilled promises, bitterness from unrealistic standards, tension from constantly being attacked or attacking? Do you want the members of your family counting the days until they can get out, or counting the days until they can all be together again?

God loves his own deeply, personally and permanently. Christ died for his own. Christ keeps his own. Christ is returning for his own that he might live with us and enjoy us forever. Beloved, I want you to know that. I want you believe that. I want you to embrace that. I want you enjoy that. I want you to be carried in life by that. I want you go through the valley of the shadow of death held by that. I want you to learn to respond to God's grace by believing it, embracing it and enjoying it.

For all of his faults, and he had plenty, David believed this, embraced this and enjoyed this. He didn't believe it perfectly. But he never stopped believing this. This is what God wants from you. Believe him. Embrace him. Enjoy him.

Read Text:

We have seen some of our local sports teams offer lucrative contracts to some players who after getting a great deal, coast and never live up to their potential. It can happen in a relationship. The guy works so hard to win the heart of a girl, but once they are married, he quits pursuing her. We all know that trials expose our true beliefs. So does blessing. Maybe even more so. As we heard last week, we can't outgive God. David wants to build a house for God, and God tells David that He (God) is going to build a house for him. How does David respond to this amazing grace? There is a lot here for our souls.

1. **Stop and think about it.** (18a)

When I say stop and think about it, I mean stop and reflect prayerfully about God's grace to you. This is so good. God, I would be so lost and wouldn't even know it, apart from your grace. God, I

would be so deceived by my sin, so trapped by my desires, so hurtful to others and so ignorant of your kindness, truth and salvation if it were not for your grace to me. David tells Nathan the prophet that he wants to build a house for God and God responds with an astounding promise: David, I am going to be a house for you, but it is not going to a building with rooms, but a dynasty that has no end. David hears this and he goes to the tabernacle (I assume) and sat before the LORD and talked with him. He was amazed by God's grace which tells me that David understood grace. Beloved, how you respond to grace reveals whether or not you understand grace. If you have prideful view of yourself, then God's grace to you will be interpreted as something that you earned or are somehow entitled to.

A. Think about who God is and what God has said and done.

I counted 16x David refers to God by name. But notice the different names for God that David uses in addressing God. Most of the time David refers to God as Adonai Elohim, but he uses Yahweh on a couple of occasions as well as the title translated LORD of hosts. The different names of God reflect the different aspects of God's character and position. David's use of the different names of God is a reflection of the fact that David thinks deeply about who God is. He is Sovereign, He is personal, He is creator, all of which means that David is the vassal, the servant of God. David is thinking about God and he prays to God in response to God's Word. God gave his Word (his promise and covenant) to David through the prophet Nathan. And David's response of introspection, worship, awe and prayer is in because God gave his Word to David. You can see why we focus so much of our attention upon God's Word. God's Word rightfully understood and embraced drives our worship of God. We do not need to be hyped or manipulated or cajoled into responding to God. The Spirit of God takes the promises of God and amazes and overwhelms our hearts for God. No one has to compel us to sing out, we have to. No one has to compel us to pray, we want to. When you stop and think about who God is, and what God has said and done, it will affect you profoundly and personally. And David thinks deeply about the things that God has done for him.

How does use his power? What has God done? For David, God has protected him, sustained him and now promises to build a dynasty for him. What about you? How has God exercised his authority and power for you? How has God provided salvation for you through Christ? What have been the myriad of things that God has done and continues to do for you. Stop and think about that. And then...

B. Think about who you are

I counted 9x that David referred to himself as "your servant." If you think carefully, correctly and thoughtfully about God, then you will think properly about yourself. David's view of himself is right. He is God's servant. He is here to do the bidding of God. What is amazing is to reflect on the fact that the LORD of hosts is gracious to a servant! If someone challenged you and said, "Who do you think you are?" They would probably be trying to take you down a few notches. But the question is a good one to ask. But it is always the second question to ask, not the first. The first question to ask is, who is God. If you get that answer right, then you will get the answer

to the second question right. If you don't get the first question right, you will never be able to answer the second one. David gets them both correct. He recognizes the incredible gap between himself and God. Therefore, he recognizes God's grace to him and what God has promised him. And David, is rightfully stunned! *"Who am I, O Lord God, and what is my house, that you have brought me thus far?"*

2. **Amazing grace drives a faith that is amazed.** (18-21)

God made David king. God took the initiative with David. That is the story line of the Bible. God takes the initiative to do good for us. He does God made David king and David responds with faith. He believes God. He believes God with a faith that is amazed. David is so amazed that he wants to do something, so he decides to build a house for God and as we saw last week, God uses that occasion to tell David that he is going to something for him. And again, David responds with a faith that is amazed. God just made a really big and bodacious promise to David. Here is why David is a man after God's heart. David believes it!

A. **I don't deserve it, but I believe it.** (18b)

Here is why good theology is like rocket fuel for our worship engine. When you see God high and lifted up, Sovereign, Supreme, glorious, awesome in power, majestic and faithful to his promises, then when you encounter a promise of God to you, you will respond like this as well. I don't deserve it, but I believe it. Beloved, I so want you to get this. I want you to embrace at the heart level that God is great. He can do everything that he sets out to do. God is sovereign and he will do everything that he sets out to do. God is good, he will do you good. He sent Christ to die for you, he is that good. Therefore, when God promises to forgive you of your sin when you turn to him, you can say, "I don't deserve it, but I believe it." When God says that he will never leave you or forsake you, you can say, "I don't deserve it, but I believe it." When God says, when you walk through the waters, I will be with you. When you go through the valley of the shadow of death, you do not need to fear because my rod and staff will protect you and comfort you, you can say, "I don't deserve it, but I believe it." When God says, that his grace is sufficient for you, you can say, "I don't deserve it, but I believe it." When Jesus says, "I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and take you to be with me" you can say, "I don't deserve it, but I believe it." But there is more.

B. **I don't get it, but I believe it.** (19-21)

Look at the end of v.18. You have brought me this far! Look at all that you have already done and there is way more to come. And all that has happened is easy for you. Do you see what David is saying? This is way bigger than me. You are doing so much more than I can imagine and will do even more. I don't get it, but I believe it. Beloved, the goodness of God and the power of God is inexhaustible and unstoppable. You and I cannot comprehend the depth of his mercy. We don't get it, but we believe it. If you want to dismantle the schemes of Satan against you, then believe in the goodness of God. Believe what God has revealed about himself. At this moment, David is able to look back over the past 10 years and all of the struggles, trials, dangers and

challenges make sense. All through those days God was being a good God. David could not see it, then like he sees it now, and even what he saw here, is a drop in the bucket. David has an idea that what is happening is going to be instructive for so much more than he can grasp (19). And, here we are 3,000 years later benefiting from and delighting in this. Beloved, you do not have to understand all the ways of God in order to believe them. The fact is, you can't. But, you and I can believe them.

David hears the Word of God. The Word of God compels him to come before God and he sits down and considers what he has heard. He thinks about who God is, what God has said and what God has done and is doing. He is amazed and responds with a faith that is amazed. He also response to God's amazing grace with worship that is in awe.

3. Amazing grace drives worship that is in awe. (20-22)

You know you me. You know all about me. You know all of my fears, insecurities, doubts, sins, failures, weaknesses and struggles. You know it all. There is nothing that is hidden from you and yet you still know me and have called me to be part of your plan. There really is none like you.

The Canaanite, Egyptian, even Philistine gods were deities who took from their followers. They were angry and needy. You had to make them happy. I saw examples of this in Haiti. A lady in a village had a family member who died. This lady had nothing. But, in order for the witch doctor to send the spirit of her family member away from the hut and not torment her, this lady had to give the witch doctor an extravagant gift that she could not afford. She went into debt that she would spend the rest of her life trying to pay off in order to pay for the witch doctor. She lived in fear and her fear drove her to a bondage that apart from the gospel she would never escape. This is what the gods of the world are like. They take and take and take and lie to you about God. But David sees through it. He says, there is no one like you. That is so true, which is one of the reasons why it is difficult for us to believe in the utter goodness of God. There is no one like him and yet, here he is going on the record, laying down a promise and calling us (David) to believe him.

V.22 sounds to me as if the lava of joy just hit the surface and is exploding into the sky with worship. There's more. It's not just you. God is so great and so good, that he is generous with his goodness to thousands upon thousands. David is part of a people.

The Old Covenant people of God (Israel) are a preview for the New Covenant people of God (the church). This covenant that God made with David was way bigger than David. It did not stop with David; it was about a people that David was part of. That is what God's grace does. It rescues us. It redeems us and makes us part of his people. When you come to faith in Christ, you are born into the family of God and made a citizen of his holy nation. The church stands on the shoulders of the Old Covenant and even this Davidic Covenant. In this covenant, God promises David a dynasty that will never end. We get that now because it is fulfilled in Jesus, the king, in the line of David who will reign forever. In that way, we benefit from this covenant. The

Davidic covenant was way bigger than David, just as God's covenant of grace with you is way bigger than you. We are saved to be part of a people.

4. **Amazing grace forms a people for his glory.** (23-26)

All of these things that were said about the OT people of God are true for the NT people of God. We are your people (23a). We alone are your people because only the redeemed are your people. And it was your act of redemption that makes us your people and it contributes to making your name so great. Your glory is spread abroad because you are a God who redeems. You do great and awesome things for your people. You have established your people and you will keep them and preserve them and sustain them and guarantee their final destiny. You have become their God. (24) The grace of God is amazing because it not only works in our lives individually, but it calls us together as a people so that we can reverberate and share in and enjoy God's grace in others. That is what the church is. We are the redeemed people of God who rejoice in the grace of God to us and to others. God's grace is so amazing and so plentiful that we want to share it.

5. **Agree with God** (29)

Do you see what David is praying in v.29? He is praying God's Word. He is agreeing with God. This is what we mean when we say "amen." We are saying, yes God, please do this. Now, why do we pray the promises of God, like David does, when God has promised? Why do we say amen to God's Word, since our amen does not make it true nor make it happen? God invites us to pray and agree with his promises as a way of us entering into and participating in his plan. Prayer is like getting courtside seats at a basketball game where you get to sit next to the owner of the team, only way better. We get invited into the presence of God where we get to partner with him at Command Central in his plan for the formation of his people from all over the world for the kingdom of his Son. Prayer takes us into the very heart of the action.

Conclusion and Summary

- 1) God's Sovereign election of sinners for redemption is the grounding for humility, faith and worship. God chose David and David said, "who am I" that you would do this? How do you respond to the fact that God has elected you, called you and regenerated you to saving faith? You are grasping this truth when you respond with "who am I" to God's Sovereign and amazing grace.
- 2) I am guessing that some of us, if not most of us, could upgrade our prayer life. Here is a very simple challenge. Stop and think about a promise of God. What does this promise of God say about God? What does this promise say about you? What can you say to God about God and what can you admit to God about you? Do you believe this? Do you need help believing this? What does this promise say about others who believe it? (chart)

Beloved, I want you to learn to respond to God's grace by believing it, embracing it and enjoying it. Praying this way helps cultivate that because your relationship with God is more than just asking for things, but it is sitting before him and enjoying him. After all, that is the goal.