

Steve Hill: Getting Back to the Amazingness of Grace

For some reason known only to the Lord I am reminded of a dear saint of God who would be spiritually crushed by the lack of depth in today's Christian world. Of course, I can't speak for him, but I can speak about him. He was radically saved by the grace and mercy of God. His encounter with Jesus has become known throughout the world. However, his name, his face and his story are almost insignificant. But not to me.

Probably one of the most recognized songs in English Christianity is "Amazing Grace," published in 1779. Imagine its origin, scratched out with a quill pen on some type of crude parchment by John Newton, a slave trader who experienced the pure mercy and grace of God. Little did he know that his poetic personal prayer to Jesus would be recorded thousands of times and be adored by generations of grateful sinners who knew exactly what he was expressing. I would imagine the rendition of "Amazing Grace" delivered by a band of bagpipes has brought overwhelming inspiration to countless millions.

Mercy is underserved forgiveness. Grace is undeserved favor from God. We are inferior beings; He is superior. Regardless, He chooses to extend His loving-kindness toward us. He not only forgives us (mercy), but He also continues to love us (grace). Sadly, many have hijacked that grace and stretched its benefits far past God's intentions. Just because He loves us unconditionally doesn't mean we can stomp all over His kindness.

Although I don't have a quill pen and an inkwell, I've chosen to add a few modern verses to Brother Newton's beloved hymn with my mini computer. He would be extremely offended at the following words. I believe he would be equally offended by our modern-day interpretation of this cherished characteristic of

God. As you read these words, please don't take offense. My intention is to show just how far we've drifted. We live in a day when many would prefer these verses to the original.

*Amazing grace, how sweet the sound
That sets me free to sin
My life is fun, no price to pay
It's all because of Him.*

*So many sermons I have heard
The altar calls were strong
But thanks to grace, I fought them off
It's sin where I belong.*

*When I've been there ten thousand years
And shared my life of ease
There are martyrs here who died for Him
While I lived myself to please.*

Whether you know Jesus or not, there is a vicious fight taking place for your soul. You have a very real enemy who seeks to steal, kill and destroy. Perhaps you are fully aware of the peril you face; perhaps you are not. The good news is that Jesus has come so that you might experience life in all its fullness, just as He promises: "The thief [the devil] does not come except to steal, and to kill, and to destroy. I have come that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly" (John 10:10).

There are four different types of people who are reading these words.

First, there are those who have never known the Lord. God wants you to know that He loves you and has a tremendous plan for your life (see 2 Pet. 3:9). If you've never known Jesus but would like to meet Him pray this prayer out loud:

Dear Lord Jesus, thank You for speaking to me. Thank You for not leaving me alone. Jesus, I have sinned. I'm sorry. Forgive

me, wash me, make me brand-new. Come live in my heart. Be my Savior, my Lord, and my very best friend. Amen!

Perhaps you are in the second group of readers. You once knew the Lord but have fallen away. Sin has once again taken control of your life. It's time, like the prodigal, to come back to the Lord. Confess your sins and He will forgive you (see 1 John 1:9). Don't wait another day.

The third type of person reading this is the one who is religious but doesn't know the Lord. Just because you go to church doesn't mean you'll go to heaven. Walking into a garage doesn't make you a car. Maybe you're religious but you've strayed. Decide right now to get back to what you once believed. Get back to Jesus!

The fourth group knows the Lord and loves Him sincerely, living in victory every day. If that is you, blessings!

Now we have all been given a free choice. If we choose to tune our ears toward the only One worth following and listen to His instructions, we will find ourselves at the right destination. No one knows his or her physical end. But we should all be well aware of our spiritual end. No matter how difficult or how blessed our lives have been on this earth, nothing compares to what awaits us.

✠ Adapted from *Spiritual Avalanche: The Threat of False Teachings That Could Destroy Millions* by Steve Hill, copyright 2013, published by Charisma House. In this book, Steve Hill, shares a vision God gave him showing a spiritual avalanche of deception and false teaching. He received it while living in what we call *borrowed time*, having been given just a few days to live. But the Lord chose to spare his life. This book's message is imperative for every Christian. To order your copy click [here](#).

PRAYER POWER FOR THE WEEK OF 4/15/2013

This week examine yourself and make sure you are wholeheartedly following Christ and heeding the truth of His Word. Continue to pray for worldwide revival and a harvest of souls. Pray for provision and protection for our Korean brethren as they face the threat of war. Remember those suffering in North Korea and ask the Lord to guide and direct our president in making wise choices affecting our nation and the world. Continue to lift up the persecuted church and Israel, and pray for those in spiritual and civil authority over you. Ask the Lord for a fresh outpouring of His Holy Spirit, and for our nation to repent and call out to God for His intervention and healing. 2 Peter 3:9; John 10:10