

Is Grace a Person?

Some teachers today claim that grace is a person rather than a noun, explaining that the name of that person is Jesus. It's a very catchy saying, but is it true?

Grace certainly came through a person, but is grace itself a person? And what does it actually mean when someone says, "Grace is a person named Jesus"?

We know Jesus was filled with grace and truth.

He was the embodiment of God's grace.

He was grace in action, dying to pay for our sins, rising from the dead to justify us, sending His Spirit to empower us and always interceding for us in heaven.

But grace is not Jesus.

Grace is a noun, brought to us by a person, whose name is Jesus.

He brings grace to us and demonstrates grace to us, but in the Bible, grace is not a person but a noun—a wonderful, glorious noun!

Let's look at some relevant verses that make this perfectly clear.

"The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, the glory as the only Son of the Father, full of grace and truth" (John 1:14). So, Jesus is full of grace and truth but is not grace Himself.

"But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we (the Jews) shall be saved, even as they (the Gentiles)" (Acts 15:11). Here Peter speaks of the grace of the Lord Jesus, which would make no sense at all if grace is a

person, and His name is Jesus.

Paul also speaks of the gospel of the grace of God (Acts 20:24), which makes no sense if grace is a person not a noun. Of course, the message of God's grace is all about Jesus, but that is very different from saying that grace is Jesus.

Could it be that some people who say that, "Grace is a person, and His name is Jesus," are failing to give a clear definition of grace?

Really now, when you ask someone to define grace and they give an answer like this, what have they actually told you?

Every true Christian believes in Jesus and loves Him and follows Him, so when a teacher defines grace by saying, "It's a person named Jesus" they haven't told us anything at all. What exactly do they mean?

Let's look at some more verses that speak about God's amazing grace.

Paul wrote, "But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many" (Rom. 5:15). Paul again speaks of the grace of God and then the grace of that one man Jesus Christ, which is very different than saying that grace is a person.

In keeping with that, Paul speaks of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ five times in his letters (Rom. 16:20; 2 Cor. 8:9; Gal. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:28; 2 Thess. 3:18).

If grace is a person and His name is Jesus, then what would these verses mean? Would Paul be speaking about the Jesus of our Lord Jesus Christ?

In Romans 1 Paul wrote, "To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our

Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. 1:7). Notice that peace and grace come from the Father and the Son but neither peace nor grace are the Father and Son. See also his greeting to the Corinthians: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:3).

So I think it should be pretty clear by now that grace is a noun, not a person, but, to repeat, it is a glorious noun, and it is all about Jesus.

It's just wrong and unhelpful to say that "grace is a person named Jesus," as many modern grace teachers claim.

Instead, while focusing on the person and work of Jesus, we can define the grace that comes to us through Him.

It is the Lord's unmerited favor—and so much more.

It is God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

It is His merciful, enabling help, His ongoing empowerment, His continued working on our behalf.

It speaks of the Lord's past, present and future action, expressing what Jesus does for us and not just what He did for us.

As expressed by A.M. Hunter, "Grace means primarily the free, forgiving love of God in Christ to sinners and the operation of that love in the lives of Christians."

How glorious is God's grace!

The more accurately we define it, the more we can live by it.
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(Excerpted and adapted from *The Grace Controversy*.)