



October 9, 2022

## Abounding Grace: Experiencing and Expressing Grace

### *Mercy and Grace*

Hebrews 4:14-16

#### **For Discussion and Reflection:**

1. The author states that when God's people engage him, they receive mercy. Notice the certainty of that statement. There are no conditions placed on the experience, rather a statement of promise. What response do you expect from God as you engage him? What do you think must happen to receive God's compassion? Have you ever tried to clean things up or make changes before you engage God? Why do we do that?
2. Notice the sympathy expressed in Hebrews 4:15. Also consider the empathy of the priesthood described in Hebrews 5:2. Whether we lack information (ignorant) or have willfully departed the paths of righteousness (wayward), how are we received when we humbly enter God's presence? How does that encourage you?
3. Grace, or favor, most often refers to the standing that we have with God through Jesus. Consider some of these passages: Luke 1:30, 2:52; Romans 5:2; Galatians 1:2; 1 Peter 3:7. One of the best passages to teach us about that favor is Ephesians 1:3-14. What does this text teach you about your "favored status" or grace with God? How does that status help you in your time of need?
4. Grace, or favor, has a transactional component to it. Because we are favored by God, we ask for gifts from him. Consider these passages: Acts 6:8, 24:27, 25:9; Romans 1:11, 12:6; 2 Corinthians 1:12, 12:9; Ephesians 4:7. The word carries the idea of favor resulting in gifts from a benefactor. What gifts do we receive? What about James 1:5? What does Paul ask for in Ephesians 6:18-20? As you engage the Lord, what are you asking him for? What are you asking him to do or give you?
5. The author says that we "find" grace. The word indicates our discovery of grace. Do you think he's referring to our standing, specific gifts, or both? What does the term "find" communicate to us about our engagement with God?
6. Our standing with God opens us to gifts from him. Re-read Ephesians 1:3-14 keeping in mind these two sides of grace (standing and gifts). Highlight the statements of standing; underline the gifts we receive. What stands out?
7. If you are regularly experiencing the unconditional compassion of God (mercy), being assured of your relational standing (grace), and receiving generously from God (gifts of grace), what will you express to others in your life? To ask it a different way, what do others experience in life with you: compassion, relational assurance, and generosity? If not, why not?
8. Based on our study, how can your time with God become more meaningful? What can you do to inhabit the place of grace more faithfully? What should you expect from that engagement?