Deserve vs. Grace

Ever stop to wonder, “What do I really deserve?” Today we are discussing what the Bible has to say about what we deserve versus God’s grace.

## Introduction

Today, we're diving into a topic that hits close to home for all of us: what we deserve and what we receive through grace. The world often measures us by our achievements, however, it's time to uncover the truth according to God's Word. Let's dig into the scriptures and discover some profound truths.

## The Reality of Deserving

Let’s start with the reality of what we deserve. It's a concept we encounter every day, whether it's at work, in our relationships, or in society at large. Proverbs 12:14 says:

### Proverbs 12:14

(14)  From the fruit of their lips people are filled with good things, and the work of their hands brings them reward.

This reminds us that hard work pays off and that the fruit of our labor can lead to blessings and abundance. It's the age-old principle of reaping what we sow, of seeing the tangible results of our efforts. The danger of this is thinking we can earn favor from God and can atone for our own mistakes and sins.

But life isn't always fair, and sometimes, our actions have consequences that we'd rather not face. Romans 6:23 says:

### Romans 6:23

(23)  For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"For the wages of sin is death." That is a harsh reality check. It reminds us that our choices have weight and that our decisions can lead us down paths of destruction. Sin carries its own price tag, its own set of consequences that we cannot escape. This is what we deserve. No matter how hard we try, we are sinful beings that on our best day still deserve eternal separation from God, in other words, death.

So where does that leave us? Striving to do our best, yes, but also recognizing our limitations, and our imperfections. Understanding that while we may deserve certain outcomes based on our actions, grace offers something altogether different.

## Undeserved Grace

The opposite of what we deserve is undeserved grace. It's a word we hear often in church circles, but what does grace really mean? Ephesians 2:8-9 gives us this biblical truth:

### Ephesians 2:8-9

(8)  For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—  (9)  not by works, so that no one can boast.

Did you catch that? Grace isn't something we earn; it's a gift freely given by a loving and gracious God.

When we were at our lowest, at our most broken and desperate, God did not turn His back on us. Instead, He reached out His hand in love and offered us forgiveness, redemption, and new life. He sent his son, Jesus, to redeem us so that we would not spend eternity separated from him. Jesus tells us why he came in John 10:10, which says:

### John 10:10

(10)  The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

That's grace in action, friends. It's unmerited favor, undeserved kindness, poured out on us in abundance. And the best part is that it is available to each and every one of us, no matter who we are or what we've done.

Jesus shared the parable of the prodigal son in Luke 15:11-32. Despite squandering his inheritance and living a life of rebellion, selfishness, excess, and gluttony, the prodigal son is welcomed back by his father with open arms. It is a powerful reminder that no matter how far we may stray, God's love never wavers, and His grace never runs out. We deserve death but we can have undeserved grace through Jesus Christ.

## Embracing Humility and Gratitude

We can tie the reality of what we deserve with undeserved grace together with humility and gratitude. Philippians 2:3-4 says:

### Philippians 2:3-4

(3)  Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves,  (4)  not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

Paul challenges us in his letter to the church in Philippi. It's a call to shift our focus away from ourselves and towards those around us, to live lives marked by selflessness and compassion. It is a life built on a core tenet Jesus gives us recorded in John 15:12-13, which says:

### John 15:12-13

(12)  My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you.  (13)  Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

And let's not forget about gratitude. Psalm 103:10-12 reminds us of the depth of God's love and forgiveness. It says:

### Psalms 103:10-12

(10)  he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.  (11)  For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;  (12)  as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

This is a humbling truth, a reminder that we don't get what we deserve, that instead, we are showered with grace and mercy.

So what does all of this mean for us? It means living with hearts full of gratitude and an abundance of humility. It means recognizing that we are recipients of undeserved grace, and in turn, extending that same grace to others. It also means embracing the truth that no matter how far we may stray, God's love never wavers, and His grace never runs out.

## Conclusion

The Bible tells us plainly and simply what we deserve and what grace offers us. We encourage you to live with hearts full of gratitude and humility. Soak up the grace of God through Jesus and spread it around like confetti, showing the world what grace looks like in action. And most importantly, never forget that God loves you beyond measure, and you are cherished beyond comprehension. God’s grace knows no bounds, it is limitless.

As you start each day, shine bright, and make the world a better place, one act of grace at a time. Be the hands and feet of Jesus to each person you meet, without judgment or condemnation. We all deserve eternal separation from God, but He grants us grace beyond measure.