



APPNOTES

Date: November 4-8,2019

Series: Grace Is Greater

Luke 23:39-43 At any moment we can reach out and grasp the grace of God. It's never the wrong time and never too late. In these passages, a criminal hung next to Jesus, accepting his fate for his wrong-doing. Unlike the other criminal, this man believed who Jesus was. He confessed his sin and acknowledged that he was receiving just punishment, that Jesus didn't deserve his, and he then asked Jesus to remember him when Jesus came into His Kingdom. Jesus didn't say, "No, I will not," or "Sorry, it's too late for you." Instead he graciously told the criminal he would be with Jesus in paradise today. Today! Jesus paid that debt for us that very day as he hung there, and he offers us forgiveness. There are no strings attached, nothing required in return. We only have to acknowledge it and cry out to Jesus.

John 3:16-17 "For God so loved the world he gave his one and only son..." Read that again. How powerful that statement is! Can you imagine what kind of love that is? It's nothing you or I could ever truly understand. But it gets even better than that. John goes on to say that Jesus did not come to condemn us, but he came to give his life and to give us grace. What!? Who could be so strong and so brave to knowingly go to the cross to die a slow, painful death for people who don't deserve it? Jesus did this because he believed in his Heavenly Father's plan and he loves us. What a beautiful love to know. God's love. What a beautiful gift to receive. God's grace. We are forgiven for all of our shortcomings and all of our sin because of what Jesus did for us. Can you imagine what you could overcome if you had faith in that love?

Hebrews 4:16 One of my favorite Christian bands, Mercy Me, sings this song called "I Can Only Imagine". They sing about what it will be like to come face to face with Jesus, surrounded by His glory. I love how the lyrics make Him out to be someone we'll be excited to meet. Someone to celebrate, rather than a being who we would be apprehensive of. Jesus isn't someone who requires us to straighten our posture, shine our shoes, and wear our Sunday best. God wants us just as we are. He wants our messy. He wants us to be so full of confidence in His love that we are unafraid to come to him. Just as parent would when they lose their child in a busy crowd, God will be

there, crouching down, arms wide open with the biggest smile saying, welcome home child.

Romans 3:23-24 We all sin. If we're honest with ourselves, we all know it. But no matter our sins, or even how many times we fall short of our promises to live a Godly life, God loves us. Through Christ Jesus and only through Him, we are given this gift of grace. Yes, a gift. One we certainly don't deserve. One that doesn't require anything of us in return. It's not the gift of car keys handed to the sixteen-year-old with the demand he or she keep her grades up. This gift of God has no strings attached. We only need to accept it. Pray for Jesus to come into your heart. Confess your sins to Him, and you will be forgiven by grace. Grace is free, it is beautiful, and it is endless. This grace makes us right. It shapes us into the person God has ever so lovingly created.

Psalms 103:8 There is no human who can match God's compassion and love for us. We can do the same wrong thing over and over again, each time seeking His forgiveness. Each time, receiving it. God requires nothing from us in order for us to receive this love, but God's love gives us the freedom to love and show compassion to others. When we look to better ourselves and live a more godly life, let's work on how we respond to others. When we seek forgiveness, let us look to give forgiveness. When we need to feel loved, let's give love. Show kindness to a stranger on the street or give an unexpected gift to someone in need. A kind word can mean so much, and it costs us nothing to offer it. Through all of these, we offer that same grace to others as God so freely extends to us.

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