

The Key to Living a Great Life

If there's one thing I've realized in life, it's that we can never ask God for too much grace. And we all need it—every day, for everything we need to do in life. Because God loves us so much, He gave His only begotten Son to die for our sins so we can receive His grace, both for our salvation and then to help us walk out our life in Christ with His power.

It's so wonderful to realize that God's *amazing grace* is available to *everyone*, no matter who you are or what you've done. God has good plans for every person who accepts Christ as their Savior, and He wants us to have the abundant life Jesus died to give us. The key to this great life is living in God's great grace.

Grace is from the Great Equalizer. It's so important for us to understand that God's grace is available to every person on this Earth, in whatever capacity they need it. There is no one who is beyond God's reach or His ability to save and restore their life. I know sometimes we can feel like we've done too much wrong and we need to earn God's forgiveness and grace, but His grace is a gift—we can't earn or deserve it. And no one is such a "special case" that He cannot help them.

We look at others' lives, and it may look like they have it all together. People want others to know how "good" they are, so many will pretend everything is OK in order to impress someone. But the outward appearance doesn't always tell the real story. We may see people's outward success, but can't see the inner turmoil they're experiencing, or that they have no real peace or joy in life.

I believe this is a common problem for many people and the reason there is so much strife in the world today. Strife in

our hearts causes us to compare ourselves with others and compete with them, trying to make ourselves “better” than them. It makes people frustrated and confused, struggling with so many issues in their lives because they are trying to figure everything out and solve their problems on their own.

But John 15:5 says that apart from Jesus, “[cut off from vital union with Me] you can do nothing” (AMP). All we have to do is humble ourselves before God and ask Him to help us.

We have not because we ask not. James 4:1-3 explains in detail why so many people are frustrated, confused and living in strife. Verses 2-3 say, “You want what you don’t have, so you scheme and kill to get it. You are jealous of what others have, but you can’t get it, so you fight and wage war to take it away from them. Yet you don’t have what you want because you don’t ask God for it. And even when you ask, you don’t get it because your motives are all wrong—you want only what will give you pleasure” (NLT).

We all have things on our “wish lists,” things we want or need or would just like to have. And when we see someone else with something we want, it can stir up some strong emotions. We can become envious and begin to covet that thing.

I remember years ago, I wanted to be like my pastor’s wife. She was such a sweet woman of God, so kind and soft-spoken and people really loved her. I, on the other hand, was just so outspoken and sharp with my tongue. I *wanted* to be quiet and sweet like her, so I tried but it didn’t work. At one point, people even started asking what was *wrong* with me!

I felt a lot like Paul in Romans 7:15, when he said, “I do not understand what I do. For what I want to do I do not do, but what I hate I do” (NIV). I just didn’t understand why I couldn’t change! I wanted to be sweeter and quieter, but that never lasted long. And just like Paul found out in verses 24 and 25, I began to realize that I can’t change myself—only *God*

can. So I asked Him to change what needed to be changed in me.

If you're struggling to feel good about yourself or be what you think you need to be, I want to encourage you to stop trying and start asking God for grace. God made you who you are, and He knows what you need and what needs to change in your life. He wants you to enjoy your life while you're in the process of becoming all He created you to be.

God will give you grace for your case. That's why I call Him the Great Equalizer. We never have to settle for less than God's best in our lives when we have access to His grace—His power to do the things we can't do in our own strength—at all times. God's grace has no limit, it won't run out. It is available to any and all who will *humble* themselves and receive it. Remember, we can never ask Him for too much grace. He always knows exactly what we need. And He is always ready and willing to help us—each and every one.

*For more on this topic, order Joyce's four-CD series **Amazing Grace**. You can also contact us to receive our free magazine, *Enjoying Everyday Life*, by calling (800) 727-9673 or visiting .*

Ladies, join Joyce for the Love Life Women's Conference September 17-19 in St. Louis, Missouri. For more information, go to

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