

HOW GREAT IS OUR GOD!

STUDY FOUR

The Grace of God

2 Samuel 9:1–13

The remarkable thing about God’s grace is that it is not grace extended to just one of us who is not deserving but to all of us . . . even though all of us continue to operate our lives so often against His will. Divine grace is a whole different genre from human grace.
—Pastor Charles R. Swindoll

GRACE grabs our attention because it swims upstream against the flow of common interactions: “eye-for-an-eye” and “scratch-my-back-and-I’ll-scratch-yours.” Grace opposes entitlement. It rebuffs transactional relationships. When displayed, grace can bring tears to our eyes—even if we merely observe it in one person extending grace to another, like the strong to the weak. A single, simple expression of grace will often receive applause. Recipients relish its luster and feel the warmth of its bright shine in a world of moral gloominess.

Such an act we’ll examine for this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study. Pastor Chuck Swindoll teaches us about the grace David gave to Saul’s grandson Mephibosheth. Through King David’s act of grace, we’ll discover and cherish how God lavishes His grace upon us.



PREPARE YOUR HEART

B. B. Warfield defined God’s grace as His “free sovereign favor to the ill-deserving.”¹ Recall the grace of God in your life. Before engaging God’s Word, record a prayer below thanking God for His kindness to you and then request His guidance through His Word.



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SEARCHING
THE
SCRIPTURES
BIBLE STUDIES

The Grace of God

2 Samuel 9:1–13

God doesn't stand back, fold His arms, and frown, waiting for us to meet Him halfway. He reaches out to sinners like us. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES

As king, David held a sacred position as the spiritual model and leader of ancient Israel, reflecting God's character and ways to God's people. Few acts in the annals of Israel's kings better mirror God's grace than that of David to Mephibosheth in 2 Samuel 9.

Mephibosheth's story can be traced to a vow that David made to Jonathan, Mephibosheth's father. It was during the days when Jonathan's father, King Saul, was trying to kill David because God had chosen David to become the next king. What was Jonathan's vow, and how did David respond ([1 Samuel 20:12–17](#))?

For years, David was a fugitive on the run until Saul was killed during a battle with the Philistines. Tragically, Jonathan was killed too. In the frantic aftermath, every family member related to Saul fled for their lives, and young Mephibosheth was injured. What happened to five-year-old Mephibosheth ([2 Samuel 4:4](#))?

Saul's dynasty came to an end two years later when Saul's son, Ishbosheth, was murdered by his own captains (4:1–8). Finally, at age 30, David was declared the rightful king of Israel (5:4). He moved his capital from Hebron to Jerusalem, which became known as the City of David (5:6–10). After some time passed, he remembered his vow to Jonathan.



Observation: Grace Illustrated

During observation, we take time to simply learn what the text says.² What's the overarching topic? Who's mentioned? What's repeated? Begin by reading [2 Samuel 9](#). Do so carefully. Consider why the author chose to include this story while writing on the reign of David.

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In one sentence, summarize what happened in 2 Samuel 9.

Why did David want to know if anyone from Saul's family was still alive? (Note the word repeated in verses 1, 3, 7, and 8.)

What was unique about Mephibosheth?

For the rest of his days, Mephibosheth dined with royals. As a man with a disability, he would have required more care than David's other sons. David understood that and decided to pay the price. Grace is costly for the one who shares it. Just as David made Mephibosheth his own, God, who realized the extreme cost, paid the price to make us His own.

Grace is not God helping those who help themselves. Will you please take that line out of your life? Why? Because God helps the helpless. Grace is God extending His favor to those who can't help themselves.
—Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Interpretation: Analogies of Divine Grace

Using your tools—*commentaries*, a *Bible dictionary*, or *web articles*—explain the reasons David wanted to extend grace to anyone in Saul's household.

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In verse 1, David stated that he wanted to show kindness, but then David defined the type of kindness he had in mind in his statement in verse 3: “God’s kindness.” In what way did David reflect God’s kindness in his treatment of Mephibosheth?

Pastor Chuck provides six analogies worth remembering that correlate David’s kindness to Mephibosheth with God’s kindness to us.

1. *As David extended his love to someone viewed as a nobody, so God extends His love to us.* God does not have to love us. In fact, our transgressions assault God’s holiness, but because of His grace, He loves us and delights in doing so.
2. *As David sought and found Mephibosheth, so God seeks and finds us.* Despite our running away, God chases us to restore our relationship with Him.
3. *As David restored Mephibosheth to a place of honor, so God has restored us.* We are a kingdom of priests who have been given the crown of eternal life.
4. *As David adopted Mephibosheth into his royal family, so God adopts us.* God does not treat us as a faceless and nameless employee of a vast business empire. Rather, we’re family. He’s our father. We’re His children.
5. *As Mephibosheth’s disability constantly reminded him of David’s grace, so our sin constantly reminds us of God’s grace.* Indwelling sin humbles even the most mature Christians. For the softhearted, such obstacles become opportunities for repentance and gratitude.
6. *As there was no status or rank at David’s table where Mephibosheth ate, so there is no status or rank at Jesus’ table where we will one day eat.* Infighting plagues even the healthiest of families, but one day soon, God’s children will gather in perfection, sit at Jesus’ table, and enjoy the new world full of bliss.

After reflecting on the six analogies above, choose the one most important to you in your specific season of life. Record below why it’s significant to you.

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God sovereignly, apart from anything from us—any goodness, any effort, any attempt to win His favor or friendship—in His grace, reaches down to lift us up, even while we fight Him in the process. Amazing. —Pastor Chuck Swindoll



Correlation: Grace upon Grace

During correlation, we examine other biblical passages that address a similar topic to our own in order to better understand God’s thoughts on the subject. In this case, we will explore three New Testament passages that complement what we have learned about God’s grace so far. The first two passages, we provide. For the third, we ask you to do some digging!

The Word Became Flesh—John 1:1–18

Read [John 1:1–18](#). Summarize below what this passage teaches about God’s grace.

Rich in Mercy—Ephesians 2:1–10

Read [Ephesians 2:1–10](#). Summarize below what this passage teaches about God’s grace.

Passage Number Three

List a third passage below and expand on its contribution to our understanding of God’s grace. If a third New Testament passage does not come to mind, do some hunting. For example, you can perform a search for the word *grace* in the New Testament of the New Living Translation. Read through the occurrences, find one that grabs your attention, and use it as your third passage.

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After receiving such a wealth of knowledge about God’s grace, we can’t help but exclaim with Paul:

So we praise God for the glorious grace he has poured out on us who belong to his dear Son. (Ephesians 1:6)



Application: Extending Grace

Begin application by thinking of someone who has shown you grace in your life. Describe the occurrence below, then plan to contact that person soon to acknowledge how he or she has been gracious to you and how much you appreciate him or her.

Often, we take for granted the relationships we have with those closest to us, and we begin expecting their graciousness in our lives or fail to extend grace ourselves. Pick one person you’re closest with—spouse, child, or close friend, even colleague—and think of a meaningful way you can extend fresh acts of grace to him or her. Record below what you plan.

Lastly, think of an acquaintance or perhaps someone you have never met. A coworker five offices down, a new neighbor across the street, or a new member at church. Consider how you can show him or her God’s kindness, in a small way, and plan to do that over the next week. Note below what person came to mind and how you can show him or her the grace of God.

After learning of God’s immense grace in our lives, we wonder how we ever lived without noticing it. But we have all experienced it. From the breath in our lungs, the food we eat, and the relationships we have, and most of all: our union with Christ. He who began a good work in us will complete it in His day (Philippians 1:6).

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A FINAL PRAYER

Father, thank You for the work of grace in my life. Thank You for painting the picture of Your kindness so clearly in Your Word. Please continue opening my eyes and softening my heart that I may grow in my understanding of Your gracious works in our world. Give me wisdom and energy to reflect that grace each day. In Jesus' name, amen.

ENDNOTES

1. Benjamin Warfield, in *Great Quotes and Illustrations*, comp. George Sweeting (Waco, TX: Word, 1985), 133.
2. To learn more about Pastor Chuck Swindoll's *Searching the Scriptures* Bible-study method, go to the web page, "*How Does Pastor Chuck Swindoll Study the Bible?*"

For the 2026 broadcasts, this *Searching the Scriptures* Bible study was developed by Aaron Massey, senior vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, and Bryce Klabunde, vice president of *Searching the Scriptures* Ministries, based upon the original outlines, charts, and transcripts of Charles R. Swindoll's messages. Copyright © 2008, 2019, 2026 by Charles R. Swindoll, Inc. All rights are reserved worldwide. Duplication of copyrighted material for commercial use is strictly prohibited.

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