

Grace..Grace...Grace.

**For by grace you have been saved
through faith and that not of yourselves;
*it is the gift of God. Ephesians 2,8***

The picture which always moves me deeply, is children or people standing in a long unending queue stretching out their hands to receive food given by strangers when struck by calamities. I always hang such a photo in my room reminding the grace received in my life. Once when I looked at such outstretched hands, I used to think that one of the worst moments in my life would be when I have to be totally at the mercy of others even for a morsel of food.

I was brought up in a family where I was rigorously taught and trained to do things by my own hands and earn my bread. In other words never to depend on anyone else. If somebody helped me, somehow knowingly or unknowingly we were taught to pay it back. Never be in debt to anyone, except in love was drilled into my heart.

Though I had a wonderful relationship with my Lord, this same thinking naturally flowed there. Hmm the Lord has done so many things for me, so how can I repay Him. I started working for the Lord trying to repay. Once I was talking to my friend late into the night about this. We were arguing. Then she smiled and said, "tell me with what and how much can you repay Him" and she said "learn to receive grace, certain things can never be paid back." That word worked so deeply in me.

Now I look at the Cross, and I try to comprehend what grace is all about. I can never earn this. Even if I can burn myself inch by inch, I still cannot earn the grace of salvation. Jesus Christ was totally sinless, and before stepping into this sin-steeped world He lived in Heaven, spotlessly pure. Whereas I was born in sin (Psalm51). What chance did I ever have to come before Him and what can I bring Him? Cross and the beauty of the spotless sacrifice broke me totally, my pride of being able to repay was shattered before Calvary. I learnt humility. I learnt to receive. I learnt to stretch out my hand shamelessly and to cry, "Lord my hands are empty, there is nothing in the whole world that I can give you, but I need you, I need all of you." My life was filled in ways that I can never imagine.

It takes more humility to say, I can never earn this, nor do I deserve and never can I repay it, but I need you Lord, your grace, your love, your salvation and your everything and just give me a grateful heart. Again I see the photograph and I don't see children stretching their hands for food, but I see myself absolutely helpless, absolutely poor, absolutely undeserving, stretching out my hand even further and crying louder, " Jesus I need you, I need all of You. Son of David have mercy on me....."

My friend did you choose to know the Lord? This is GRACE all about. That God demonstrated His love towards us that when we were still sinners Christ died for us. Romans 5, 8. Only the love of God, which is poured out into our hearts, should propel us to work for God. Working for God out of a sense of duty and obligation, in the long run will steal the joy of co-partnering with the Lord in His Kingdom building. Let us receive stretching our arms and let it flow to this starved world.

Dear Father, teach us humility to receive the gift of your Son and His Inheritance. Help us to come before you with absolute abandonment just longing to be filled with the fullness of Jesus Christ. Teach us Lord how lovely it is to stretch our hands to the utmost and to receive your grace. Thank you Father for sending Jesus, the delight of your heart to be atoned for us. Help us to be ever faithful and be poured out for your Kingdom with our hearts filled with the love of Jesus. In Jesus name Amen. Amen and Amen.