



Grace to Come



A DAILY DEVOTIONAL FOR ADVENT 2024

Grace, the unmerited favor of God.

Grace, whose Greek translation 'charis' means "gift," is indeed the crowning expression of the story of Christmas.

Though "Joy," "Noel" and "Peace" most commonly adorn the Christmas season, the entire Advent story is wrapped in grace —woven throughout all of Scripture, not just in the cherished Gospel passages.

Long before the baby was laid in the manger, God had already laid out the plan of redemption...

We can't understand the full meaning of Advent without reflecting on the story of grace across all Scripture and human history. Advent recalls the longing for a Savior, centuries of waiting and the prophecies and promise of the Messiah. It celebrates His arrival, sacrifice, resurrection and return. **This is the story of grace to come.**

REPETITIONS OF GRACE

The saving grace of Jesus is woven into every page of the Bible. From the beginning, grace is God's response to our rebellion. Stories throughout Scripture echo the promise of a coming Savior—Jesus, the unmerited and undeserved gift of grace. We see God's gracious hand at work in the lives of people throughout the Old Testament. We see grace in action and hints, shadows and prophecies of Grace to come. No Old Testament figure could keep the Law perfectly, yet God makes a way. He preserves, protects, forgives and demonstrates grace repeatedly.

In the New Testament, God's grace is present and available, culminating in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. God the Father showed grace and sent Grace in the person of Christ, His Son and our Savior. God had the grace to come, be born as a baby, grow to adulthood, experience human suffering, heal, teach and then die a terrible death. Resurrected, He offered grace that can restore and redeem relationships with Him and each other.

THE ULTIMATE GIFT

As we celebrate Jesus' birth, may we be awed by the reality that there is still more grace to come. What Christ offered as He walked among the disciples, He offers to us and millions around the world who still need to hear the story. Grace anticipated, Grace among us, and even greater Grace to come.

WHAT A THRILLING ADVENT MESSAGE!

This small devotional can only begin to tell the whole story. We pray it points you to God's Word, His grace, His world and those in your community.

Much of Frontier Fellowship's ministry is neighbor-to-neighbor—and the world holds many neighborhoods! Discover how—through your support—God's grace is expanding wider, deeper and farther to the world's least-reached neighborhoods.

χάρις
cháris

Grace

Greek Translation: Charis [CARE-iss]
Noun, Greek

The Greek word "charis" means "grace" or "gift." It embodies the concept of unmerited favor or a gift given freely without expectation of repayment.

Common uses:

Eucharist: Combines "eu-" (good, true) and "charis" (gift), meaning the sacrament commemorating Jesus' Last Supper

Charismata: Refers to spiritual gifts given by grace (charis)

Charity: Translated form "charis," denotes acts of kindness or giving, particularly to those in need

All Scripture is NRSV unless otherwise noted.

Some names have been changed for reasons of privacy or security.

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Week One

*"Grace is but glory begun,
and glory is but grace perfected."*

— Jonathan Edwards



GRACE IS A STORY

WEEK ONE | DAY ONE

“Indeed, everything is for your sake, so that grace, when it has extended to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God.”

2 CORINTHIANS 4:15

Grace permeates the narrative of Scripture. You can trace the story of God’s grace from Genesis through Revelation. There are twists and turns along the way, but nothing is by chance. It is all according to God’s plan and for His glory. The end of the story is anticipated from the beginning, and the whole of Scripture tells the unfolding story of the Messiah. Christ is promised and revealed. As we come to know Him, our story is intertwined and we are recipients of that grace, participants in the story of the ages. At every point, the story is meant to increase our thanksgiving and bring glory to God.

Frontier Fellowship Associate Directors Alex and Dana host Bible studies for international students in their region of the US—many of whom are from least-reached regions of the world. Together, they read God’s Word, facilitate discussions and help answer questions about faith in Jesus. This is the grace of God, bringing people together from different cultures and contexts and enabling them to have opportunities to hear and respond to the Gospel story—the Good News of Jesus.

During the Advent season, we have an incredible opportunity to share the story of God’s grace demonstrated throughout history and in the sending of His Son. Pray that God’s grace will extend through His people and His Word, so that many more will share in offering thanksgiving to the glory of God.

GRACE FORETOLD

WEEK ONE | DAY TWO

“...who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace, and this grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began...”

2 TIMOTHY 1:9

“Before the ages began...” This gift of grace, Jesus, was planned according to God’s purpose before Creation! Christ’s coming was not Plan B initiated after humankind had sinned. It was God’s original plan. He knew us from before time began and His grace extends beyond time. That’s the glorious message of Advent.

No human effort or striving will save us. We see this demonstrated over and over throughout Scripture. Those who tried to earn merit through obedience to the Law alone eventually failed. But the good news always was—and is still now—that grace comes only through Christ. Prophesied, promised, present and coming again, Jesus came to save us and has “called us with a holy calling.”

As we respond to God’s call, we see His purposes unfold. We make this journey knowing His grace accompanies us, just as foretold, enabling us to step forward in faith. For Haley, a new leg of the journey started when she and nine others from her church in the US began meeting with Muslim neighbors in a church-to-mosque effort to build relationships through peaceful, structured dialogues.

Over time, Haley developed a passion for sharing the Good News of Jesus among least-reached—primarily Muslim—communities. She began making trips to the Arabian Peninsula to explore long-term ministry opportunities. Just recently, she decided to move to the Middle East and commit her life to sharing the hope, love and kindness of Jesus with least-reached peoples on the Arabian Peninsula. What a beautiful example of loving your neighbor as yourself and of God’s gracious calling!

GRACE IN THE GARDEN

WEEK ONE | DAY THREE

"If, because of the one man's trespass, death reigned through that one, much more surely will those who receive the abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man, Jesus Christ."

ROMANS 5:17

There was grace in the Garden of Eden; God graciously provided everything Adam and Eve needed and also blessed them with His presence. God's grace endured even after their disobedience. The whole of Scripture tells the story: from generation to generation, God's grace prepared the way, reminding the hearts and minds of sinful humankind that there was even greater grace to come.

Adam, the first human, was a historical type of Christ. When he fell into temptation in the garden, we all inherited his legacy of sin. Jesus, the "firstborn of all creation" (Colossians 1:15) and without sin, came to earth, died and rose again to restore and redeem all humankind. We died in Adam but live in Christ!

This "abundance of grace and free gift of righteousness" means life conquers death! What a gift, and one we want to share with thousands around the world who have not yet heard the Good News!

An Egyptian ministry partner recently shared, "The harvest is great, is plentiful, but the workers are not enough. God is opening many doors, but we cannot do it alone. We need your encouragement and support; we need you to be with us."

As we witness the growth of the Church worldwide, we see God's grace revealed in individual lives, communities and nations. Pray for more workers for the harvest, so many more can receive the gift of God's grace.

GRACE & TRUTH

WEEK ONE | DAY FOUR

"And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth."

JOHN 1:14

In his book *The Unfolding Mystery*, Edmund Clowney says, "True wisdom is not the achievement of man's efforts; it is the gift of God's grace. Neither scientific research nor muttered mantras will disclose the truth that gives meaning to our lives. Truth at last is personal (John 14:6)."

When Clowney talks about personal truth, he means truth in the person of Jesus, whom we can know personally. Jesus is truth; He is filled with "grace and truth." No one else can truly make that claim.

Since Adam, humankind has often looked for wisdom in the wrong places. Wisdom does not come from worldly knowledge (just ask Solomon), wizards or sorcerers (as summoned by Pharaoh), nor from within ourselves.

Ana was desperate. Abandoned by her husband years ago, she was now running out of money. She was considering spending the little she had left on black magic in an attempt to regain her husband and finances. In her desperation, Ana found Indopartners' online resources and was intrigued by the messages of hope they offered. She reached out to Indopartners' staff, who shared with her how Jesus restores that which is broken and is the source of abundance and joy. Ana soon met with a Christian to learn more about Jesus and recently made the courageous decision to follow Him.

Advent is a time for sharing and celebrating Jesus, who is the Truth and is filled with "grace and truth." To whom can you extend this message of hope this holiday season?

GRACE AMONG US

WEEK ONE | DAY FIVE

“When he came and saw the grace of God, he rejoiced, and he exhorted them all to remain faithful to the Lord with steadfast devotion...”

ACTS 11:23

The story of Jesus—extending from Genesis through Revelation—is passed on by those who are sent: prophets, priests, angels, shepherds, ordinary men and women. Barnabas was sent by the Church in Jerusalem to see what was happening with the believers in Antioch. What a joy to find them faithful! He could see the grace of God! Barnabas encouraged them and ministered alongside them. He actually did more than encourage them; he exhorted them to remain faithful and committed to the Lord with “steadfast devotion.” He also pointed many others to Christ.

Born into a non-Christian home in Central Asia, Peter became a follower of Jesus in the early 1990s. After years of study and mentorship, he was ordained to pastoral service and planted a church in his hometown. God took Peter around the world for further study, all the while deepening his passion and care for members of his community. Nearly a decade later, Peter founded a Disciple Making Movement (DMM) in Central Asia. Now, this DMM now includes more than 350 churches and groups sharing the Good News of Jesus with their least-reached neighbors, growing and learning together in God’s grace.

Peter saw and experienced God’s grace and, remaining faithful, embodies the same spirit as Barnabas. He is participating in God’s mission to redeem and restore the world. God is richly rewarding his efforts. He will do the same with each of us. When we respond to His grace with obedience, it brings Him glory. Where do you see cause to rejoice today, and whom can you exhort and encourage to remain faithful? Pray for others, like Peter, who are doing this across the globe.

STANDING IN GRACE

WEEK ONE | DAY SIX

“Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we boast in our hope of sharing the glory of God.”

ROMANS 5:1-2

Standing in God’s grace can seem so difficult. We might be willing to rest in it, take comfort from it...but to stand in His grace and to boast only “in our hope of sharing the glory of God” requires some courage. This is courage only God can provide. Moses, David, Joshua, Esther, Daniel, Paul...all those who stood in His grace, testifying to His Word, did it only through His strength. Over and over again, God’s Word shows us God’s sufficiency. Through His grace, we are able to stand firm. This is a part of the story of grace.

Jesus is our ultimate example of endurance under pressure, courage in the face of persecution and standing in grace. We, too, have access to this grace! Frontier Fellowship often hears remarkable stories of women and men who remain faithful to Christ despite persecution for their faith.

The Iranian Church is one of the fastest growing in the world. Amid this growth, Iranian Christians face extreme pressure, persecution and often imprisonment. Daria, a student at Pars Theological Centre (Pars), was arrested in the middle of taking an exam, as was her husband. They were both interrogated, placed in solitary confinement and then released on bail. Now, they await sentencing and continue to cling to the message of the Gospel. Their hope remains steadfast in Jesus, and we pray that God will continue to grow the faithfulness of Christians around the globe who face similar circumstances and contexts.

SIGNS OF HOPE & GRACE

WEEK ONE | DAY SEVEN

“Therefore prepare your minds for action; discipline yourselves; set all your hope on the grace that Jesus Christ will bring you when he is revealed.”

1 PETER 1:13

Long before a star appeared over Bethlehem the first Christmas night, ancient prophecies foretold the coming of a Messiah-King who would save people from their sins and gather them into God’s reconciled family: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son” (Isaiah 7:14 ESV); “O Bethlehem...from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel” (Micah 5:2 ESV). Throughout history, Israel searched and yearned for signs of this Savior.

Centuries later, the people of Israel weren’t the only ones watching the sky. Wise men from the East, likely Persian intellectuals, noticed a new, unusual star. Recognizing the significance of this sign, they followed the star on a monthslong journey to find and pay homage to Israel’s newborn King.

The inclusion of the Magi in this story offers another sign: God’s promised redemption isn’t just for the Israelites, but for all peoples of the earth who seek Him. As we grow in faith, we learn to notice signs of hope and grace—glimpses of the Kingdom dawning around us. We learn to live in anticipation and readiness, and our eyes and ears focus more clearly on recognizing the Good News in the midst of a distracted world.

God continues to draw all who seek Him into His story (Acts 17:27). Ask Him today to open your eyes and ears to see and hear signs of His Kingdom, come and coming. Are you prepared for action, grounded in His grace and living in hope? Where do you see and hear God’s promise? How might you share this Good News with others?



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Week Two

*"It is grace at the beginning,
and grace at the end."*

– D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones



GRACE GOING FORWARD

WEEK TWO | DAY ONE

“Thus says the Lord: The people who survived the sword found grace in the wilderness; when Israel sought for rest, the Lord appeared to him from far away. I have loved you with an everlasting love; therefore I have continued my faithfulness to you.”

JEREMIAH 31:2-3

Scripture repeatedly references the Israelites’ wilderness journey, and through the book of Exodus, we see shadows and sightings of the Savior to come. The verses above recall the grace found in the wilderness and the promised new covenant of grace. Jeremiah also reminds the people of God’s grace because they are now in exile in Babylon.

Conflict and famine forced millions of South Sudanese, including Frontier Fellowship’s South Sudanese partners, to flee. These partners weren’t sure when—or if—they could return home. They prayed that God would show them how to minister in the refugee camps where they now lived. Over the years, God used them to extend healing, comfort and provision to other displaced peoples. Doors opened for them to finally return home to South Sudan, where they continue sharing the hope of the Gospel with their least-reached neighbors, including refugees from Sudan who fled following the outbreak of war in 2023.

Just as God’s grace continued to follow the Israelites in exile, He enabled the South Sudanese Christ-followers to flourish in their displacement and continues to demonstrate His grace as they have returned home.

Each Advent we recall the longing, the waiting, the arrival and the promise of Christ’s return. Each time we turn to Scripture, we find Jesus—God’s gift of grace—faithfully leading with His everlasting love. His faithfulness is grace going forward, giving us the strength to go forward as well. Pray for those around the world who are displaced and for those who minister among them and to them.

HEALING GRACE

WEEK TWO | DAY TWO

“And after you have suffered for a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, support, strengthen, and establish you.”

1 PETER 5:10

Born into a Hindu family, Manu first heard about Jesus when one of Frontier Fellowship’s South Asian partners visited his village. After hearing a Gospel presentation, Manu pushed his way through the crowd, wondering—perhaps desperately hoping—if the Jesus he’d just heard about could heal him from epilepsy. After having a church planter pray for him, Manu’s symptoms disappeared! Eager to learn more, he visited a local house church and soon decided to follow Jesus.

Manu’s story resembles the dramatic examples of healing found in the Bible. We know that not everyone who is prayed for is immediately healed; God’s ways are mysterious. But the verse above gives us hope that all those called by the God of grace will find restoration, support and strength and be established by Him. Our suffering is just for a “little while,” and God promises to walk with us through suffering, not just provide a way out of it.

The God of grace has called us to His eternal glory in Christ. What a miraculous gift! Whether we experience physical healing like Manu or Jesus’ presence with us as we suffer, we experience God with us, Immanuel. This is God’s great gift of love and grace, both now and forevermore.

Through Frontier Fellowship’s partnerships, Christians in the US and on the frontier are helping the least-reached connect with local churches and resources that can introduce them to Jesus. Pray for those who have daily contact with men, women and children who, like Manu, will welcome the Good News into every part of their lives.

RECEIVING GRACE

WEEK TWO | DAY THREE

“Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

HEBREWS 4:16

Christmastime brings thoughts of gift-giving and receiving. At times, we are surprised to be the recipients of generosity we did not expect. It's one of the joys of the season.

Nothing we can do earns God's love. God calls, forgives and loves us because God is love. We receive God's grace in the very fact of our existence; life itself is a gift of unmerited favor. As we come to know this loving God, we can approach Him boldly to receive His mercy and grace. But the gift does not stop there. When we receive His mercy and grace, we are empowered to share God's goodness and love with others.

“Why are you doing this? Why this love?” A Sudanese refugee woman was curious to know why Egyptian followers of Jesus were providing food for her family and taking her very ill son to a local hospital for care. One of Jossour's team members explained that the love of Jesus compelled them to love others. The woman inquired, “I need to know more about the love of Jesus. Can you tell me?” Jossour's team shared the Good News and gave her a Bible so she could learn even more. She prayed and gave her life to Christ that day. God's love extended through His people and His Word—such grace!

Pray for those around the world who are sharing God's love in tangible ways with least-reached peoples. Ask God to extend His love through you, as well. And remember that you can also “approach [God's] throne of grace with boldness” in your own times of need. Give thanks for these gifts of grace!

GRACE & GLORY

WEEK TWO | DAY FOUR

“For the Lord God is a sun and shield:
The Lord will give grace and glory: No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.”

PSALM 84:11 (KJV)

God's revelation of grace is a gift that grows and gains momentum over time. Thinking of those who walk closely with God, we recall the story of Naomi, Ruth and Boaz. Boaz was a type of Christ, representing the Kinsman-Redeemer—the relative who pays another's debts at their own expense. Ruth's faithfulness and Boaz's generosity saved Naomi's inheritance. Because of Boaz's compassionate love, the family line was redeemed. Ruth—a foreign, desolate, poverty-stricken woman—becomes a beloved wife and gives birth to the son who would continue the royal line through David to Jesus, the promised Messiah. What a faith-building glimpse into the gracious nature of God! This, too, is a part of the Christmas story and the story of grace. God fulfills His purposes and rewards those who follow Him.

Joko, an Indonesian church planter with Light of the Islands, was visiting a local tourist site one day when he met Edi, the site's manager. As they got acquainted, Edi described a lifestyle of nightclubs, promiscuity and indulgence. When he finished sharing, Joko asked, “How long do you want to live like this?” He then shared the Good News with Edi, who was so moved by it that he decided to follow Jesus that very day.

Over the years, Joko continued to disciple Edi as he grew in faith. Today, Edi's life has been transformed by Christ. He now mentors his friends from the nightclubs, and many of them are curious to know what caused such a sudden change in Edi's life. Through Joko and Edi, and their faithfulness to sharing the Gospel, God is fulfilling His purposes in Indonesia and many lives are being redeemed and transformed!

GRACE TO FOLLOW

WEEK TWO | DAY FIVE

“For this reason the promise depends on faith, in order that it may rest on grace, so that it may be guaranteed to all his descendants, not only to the adherents of the law but also to those who share the faith of Abraham (who is the father of all of us)...”

ROMANS 4:16

God asked Abraham to do a seemingly impossible and confusing thing: willingly sacrifice his only son, Isaac. Here, we see another shadow or type of Christ and His sacrifice. Abraham and Isaac were spared because God provided a ram. Jesus—God’s only Son—was not spared, but was sent to earth specifically to die, to be our sacrificial lamb. It was the ultimate expression of grace.

Like Abraham and Isaac, we, too, have been spared. It is all the same story—from the promise that rested on Old Testament grace, to the fulfillment of New Testament grace and the victory of the risen Christ. The story continues today as followers of Jesus carry the hope of the Gospel to the far-reaching parts of the world

Aditya, a South Asian electrician, was electrocuted on the job and became disabled. He believed in witchcraft and worshiped Hindu idols but had no peace, either before or after his accident. Perhaps in his weakness, he gave more thought to his dissatisfaction. New Life South Asia sent church planters to his village, and Aditya heard about Jesus for the very first time. Aditya shared, “Pastor Viraj prayed for me, and I was filled with peace. Now, I live for Jesus Christ! I praise God for sending Viraj to share the Good News of Jesus with me.”

We share the faith of Abraham, the peace of Aditya. During Advent, take time to reflect on this glorious grace and the promise of the Savior who has come and is coming again.

THE GIFT OF GRACE

WEEK TWO | DAY SIX

“For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.”

ROMANS 6:14

Have you ever received a gift or given a gift that didn’t last for long? Maybe it broke, or the batteries ran down or it was poorly made to begin with. There can be a sense of almost childlike disappointment that comes when a gift breaks or doesn’t meet expectations, even if you are not a child. It looked bigger, sturdier, prettier or cooler online than in person. And what about gifts that “run out”? The subscription, the box of candy, the new art supplies...

The gift of God’s grace—when we are able to recognize it—never disappoints. It surpasses expectations. All we deserve is death, and yet Christ died in our place. We have been given life! We can’t earn it and there is nothing we can do to deserve it. No one can break it or take it away. If we are in Christ, we are forever under grace.

Grace never runs out. And it can always be shared. You can share it through a conversation, or a book—God’s Word!

You can share God’s grace in partnership with Frontier Fellowship as we seek to engage the world’s least-reached peoples. You can also share it with your neighbors, family and friends. What an amazing gift to be able to tell someone that God’s grace overcomes sin and death. This Advent season, seek to share the Good News of the grace that reaches past the manger and directly into the lives of those Jesus came to save.

GRACE UPON GRACE

WEEK TWO | DAY SEVEN

“From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.”

JOHN 1:16

A Frontier Fellowship Mission Advocate wrote, “My husband and I traveled to Egypt with a group of American Christians to visit and learn from Egyptian ministry partners. We met with a number of Egyptian church leaders—determined, wise, creative, well-educated men and women devoted to helping others meet Jesus and grow in Him. They live in a difficult place, so they must be cautious, and they are, but fear hasn’t stopped them. They’re taking the grace and truth they’ve received from Jesus and extending it to others.

“We heard stories of Muslims who’d encountered Jesus without a human intermediary, instead through dreams and visions. Like Saul of Tarsus in the Book of Acts, some were former persecutors of the Church. Indeed, God is pouring out His grace in Egypt and beyond.”

The story of Jesus is the story of grace: pure, undiluted, unmerited favor. Whether through dreams and visions or through the guidance of a friend, we’ve each met Jesus and experienced His grace poured upon us. We in no way earned or deserved it. Favor after favor has been given to us, and all because Jesus willingly left His throne in heaven to be born in a backwater of the Roman Empire and placed in a feed trough over 2,000 years ago.

What better time than Advent to reflect on what Jesus sacrificed to live among us, giving thanks for the amazing grace upon grace we’ve received from Him? By His kindness, we’re recipients and messengers of this Good News, praying for colleagues like those our Mission Advocate met in Egypt.



Week Three

*Grace is the touch of God that pulls us
out of our darkness and
into His marvelous light.*

— Anne Graham Lotz



GRACE BEYOND MEASURE

WEEK THREE | DAY ONE

“...and the grace of our Lord overflowed for me with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.”

1 TIMOTHY 1:14

The Apostle Paul shares his testimony in this first chapter of 1 Timothy. As he tells of his own sin and God’s great mercy, he acknowledges God saved him so others could witness the “immense patience” and love available to all who “would believe in him and receive eternal life” (verse 16).

We have all sinned and need God to redeem us, forgive us and give us new life. This is God’s grace beyond measure. No matter the context or content of our sins and struggles, our failings and former unbelief, there is hope! Advent is a time to ponder that hope, that gift, and, like Paul, give God the glory.

Miriam is a single mother in Central Asia. In her culture, men typically provide most of the financial stability for the family, and Miriam struggled to make ends meet. She turned to prostitution to provide for her son. In her feelings of shame and hopelessness, Miriam tried to take her own life. When she awoke in the intensive care unit of the local hospital, she met two women. These women were faithful friends to Miriam and were able to share the Good News of Jesus with her. Soon, by God’s grace, Miriam chose to follow Jesus and committed her life to sharing this hope with others. Now, she joins her church in serving their least-reached community and extends the life-changing message of the Gospel with those who have not heard.

Miriam’s life is just one example of the lives being changed by Christ and His love. Each day, Frontier Fellowship partners and colleagues share the Good News among the least-reached—pray that many more will find hope in God’s measureless mercy and grace!

INHERITANCE OF GRACE

WEEK THREE | DAY TWO

“And now I commend you to God and to the message of his grace, a message that is able to build you up and to give you the inheritance among all who are sanctified.”

ACTS 20:32

Who will receive the inheritance? Who will be included in the family line? Scripture includes examples of those grafted into the family tree—a foreshadowing of God’s grace extending to centurions, Samaritans and us. Tamar, Rahab, Ruth and Bathsheba—all outsiders—are in Matthew’s genealogy. He could have included only Hebrews, men or prominent Hebrew women. But he chose these with purpose, just as God chooses each with purpose.

“They come every Sunday, they dance and leave,” responded an Oromo man in Ethiopia when asked about a small church in his village. At the time, many churches conducted worship services in Amharic, the national language. Political, economic and social issues hindered the use of Oromo, the primary language of over 33% of Ethiopians. This alienation of ethnic identity was one reason the Good News hadn’t taken deeper root among this least-reached people group.

This was the context Dr. Urgessa Biru faced two decades ago when, responding to God’s call, he returned to his home area to share the Gospel with his own people, the Arsi Oromo. He met with church leaders and challenged them to rethink their approach. Slowly but surely, churches began embracing the vision for worship services in the Oromo language. By God’s grace, Light of Hope Ministry Ethiopia (LOHME) has seen indigenous churches emerge among Arsi Oromo. The LOHME choir’s Ethnomusicology Project, led by Dr. Taliilee Fiqruu, has developed praise music for Christian worship using local melodies and dances. These songs are impacting Oromo people of all faiths. The recently translated Arsi Oromo Bible is now making the Good News widely accessible. By God’s grace, the inheritance has come to the Oromo...and to each of us.

RICHES OF GRACE

WEEK THREE | DAY THREE

“...so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

EPHESIANS 2:7

Through the centuries, God was preparing the time and place for the arrival of His Son. And He was preparing the hearts of those who would receive Him. His kindness to us is immeasurable. The riches of grace are all around us...often in unexpected places and often in the midst of difficult circumstances. And that's usually when we notice them most!

When extremists invaded Mohamed's town, he witnessed unbelievable atrocities. Along with many others, he fled his home and was displaced for many years. When a church planter visited his refugee community, Mohamed learned the true story of *Isa al Masih* ("Jesus the Messiah" in the Quran). Mohamed had many questions, but found peace in the person of Jesus. When he publicly expressed his Christian faith, he was severely persecuted and once again had to flee... this time from his own family.

Amid persistent challenges, God remained faithful and provided abundant grace to Mohamed. Christ-followers who came to minister to his community befriended, disciplined and mentored him. Recently, in Mohamed's town, Synod of the Nile's Pastoral, Outreach and Mission Council (POMC) established a new church, where he now worships alongside his wife. Together, they share the Good News of Jesus with those who have experienced similar struggles.

The riches of grace, made known through Jesus, are often abundantly and clearly seen in the lives of persecuted Christians. These faithful and courageous individuals are wholeheartedly committed to Him and to sharing the Good News.

SUFFICIENT GRACE

WEEK THREE | DAY FOUR

“...but he said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness.' So, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me.”

2 CORINTHIANS 12:9

Judges 13-16 tells the story of Samson, another historical figure who points to Christ. Samson's story is one of both power and weakness. He was a judge of Israel, strong and mighty, often victorious, a Nazarite committed to God and his laws. He was certainly more powerful than most of us. But he was still unable to fulfill the Law or to save himself, let alone Israel. In his successes and failures, Samson points to the need for someone far greater who can remain faultless and be the true and final Judge. He points toward the One who truly redeems His people and fulfills the promise of conquered sin. We are saved not by the Law but by that glorious, undeserved gift of grace—Jesus!

Sufficient means enough. God's grace is exactly what we need—no more, no less. Theologian Michael Horton says, “The Gospel is not Christ plus our spiritual disciplines, Christ plus free will, Christ plus our acts of love and service to others, or Christ plus our pious experiences, but Christ alone. All our salvation is found in Christ, not in ourselves” (*Putting Amazing Back in Grace*, page 15).

Most of us spend our lives searching for what's "enough." We can be easily convinced that material items, good deeds, grand adventures or other gods will bring us satisfaction. But it's never enough. It's not even a tiny part of enough.

Only God's grace in Christ is sufficient. We need not search elsewhere or claim self-sufficiency. In fact, His grace shines all the brighter in the presence of our weakness, because He is present there, too! When His grace, His power, are seen in their miraculous sufficiency, all the glory goes to God!

SACRIFICIAL GRACE

WEEK THREE | DAY FIVE

“In him we have redemption through his blood,
the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to
the riches of his grace...”

EPHESIANS 1:7

The Old Testament includes many examples of animal sacrifice. The Jewish people understood this practice as a way of keeping peace with God. So when John the Baptist announced Jesus as “the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29), listeners likely thought of Passover, foreshadowing Jesus as the Lamb of God, born to reconcile all peoples to Himself.

Throughout history, many people groups have sought redemption through sacrifice. The Nenets of Siberia traditionally sacrifice a white reindeer twice yearly to keep peace with the spirits and invoke good fortune. For the Nenets, reindeer represent much more than Christmas folklore—reindeer are life.

From their homeland, Siberia’s Yamal peninsula, the Nenets and their reindeer traditionally migrate more than 600 miles across northern Russia’s arctic tundra each year. Reindeer provide companionship, transportation and sustenance. Reindeer hides are used to make clothing and shelters for the harsh climate.

There is now a small, growing Nenets Church on the tundra, and Bible translation is underway. Thank God for the ways He is at work in the world! Join us in praying for all who believe they must earn salvation or do good works to reach heaven. Ask God to open avenues for them to hear about Jesus and the redemption He offers “according to the riches of His grace.”

ABUNDANT GRACE

WEEK THREE | DAY SIX

“May grace and peace be yours in abundance in the
knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.”

2 PETER 1:2

Some families express their love for each other through piles of gifts under the tree at Christmas, while others choose to focus on time spent together, perhaps a holiday vacation. Some prepare lavish meals, while others have simpler celebrations. We might have many ways to celebrate and express love for one another, but as Christ-followers, we know that the heart of the holiday season is found only in Jesus, God’s astounding and abundant gift of grace.

Schools in the Sand is a Christian ministry providing primary-school education for children from the Meghwal and Bhil unreached people groups. These Hindu people groups are ethnic minorities living in an economically poor region of Pakistan. Because of their low-caste status, Meghwal and Bhil children aren’t welcome in local primary schools. By providing education for these children, Schools in the Sand helps equip them with the necessary tools to break the cycle of poverty and introduce them to the teachings of Jesus. Schools in the Sand uses its facilities to host church services and Bible studies, creating avenues of Gospel access for the whole family and reinforcing, in tangible ways, God’s love and care for every person!

As our knowledge of God and His Son increases, our grace and peace also grow in abundance. This abundance, this extravagance, knows no limits because God has loved us with limitless love. This abundant grace is available to all, rich and poor, regardless of our past, culture or context. Take time today to reflect on God’s amazing gift of grace and pray for least-reached people who still lack access to this wonderful gift.

CHOSEN BY GRACE

WEEK THREE | DAY SEVEN

“So, too, at the present time there is
a remnant chosen by grace.”

ROMANS 11:5

Philip was born into a poor family in a neighborhood ostracized and excluded from society. When he was eight, the village teacher allowed Philip to attend school but made him sit in the back of the classroom on a stack of dried cow patties used as fuel.

Philip wanted to fit in. He tried to play tag with the other children, but nobody would touch him, believing he was unclean. They called him demeaning names and ignored him. Adults were also cruel, including a storekeeper who forced him to wash his money before buying milk. He, along with others from his neighborhood, was despised and rejected, suffering lifelong abuse.

Through the Holy Spirit’s work, Philip became a Christian. He committed his life to sharing the hope of Jesus with others who were oppressed. He drew strength from knowing that Jesus, like him, had also suffered greatly.

Sorrow is part of the human condition. We live in a sinful and broken world full of rejection, loss and pain. We’ve all experienced suffering and grief and have seen injustices committed against groups of people. But God chooses His remnant people, often the least likely by worldly standards. And no human-made categorizations matter to Him. We are all made in His image.

Frontier Fellowship partners seek to reach the least-reached, the rejected, the despised and abused. We desire to share Christ’s love and His message of hope and grace. Consider today how you can love the unloved, share the Good News and pray for that remnant chosen by grace.



Week Four

*The practice of giving thanks—this is the way
we practice the presence of God.
Staying present to His grace is the way
we stay present to His presence.*

— Ann Voskamp



GREATER GRACE

WEEK FOUR | DAY ONE

“...you have heard of this hope before in the word of the truth, the gospel that has come to you. Just as it is bearing fruit and growing in the whole world, so it has been bearing fruit among yourselves from the day you heard it and truly comprehended the grace of God.”

COLOSSIANS 1:5-6

As we have seen, the story of Jesus reaches much farther than the manger. The author of Hebrews reminds us of Jesus’ humanity and that He is now “crowned with glory and honor” (2:9) because of the death He suffered for our sins.

Frontier Fellowship’s Women’s Shelter partners (City and Mountains) are no strangers to the impact of sin in their communities. These partners serve in regions of Central Asia where women and children are often mistreated, and many young women are subjected to forced marriages and abuse. Our partners provide housing, services and advocacy for these families while also offering vocational training for shelter residents and at-risk women. The Women’s Shelter: Mountains location was recently granted permission by their local government to host domestic violence prevention courses. God’s grace is being made known through the faithful, tangible care of our partners.

Frontier Fellowship partners can advocate for the desperate and needy far beyond their own capacity because they point to greater grace. Jesus is the Savior-Advocate who intimately understands suffering and longs to rescue, redeem and restore. The Hebrews passage reminds us that this Savior, maker and keeper of all, unashamedly calls us His brothers and sisters (2:10-11). The author quotes Isaiah’s prophecies of the Messiah: “Here I am and the children whom God has given Me.”

There is no better news! We are all in need of this grace. And what a privilege to extend glimpses of grace to those around us so they, too, can come to know the greater grace. Where can you extend grace today?

GRACE IN OUR HEARTS

WEEK FOUR | DAY TWO

“But he gives all the more grace; therefore it says,
‘God opposes the proud, but gives grace to the humble.’”

JAMES 4:6

After years of seeming silence, the coming of the Messiah was foretold again. When the angel visited Mary (Luke 1), his greeting troubled her. “Highly favored”? Who was she to be highly favored? He then told her about the Son she would conceive. It seemed too fantastical. Understandably, the young virgin asked, “How will this be?” The angel reassured her: this was not something to fear. He promised that the Holy Spirit would come upon her, and the power of the Most High would overshadow her, assuring her, “For no word from God will ever fail.”

This was God’s Word, God’s work, God’s grace. In that moment, Mary embraced her true identity: “I am the Lord’s servant...May your word to me be fulfilled” (Luke 1:45).

And oh, how thoroughly she embraced her role and her God! Take time today to read and reflect on Mary’s song in Luke 1:46-55.

Mary moved from “Why me?” to glorifying God and claiming, “Holy is His name.” She moved from considering her own personal circumstances to acknowledging God’s presence and power from generation to generation. She accepted and rejoiced in her place in history, in the grand story of the ages.

Today, we sense that the longing and waiting of Advent is almost over. The long-promised Savior has nearly arrived! We who know He has come, as we await His return, join the humble recipients of God’s great grace. With Mary, we puzzle, “Why me?” and “How can this be?” Then we step back and see the grand story. We remember He performs mighty deeds, lifts the humble, feeds the hungry, is merciful and keeps His promises. “For no word from God will ever fail” (Luke 1:37).

GRACE TO SHARE

WEEK FOUR | DAY THREE

CHRISTMAS EVE

“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”

2 PETER 3:18

As we come to the end of our Advent journey, we welcome the Christ Child into our world—Immanuel, the God who has been with us all along. We rejoice that every hope and fear in our hearts finds resolution in the one who is making all things new.

Yet, our waiting isn't over. We celebrate God's Kingdom drawing near even as our reality feels far from complete—hearts are still broken; creation still groans; injustice, violence, sorrow and fear continue to wreak havoc everywhere.

God speaks to us as He spoke to John in Revelation 21:5, calling back to us from the future of His perfect Kingdom: “See, your King! The one seated on the throne, the one with authority, the one who is trustworthy and true! Behold Me and believe Me when I say, ‘I am making all things new!’”

Like John, we train our dreaming eyes to awaken to the reality of all God has promised. Our hope is renewed and our faith restored as we begin to comprehend that all will be well. Though the world is full of trouble, we take heart because Christ, our King, has overcome the world (John 16:33). And here, we enter into another kind of Advent, a journey between the already-and-not-yet of God's Kingdom. Here we are called by grace to participate with God in His Kingdom work of redeeming and restoring. It's our turn to call out to a world that is waiting: Behold, your King has come, and He is making all things new. Take heart, fear not, all will be well.

May we continue to grow in God's grace. Take some time today to go for a walk or drive around your neighborhood, and as you go, speak prayers of blessing, hope, truth and encouragement. To God be the glory!

Merry Christmas!

Deepen Your Experience

Each of us has a unique role to play in creating avenues of Gospel access for the world's least-reached peoples. Here you'll find ways for you and your congregation to engage more deeply with us on the frontier, including joining a Frontier Fellowship vision trip or downloading free resources to expand your understanding of the world's major religions.

Use the links below to access these resources and opportunities, or contact our National Office for more information.

Pray

Download prayer guides, join the prayer team or register to attend Frontier Fellowship's monthly Called to Prayer gatherings on Zoom: frontierfellowship.com/pray

Discover

Access recommended reading lists on the world's major religions and other topical themes such as partnership and displaced peoples: frontierfellowship.com/tools

Go

Our team regularly facilitates trips to visit our indigenous partners around the globe, and we'd love to have you join us on a future trip: frontierfellowship.com/go

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Frontier Fellowship invites believing communities to engage people groups where the Good News of Jesus and His Kingdom is not yet known. Through collaborative, intercultural partnerships, we're creating avenues of access to the Gospel for those who have not yet heard it and are working for the flourishing of communities.



FRONTIER FELLOWSHIP
GOING BEYOND

7132 PORTLAND AVENUE S., SUITE 136 | RICHFIELD, MN 55423-3264

FRONTIERFELLOWSHIP.COM | **INFO@FRONTIERFELLOWSHIP.COM** | 612.869.0062



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