



AMAZING GRACE



PRAYER, FASTING, AND CONSECRATION

JANUARY 6–10, 2020



EVERY NATION



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CONTENTS

Fasting 101	2
My Plan	5
I Am Thankful to God For	6
In 2020, I Am Believing God For	7
Introduction: Amazing Grace	8
Grace Is All-Encompassing	10
Grace Declares Us Right before God	14
Grace Draws Us Closer to God	18
Grace Purifies Us	22
Grace Enriches Us	26
Grace Is Sufficient for Us	30
Grace Helps Us Overcome	34

FASTING 101

CONNECT

All of us have needs and wants. Needs are things that we cannot live without. Wants are things we would like to have. What are some of your needs? What are some of your wants? There are many things we need and want. But sometimes, we focus so much on our needs and wants that we put aside our relationship with God. Fasting lets us focus more on God by setting aside our needs and wants.

WHAT IS FASTING?

Fasting is stopping an activity (usually eating) for a period of time to focus more on God. We replace eating or using our gadgets with time with God. This means praying, worshiping, and reading the Bible. These activities strengthen our relationship with God.

When our parents speak to us, we should pay attention and listen to them. Fasting helps us pay attention and listen to God. It helps us put aside distractions. We say to God, “I am going to listen to You because You are my Father. I trust You!”

Jesus gave us an example of fasting in Matthew 4. Jesus knew that He would need strength and power for His ministry. He prepared by fasting for forty days in the desert. During this time, He was tempted by Satan. His response to that temptation is the truth we can hold on to for strength when we fast:

“People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” **MATTHEW 4:4 (NLT)**

Fasting is usually keeping yourself from eating and drinking as you devote more time for God. But you can also fast from different media (TV, video games) and technology (gadgets, Internet) if you cannot fast from food. The important thing is to keep your focus away from the things the world offers to spend more time with God.

BEFORE FASTING

1. Pray

Spend time reading the Bible before the fast. Ask the Holy Spirit for guidance in your prayers. Write down your specific prayer requests for your family, friends, church, and nation.

2. Commit

Pray about the kind of fast that you will do and commit to it ahead of time. Ask God for grace to help you follow through with your decision. Also, ask your parents and maybe even your doctor if you are allowed to do a specific type of food fast.

3. Act

If you will be fasting from food, start eating smaller portions a few days before you fast. Avoid sugary and fatty foods. Ask someone to be your prayer partner throughout the fast.

WHILE FASTING

1. Focus

Set aside time to read God's Word and pray. This devotional will help you go through your fast. Just be ready to listen to God's voice and do what the Holy Spirit is telling you.

2. Pray

If you can, join at least one prayer meeting in your church. Pray for your family, church, pastors, nation, campuses, and missions throughout the week.

3. Fill Up

During mealtimes, if you're fasting from food, read the Bible and pray instead. Drink plenty of water and rest as much as you can. Keep in mind that you may find yourself becoming physically weak, tired, impatient, or irritated. If you're doing a different type of fast, read the Bible and pray during the time you would normally do what you are fasting from (for example, browsing through social media or playing video games).

AFTER FASTING

1. Eat

If you fasted from food, reintroduce solid food gradually. Your body will need time to adjust to a normal diet. Start with fruits, juices, and salad, then add more vegetables. Eat small portions throughout the day. It may be tempting, but try not to eat junk food and sweets right away. If you've finished a different type of fast, remember what God revealed to you as you spent time with Him. Take what you learned from the fast into your everyday life.

2. Pray

Don't stop praying! Trust that God will keep His promises and knows what He's doing. Don't stop believing in and listening to God all year. Be in faith and expect God to answer your prayers!

MY PLAN

DAY 1

Fasting Options:

- Social media fast
- Gadget fast
- Skip one meal
- Other _____

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

DAY 2

Fasting Options:

- Social media fast
- Gadget fast
- Skip one meal
- Other _____

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

DAY 3

Fasting Options:

- Social media fast
- Gadget fast
- Skip one meal
- Other _____

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

DAY 4

Fasting Options:

- Social media fast
- Gadget fast
- Skip one meal
- Other _____

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

DAY 5

Fasting Options:

- Social media fast
- Gadget fast
- Skip one meal
- Other _____

Prayer Meeting(s) to Attend:

I AM THANKFUL TO GOD FOR . . .

How did God answer your prayers in 2019?

IN 2020, I AM BELIEVING GOD FOR ...

What are your prayer requests this year?

My Family (e.g., good health for parents)

My School (e.g., good grades)

My Friends (e.g., for friends to know Jesus)

Others (e.g., for more people to know Christ)

My Prayer Partner: _____



INTRODUCTION

AMAZING GRACE

We keep hearing about “amazing grace.” But what does grace actually mean? And what makes it amazing? When we should have been punished but received favor instead, we call it grace.

In the Bible, there was a man who experienced God’s amazing grace. In Genesis 12:1, God purposefully called Abraham out of all the men on the earth and started a relationship with him, a relationship that was based on a promise and a serious agreement. There was nothing about Abraham that made God choose him over others. In fact, Joshua 24:2 tells us that Abraham worshiped other gods. This is grace: The favor Abraham got was not based on who he was or anything he did. He was even blessed! God promised to bless Abraham and to make him into “a great people.” Though Abraham and his wife did not have children, God fulfilled His promise and gave them a son, Isaac. How amazing is that?

Abraham’s children and grandchildren were called the Israelites, and they continued to multiply until they were a great people. But there was a problem: they were slaves in Egypt. Still, God showed His amazing grace again when He set them free from slavery and brought them into the Promised Land (Exodus 1–14, Joshua 1–5). Like Abraham, the Israelites had done nothing to deserve God’s favor. Even after they were rescued, they continued to be a stubborn and disobedient people. Instead of responding to God’s grace with love and faithfulness, they worshiped other gods. When God disciplined them, they would be sorry and turn back to Him, but then disobey again. Something more than discipline was needed to change the hearts of God’s people.

So God showed His amazing grace once again when He sent His own Son, Jesus, to save His people. But He not only saved the Israelites; He saved everyone. That includes you and me.

Why do we need saving? Like the Israelites, we are stubborn and disobedient. And like Abraham and the Israelites, we do not receive God's grace and salvation because we are good or kind. Instead, we receive His grace and salvation when we put our faith in Jesus Christ and what He has done for us in His life, death, and resurrection. But this grace does so much more than just save us. It also changes us!

This week, as we reflect on the amazing grace that we receive through Jesus Christ our Savior, we will explore how this grace also helps us live a Christian life. Because of His amazing grace, we are saved, and because of His amazing grace, we can follow and obey Jesus.

PREPARATION FOR THE FAST: GRACE IS ALL-ENCOMPASSING

READ ROMANS 5:15–21

Sin ruled and brought death. But grace rules in the lives of those who are right with God. The grace of God brings eternal life. That's because of what Jesus Christ our Lord has done. **ROMANS 5:21**

There was once a king who invited the chiefs of all the towns in his kingdom to the palace for his birthday. Each chief pledged a special gift for the king. “Our town will present the king with the ripest, juiciest fruits of our land,” said one chief. Another whose town was well known for its woodcraft said, “We will present the king with a carved mahogany throne.” One particular chief, pressured by the other chiefs’ pledges, foolishly promised, “Our town will craft him a crown made of the finest gold.” However, the foolish chief did not have any gold. He also did not know how to forge a crown. Before his birthday, the king heard that one town still had no gift for him. Angrily, the king threatened to punish the entire town if they failed to give what they promised. The townsmen desperately tried to forge a crown, but they could not succeed. Hearing of their situation, a seasoned goldsmith from another town promised to help them. The next day, the goldsmith presented the crown he had forged overnight to the chief, who immediately presented it to the king. Upon seeing the crown, the king exclaimed, “This is the most beautiful crown I have ever seen. Because of this genius craftsmanship, I promise to provide food for your whole town as long as I am king!”

The foolish chief’s single error put his entire town in danger. Fortunately, the goldsmith saved the town, and the work of his hands even brought them greater blessing.

In the verses we read, we see that because of one man’s failure, sin became our master. But because of Jesus’ finished work on the cross, we do not only receive the grace of being forgiven and becoming children of God, we are also given the grace to fight against sin!

In the story, the goldsmith's selfless act overcame the fears, failures, and inability of the townspeople and their chief. This is what grace does: It overcomes the fears, failures, and weaknesses in our lives (Romans 5:21). Often, we try to overcome these with our own strength. But just as the townsmen and their chief could not add to the goldsmith's work and had to trust him instead, we must acknowledge and trust in God's grace to overcome.

Jesus is even greater than the goldsmith. He defeated sin and death. As we trust and obey Jesus, we can walk in the victory that He has already won.



Christ's grace allows us to overcome in life!

NOTES

3. How does God's grace help you fight against sin? How does it help you overcome your fears, failures, and weaknesses?



Lord, thank You for Your grace that is bigger than my sin, failures, and weakness. By Your grace You saved me from my sin, and now, I am victorious in life. Thank You for sending Your Son, Jesus, to die on the cross for me so that I can be made righteous and be in a relationship with You. Help me to live by Your grace. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

GRACE DECLARES US RIGHT BEFORE GOD

1



READ TITUS 3:3–7

His grace made us right with God. So now we have received the hope of eternal life as God's children. **TITUS 3:7**

Amusement parks are exciting, but they sometimes have really long lines. Imagine if, one day, you get passes that allow you not only to skip the long lines, but also to enjoy unlimited rides! How fun would that be?

Titus 3:7 tells us that we are justified by grace. What does this mean? Justification means that God declares all of our sins—past, present, and future—forgiven. Not only that, He also declares us righteous in His sight.

Being justified by grace is like having an unlimited pass. It's wrong to go on a ride if you don't have a pass, because each ride requires payment. It's even worse when you try to skip lines! But because you have that special pass, not only will you be allowed to enter, you have the privilege of skipping lines and even repeating rides!

Of course, the passes are paid for by your parents (they're usually expensive!), not with your own money. In the same way, our righteousness was paid for by Jesus. Jesus bought our unlimited pass by dying on the cross for us. When we put our trust in Him, we get a "pass" that frees us from the guilt and shame of our past sins, and even our future sins.

Paul, the writer of this letter to Titus, adds that we, being made right with God by grace, have received another gift: the *hope of eternal life*. This special pass also allows us to freely enter heaven!

As we begin this week of prayer and fasting and explore the riches of God's grace, we have to remember that the gift of eternal life is not based on our good works. It is based on Jesus' work to save us. And this gift of grace is received by faith.

Without Jesus, we were foolish. We did not obey, we were wrong, and we were slaves to the many things our bodies wanted and enjoyed. We lived doing evil and being jealous. *People hated us and we hated each other* (Titus 3:3). If not for His grace, we will remain this way. We can praise Him and thank Him for the grace He showed us when He saved us.



Christ's grace makes us right before God so we can have eternal life.

NOTES



REFLECT

- 1. Think of a time when you received a wonderful gift for no reason. It wasn't because you were a good student or did anything great. How did it make you feel?**

2. If you are given the chance to thank God for giving you His justifying grace, what will you say to Him?

Dear God,

Love,

3. Receiving an unlimited pass without any of your help, effort, or money is like being justified by grace, but so much more! In your own words, what does it mean to be justified by grace?



Lord, thank You that by Your grace, I can call You my heavenly Father. You have declared me righteous and You are giving me a new hope and eternal life with You. Your grace has made me right before You, even though I have sinned. I am truly sorry for my sins, and I pray that they will no longer be my master. Thank You that You listen to my prayers. I praise You and honor You. Please help me remember that You have freely given me Your grace. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

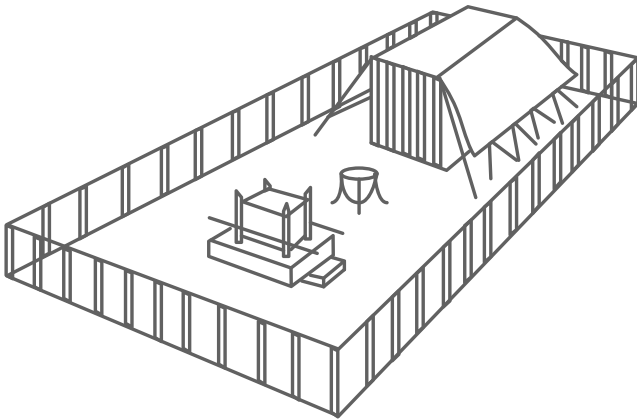
GRACE DRAWS US CLOSER TO GOD

2

READ HEBREWS 4:12–16

So let us boldly approach God’s throne of grace. Then we will receive mercy. We will find grace to help us when we need it. **HEBREWS 4:16**

Usually, when people visit your house, they stay in the living room. You know that you can’t just invite visitors into your room or anyone else’s room. Your parents’ room, especially, is usually off-limits. The only time you can invite them into the rooms is if you were given permission to do so.



For Israel, the place that was off-limits was the Most Holy Place, the inner sanctuary within the tabernacle. The tabernacle was the tent where God’s presence dwelt, where His priests offered the daily sacrifices for the Israelites.

The Most Holy Place was like God’s bedroom in the tabernacle. It was separated from the rest of the tabernacle by a thick curtain called a veil. Only the high priest could enter through the veil on the “Day of Atonement,” when he would offer sacrifices for the people’s sins.

Because you are your parents' child, you can freely enter their room. In the same way, Jesus, the Son of God, served as our High Priest and entered through the veil into the Most Holy Place. Like a child who can ask for permission from his parents to allow others to enter, Jesus, by what He has done on the cross, tore the veil in two, allowing all who have put their faith in Him to come boldly into God's presence. That's us!

Jesus grants us entrance to the place that was once off-limits to us. And He grants us so much more than just access to a room. He grants access to a relationship with God Himself—something that is reserved for sons and daughters only!

Sometimes when we do something wrong, we are afraid to approach our parents because they might get angry and scold us. We are like this with God as well. Sometimes we find it hard to approach Him when we do wrong things or feel like God doesn't care about what we're going through. All these things are part of the enemy's plan to keep us away from God. He knows that once we approach God, God will surely help us and give us grace. The truth is, when we spend more time with God, we receive the grace to fight and win against sin and hardship, and even gain the power to accomplish more things!



Christ's grace opens the door so we can approach God.

NOTES

3. What are some things that you can do to draw nearer to God and approach Him confidently?



Heavenly Father, Your grace has made a way for me to have a relationship with You. I will not let my worries, fears, or past stop me from going to You. Your Son victoriously conquered death so that I can freely come into Your presence. Lord, You know my life and see my struggles. Thank You for always calling me to come close to You. Help me hear Your voice and run to You in the darkest times and in my joyful moments. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

GRACE PURIFIES US

3

READ TITUS 2:11–14

¹¹For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people,

¹²training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age . . .

TITUS 2:11,12 (ESV)

Most, if not all, great characters in movies were beginners at first, and they needed people to train them. The role of the trainer is to prepare their trainee by setting goals with them, teaching them, asking them the right questions, answering their questions, and, most importantly, directing them to do the right thing.

As Christians, we also have to be trained. Thankfully, we too have a trainer to direct us in life: the grace of God. God’s grace enables us to refuse evil and worldly urges and desires. His grace makes us understand that it is wrong to roll our eyes at our irritating classmate or slam the door on purpose because we’re mad at our parents. It enables us to say sorry and be more self-controlled and godly.

We already know that our salvation (God forgiving all our sins) was by grace alone and that we cannot add anything to Jesus’ work. But it doesn’t mean that we can continue behaving wrongly and expect God to allow us to keep on sinning. No trainee will remain as they were; they have to grow and improve. Their trainers won’t just say “go” or “you’re ready,” and then leave them alone. They stay with them, prepare them, and empower them.

God's grace doesn't just save us. It empowers us to say "no" to sin and live a holy life. This is called sanctification. It is a work of God's grace, and He wants us to take part in what He is doing in our lives. Through His grace, we can be responsible for the things we say and do, and allow God to change us. As He changes our hearts, our actions will follow.



Christ's grace empowers us to say "no" to sin!

NOTES



REFLECT

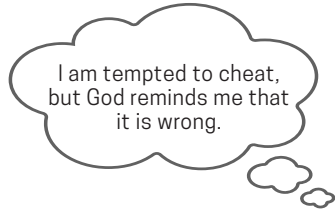
1. Do you think it's important to have a "trainer" who will ask the right questions, guide you, and encourage you to reach your goals? Why?

2. The grace of God guides us and corrects us so that we can be more like Christ. How have you seen sanctification at work in your own life? In the thought bubbles below, write some of the ways you have experienced God training you and how you responded.

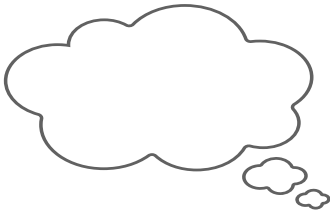
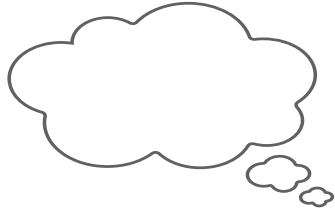
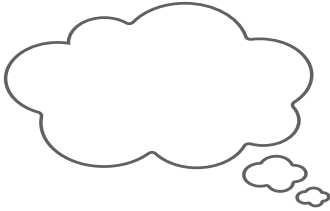
Example



Response: I say sorry to my parents



Response: I study well and don't look at my classmate's work



3. Without grace, we do not have the strength to say “no” to sin. What are some things that you need to say “no” to? Ask God for His power to say “no” to these things.



Heavenly Father, thank You that Your grace saves me and changes me. You give me the power to follow You, obey You, and live a godly life. Teach me to give up the way I acted and spoke before I came to know You. Transform my desires to fit into Your design for my life. Lord, I thank You for walking with me every day so that I may become more and more like You. I pray that I will live in a way that will bring You honor and glory. In Jesus’ name, amen.

READ 2 CORINTHIANS 9:6–11

⁸And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. . . . ¹¹You will be enriched in every way to be generous in every way, which through us will produce thanksgiving to God.

2 CORINTHIANS 9:8,11 (ESV)

John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist church, was a man who was dedicated to giving generously. In 1731, he received 30 pounds as his income. However, his expenses totaled 28 pounds. That left him with 2 pounds. Instead of using this money for himself, he gave it to the poor. When his income doubled, he went on spending only 28 pounds so that he would have a lot more to give away. Even when he was earning thousands, he still lived on 28 pounds and gave the rest away. God had greatly enriched his life, but he understood something important: he was given more so that he could bless more. He did not store up the blessings for himself. Instead, he saw an opportunity to bless more lives. Because of this, more people have experienced God's grace!



As Paul was gathering a collection from the people of Corinth for the poor in Jerusalem, he took time to explain the attitude they should have when giving. He encouraged them to give joyfully, whether they had a lot or a little. This should also be our attitude when we give. It's easy to give when we have more than enough. But what if we don't have enough?

Money is a tool that we use to buy ourselves things we need and want. While it is not wrong to have money, it is wrong when we start to love money. How do we know when we love money? When it's hard for us to give it away or when we keep thinking we need more, more, more! When we love money, it's hard for us to be generous.

But this changes as we encounter the most generous being of all—God, who makes all grace abound. He generously gave His own Son, the one whom He loved the most, who, unlike money, could not be earned or replaced. As we put our trust in God, He pours His overflowing blessing out upon every area of our lives. The same way that grace enables us to say “no” to sin, it enables us to give generously. Now that we trust God and not money to provide for everything we need, we can be generous. As we become generous and keep on trusting God, He will help us do more, give more, and share more.



Christ's overflowing grace enables us to give generously.

NOTES

3. Who has modeled generosity in your life? How can you follow their example and be generous?



Heavenly Father, thank You because You have been generous to me in so many ways. I do not deserve Your kindness and blessings, but You abundantly give them to me. Everything I do is by Your power. Thank You for Your heart for me! I pray that I will use the blessings that You have showered upon me to bless others. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.

GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR US

5



READ 2 CORINTHIANS 12:1–10

But he said to me, “My grace is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak.” So I am very happy to brag about how weak I am. Then Christ’s power can rest on me. **2 CORINTHIANS 12:9**

Most of us don’t enjoy taking tests. Usually, quizzes start out simple, and then when we have learned the lesson being taught, the final test is usually much harder than the quizzes passed before. It’s a little like the challenges we face in life. Each challenge shapes us for what’s coming up next, each teaching a new lesson from God, until we are formed to do the purpose He has planned for us. Why are we being equipped like this? So we know how to navigate through life better as we apply all the things we have learned. It’s so we can succeed in life!

Though difficult, these challenges are actually opportunities for God to pour out His grace on us. Whether at present or in the future, we can be sure that God is at work in every challenge to turn the difficult things in your life into sweet and beautiful things. We can be sure that there’s a reason behind every difficulty, because He is always working all things together for your good.

Paul also experienced this. In 2 Corinthians 12, he tells his readers that he has a “thorn” in the flesh. When he begged the Lord to take it away, the Lord responded with: “My grace is all you need. My power is strongest when you are weak.” He did not specify what the thorn was, probably so that when we read it, we can put ourselves in his shoes. This is because all of us will have our own thorns: circumstances and trials that cause us pain and suffering.

Jesus tells us the same words He told Paul: “My grace is all you need.” In the same way that our teachers help us learn the lessons that we need to pass the quizzes, we can trust that we will be helped by the great Teacher. Why? Because Jesus, who lets His grace shine through the “thorns” in your life, also wore a crown of thorns on the cross as He bore your sin.

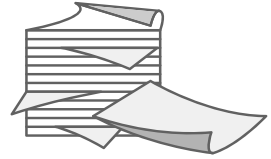
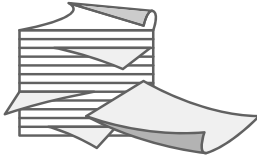
He suffered as a human to redeem humans; now He walks with you through your own suffering. Whatever your “thorn” is, Christ’s grace is enough for you in the midst of the fiercest trials and the deepest of pains. It is sufficient today, and it will be sufficient tomorrow and forever.



Because of Christ’s sufficient grace, we can persevere in the midst of suffering.

NOTES

3. What challenges are you encountering right now? Write these challenges under each stack of exam papers. How will you respond to the challenges now that you know about God's sufficient grace?



PRAY

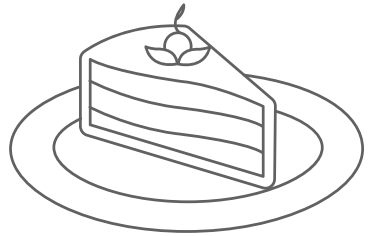
Lord, thank You that You know every little detail of my life, even my weaknesses and pains. I can trust You because You have never left my side in the midst of troubles. Your grace is enough for me. Always remind me that Your power is made perfect when I am weak. May I be humbled to see that I cannot do anything in my own strength, but You have always carried me. I pray that Your name will be praised in all seasons of my life. In Jesus' name, amen.

BREAKING THE FAST: GRACE HELPS US OVERCOME

READ ROMANS 6:12–18

*Sin will no longer control you like a master. That's because the law does not rule you. God's grace has set you free. **ROMANS 6:14***

Have you ever eaten your favorite dessert, such as cake or ice cream, and then realized that the other food you ate afterward seemed bland? This is because your taste buds get so used to the sweetness that they become “tired.” This makes other food seem less tasty.



The same thing is true with salvation. We know that what Jesus did on the cross saves us from going to hell. But salvation is so much more! Charles Spurgeon, in his preaching of Romans 6:14, said that salvation—the sweetest dessert—frees us from loving sin, rescues us from the habit of sinning, and sets us free from wanting to sin. Now sin becomes tasteless. Salvation makes us want to do bad things less, and it helps us turn away from and stop the bad things we used to do. Salvation does not only rescue us from hell; it rescues us from the power of sin itself.

The law is a list of rules that the people of God had to follow. They thought that obeying these rules would set them free from the power of sin. But obedience to rules cannot free us from the power of sin. When we can't obey, we know how far we are from what God expects of us. It shows us how bad we are, but it can't keep us from being bad, just like the label on the back of the bag of chips. It simply tells us the amount of fat, sugar, and salt in it, but it can't stop us from eating it. Only the salvation brought by the grace of Jesus Christ can free us from the power of sin.

What we have explored this week is that the gospel is all about grace. Because of grace, we are free from being controlled by sin. It disciplines us and enables us to live a life that is good and right before God.



Because of Christ's overcoming grace, you can live free from sin.

NOTES

3. How would you explain God's grace to someone else?
You can use stories or draw a picture in the space provided.



Heavenly Father, You have set me free from my sin, so I will choose to obey You by Your grace. Through Your Son's sacrifice, You give me the ability to live a new life. Lord, may I always live by Your grace and in Your will for my life. I no longer want to sin, but I want Your desires and plan to be fulfilled in my life. I believe that Your free gift of grace helps me overcome sin and grow in my relationship with You. Thank You for this grace that shapes me to be more like You every day. In Jesus' name, I pray. Amen.



EVERY NATION

Every Nation is a global family of churches and ministries that exists to honor God by establishing Christ-centered, Spirit-empowered, socially responsible churches and campus ministries in every nation.

EveryNation.org/Fasting

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