



**DAILY ENCOURAGEMENTS**

**Carstairs-Bancroft United Church**

*February 2, 2024*



Photo: Our Daily Bread

## GOD'S GIFT OF GRACE

*To each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.*

Ephesians 4:7

### **READ Ephesians 4:4-8**

As I was grading another stack of papers for a college writing class I teach, I was impressed with one particular paper. It was so well-written! Soon, though, I realized it was too well-written. Sure enough, a little research revealed that the paper had been plagiarized from an online source.

I sent the student an email to let her know that her ruse had been discovered. She was getting a zero on this paper, but she could write a new paper for partial credit. Her response: "I am humiliated and very sorry. I appreciate the grace you are showing me. I don't deserve it." I responded by telling her that we all receive Jesus' grace every day, so how could I deny showing her grace?

There are many ways God's grace enhances our lives and redeems us from our errors. Peter says it gives salvation: "We believe it is through the grace of our Lord Jesus that we are saved" (Acts 15:11). Paul says it helps us not to be overtaken by sin: "Sin shall no longer be your master, because you are not under the law, but under grace" (Romans 6:14). Elsewhere, Peter says grace allows us to serve: "Use whatever gift you have received . . . as faithful stewards of God's grace" (1 Peter 4:10).

Grace. So freely given by God (Ephesians 4:7). May we use this gift to love and encourage others.

By **Dave Branon**

### **PRAY & REFLECT**

**God of grace, help me to share Your grace in my interactions with others. Amen**

When do you most feel God's grace in your life? What are a couple ways you can show surprising grace to others today?

### **SCRIPTURE INSIGHT**

Unity is Paul's clear emphasis in Ephesians 4:4-6. He explicitly states that desire in verse 3: "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace." The apostle uses the word one seven times in verses 4-6. There is one body (v. 4; see Romans 12:4-5; 1 Corinthians 12:12-31); one Spirit (v. 4; see John 16:13; 2 Corinthians 12:18), one hope (v. 4; see Hebrews 6:11-20; 7:19; 11:1), one Lord (v. 5; see John 10:16; Romans 10:9), one faith (v. 5; see Acts 6:7; Romans 1:17), one baptism (v. 5; see 1 Corinthians 1:13-17; Galatians 3:27), and one God (v. 6; see Deuteronomy 6:4). These core dimensions of singularity give us a framework for evaluating disagreements. Paul's repeated emphasis on the oneness we share in Christ should drive us to unity that can't be broken. – By **JR Hudberg**

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