

What is God Like?

02 / Gracious

Exodus 34:6 gives us one of the clearest descriptions of what the Lord God Almighty is like:

The LORD passed before [Moses] and proclaimed, "The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and **gracious**, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness..."

In this session, let's focus on that second attribute of God: **God is gracious**. It's a word often associated with **favor** (Gen 6:5-8; Ruth 2:10) or **generosity** (Prov 14:21, 31), particularly when it comes to **not** giving someone what they **deserve** (Gen 33:8, 11; Psalms 51:1). When someone is given **grace**, they don't get what's **fair**, they are offered **favor**. Instead of getting what they deserve, they are given a generous **gift** instead (Psalms 103:8-11).

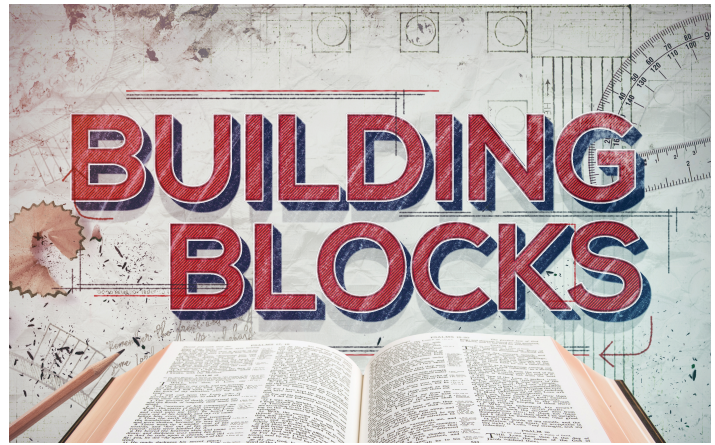
With Jesus, the Son of God, we're given a clear image of **GRACE** in the flesh (John 1:14-18; 2 Cor 8:9). But Jesus has done more than serve as a good example for us. He's called us to follow in his steps:

Let your **speech** always be **gracious**, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person. (Col 4:6)

Or, as the apostle Peter put it in 1 Peter 2:19-23:

For this is a **gracious** thing, when, mindful of God, one endures sorrows while suffering unjustly... if when you do good and suffer for it you endure, this is a gracious thing in the sight of God. For to this you have been **called**, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you might **follow** in his steps. He committed no sin, neither was deceit found in his mouth. When he was reviled, he did not revile in return; when he suffered, he did not threaten...

What is God like? God is **gracious**.



For Class & Family Discussion:

- In your own words, when someone "**shows favor**" to someone else, what does that look like?
- Let's revisit **Proverbs 14:31** and listen carefully. What's the connection between "**oppressing**" a poor man and "**insulting**" our Maker? How does generosity help the poor man while also "**honoring**" our Maker?
- Let's also revisit **Psalms 103:8-11**. What does God want you to understand about his heart for you?
- Can you think of any episodes from Biblical history when God was gracious and generous to people?
- Can you think of any parables of Jesus where he is teaching *us* to be gracious and generous to others?
- What might it look like in your life this week for your speech to be "**gracious**"? To endure "**graciously**" while doing the right thing in the sight of God?