

Dig Deeper Devotional



Still Amazed: Recovering the Wonder of Grace

Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father,

I thank you for this day which I have never seen. Your grace overwhelms me. The realization that Jesus Christ knew my sin, loved me still, carried my judgment to the cross, and invited me into eternal life seemed almost too wonderful to comprehend. Sometimes familiarity can quietly diminish wonder. Truths that once brought tears can become words I repeat without considering their magnitude. Awaken my heart again. Do not allow familiarity with the gospel to become indifference toward the gospel. Give me strength to recognize Your goodness in Scripture, creation, worship, answered prayer, provision, difficult seasons, and the people You have graciously placed in my life. Above everything else, I am amazed by Jesus. Let praise rise from renewed wonder, repentance flow from renewed awareness of Your holiness, and service become the grateful response of someone who remembers just how much grace has been given.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Scripture Foundation

NIV – Ephesians 2:4–5

“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.”

KJV – Ephesians 2:4–5

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)”

Teaching & Insight

Some blessings become more astonishing with time. A marriage lasting more than half a century, a friendship surviving decades, children becoming adults, prayers answered in ways we could never have orchestrated, or simply looking backward and recognizing God's provision through circumstances we barely understood at the time—these experiences have a way of making us say, “How did we get here?” For the believer, it is by the grace of God.

Looking backward sometimes reveals what was difficult to recognize while we were living forward. God's faithfulness can become clearest in retrospect. We often discover that He was providing when we thought we were merely surviving; directing when we believed we were wandering; protecting when we did not recognize the danger; and patiently shaping us when we assumed very little was happening. We become amazed. Sometimes after the fact.

There is something curious about amazement: we can become accustomed even to extraordinary things. Stand beside a roaring waterfall for the first time and its power can leave you speechless. Live near it long enough and eventually it becomes part of the landscape. Hear a magnificent piece of music repeatedly and what once commanded your complete attention can gradually become background sound. Spiritually, the same danger exists. One can become so familiar with scripture and church meetings that it dulls the senses.

We know that Jesus loves us. We know that he died on the cross and rose again, to save us. We know that salvation comes by grace and that Heaven awaits those who belong to Christ. All of this is gloriously true and amazing. However, there is a significant difference between knowing grace and being amazed by grace. Perhaps that is why Ephesians 2:4 begins with two of Scripture's most magnificent words: “But God...”

Paul has just described humanity's spiritual condition apart from Christ. We were not slightly misguided people requiring a few improvements. We were spiritually dead in transgression. “But God” - Intervened, loved, showed mercy, made alive, saved. . . . Grace becomes truly amazing when we remember what grace has done.

John Newton's famous hymn “**Amazing Grace**” has endured across generations because its central declaration remains the heartbeat of praise: grace is astonishing precisely because sinners could never deserve it. The hymn does not celebrate human achievement. It marvels at divine mercy. That makes praise and worship particularly important to spiritual amazement.

Praise deliberately turns our attention away from ourselves and toward the character and works of God. Worship reminds us who occupies the throne. A hymn sung thoughtfully, a worship song whose words are actually considered rather than merely repeated, or a quiet moment spent praising God for specific attributes can restore perspective. When we sing and praise we remember: you can and have received grace, you can be redeemed, He is there for you always, He went to the cross for you, death does not have the final word, and much more.

Music alone possesses no magical power to manufacture genuine worship. Biblical praise can help turn distracted minds toward truths that deserve amazement. Psalm 95:1–3 invites God's people to sing, shout joyfully, and approach Him with thanksgiving because “the LORD is the great God.” Praise becomes one way of practicing remembrance. The objective is to feel something and remember someone - God the Father and Jesus Christ. You can be closer to Him and amazed by Him.

If our sense of wonder has faded, Scripture gives us no shortage of reasons to recover it. Romans 5:8 tells us:

“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

There it is again: “But God” - Consider the timing of this scripture. “..while we are still sinners,” Not after we are repaired, respectable or demonstrated sufficient religious commitment. He loves us while we are still sinners. Christianity does not begin with humanity climbing toward God. It begins with God coming toward humanity. The cross is evidence of how extraordinary God's love has always been. If nothing else amazes us today, Calvary should.

Scripture teaches that genuine repentance meets extraordinary mercy. First John 1:9 declares that when we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive and cleanse us. The holy God against whom sin is ultimately committed offers cleansing through Christ.

The believer does not need to pretend sin is insignificant. Grace allows us to acknowledge how serious sin truly is while simultaneously discovering how sufficient Christ truly is. Repentance, therefore, is not simply a doorway through which we entered Christianity. Repentance becomes part of our ongoing orientation toward God. We must continually turn towards God when facing pride, temptation, compromise for convenience sake and other transgressions. When the Holy Spirit exposes something within us that does not resemble Christ, we turn again. It is a wonder that grace continues meeting us as God continues transforming us. Amazing!

A sunrise does not become less astonishing because another occurred yesterday. The human body does not become less remarkable because we inhabit one every day. Stars do not lose their testimony merely because we have learned something about astronomy.

Psalm 19:1 declares:

“The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands.”

Creation continually preaches a wordless sermon about its Creator.

Perhaps amazement requires occasionally slowing down enough to listen.

We should be cautious about assigning divine explanations to every circumstance when Scripture has not given them. Nevertheless, Christians can confidently affirm that God remains sovereign, present, and faithful within the unfolding story of our lives.

Romans 8:28 does not promise that everything happening to us will feel good. It promises something greater: God is capable of working within all things toward His purposes for those who love Him. Sometimes providence leaves us amazed immediately and sometimes it takes decades.

The God who created the universe does not need our talents. He invites believers to serve, encourage, teach, give, disciple, comfort, evangelize, lead, pray, and love. Ephesians 2:10 follows immediately after Paul's great declaration of salvation by grace:

“For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”

Grace does not only rescue us from something; He also commissions us for something. Your calling may not involve a platform, pulpit, title, or public recognition. It may be raising children faithfully, encouraging coworkers, caring for an aging parent, mentoring another believer, serving quietly at church, giving generously, teaching Scripture, supporting a neighbor, or telling someone what Jesus has done for you.

Do you know where God is calling you to serve? Are you doing it?

If not, grace gives another astonishing possibility: It is not too late to begin.

Our capacity to recognize those realities may diminish, yet their magnificence never does. Once that wonder returns to you, another response naturally follows. Who can I tell? Amazement must be shared.

DEED / ACTION

This week, practice intentional amazement.

Step 1: Remember Your Beginning

Return mentally to the time when you first understood your need for Jesus.

Write one paragraph describing what salvation means to you now.

Step 2: Worship with Attention

Listen to or sing “**Amazing Grace**” or another Christ-centered hymn or worship song.

Do not use it merely as background music. Consider the theology of the words and turn them into prayer.

Step 3: Create an “Amazed List”

Write down five things that currently amaze you about God.

Consider:

- His grace
- His creation
- His providence
- His patience
- His Word
- answered prayer
- spiritual transformation
- the people He has placed in your life
- the promise of eternity

Step 4: Revisit Your Calling

Ask: “Lord, whom have You called me to serve, and what have You given me to use?”

Take one concrete step this week towards serving.

Step 5: Share the Wonder

Tell one person something specific God has done in your life. You do not need a sermon.

Simply share your amazing story.

Pause & Reflect

- When was the last time I was genuinely amazed by the grace of Jesus Christ?
- Has familiarity with salvation diminished my gratitude for salvation?
- What aspect of God's character amazes me most today?
- Does praise and worship help me remember truths I have begun taking for granted?
- Looking backward, where can I now recognize God's faithfulness more clearly?
- What evidence of God's transforming grace can I see within my own life?
- Do I know where God is calling me to serve?
- Who needs to hear what Christ has done for me?

If my wonder has faded, am I willing to ask God to restore it? If it hasn't - who can I share it with today?

Hebrew Insight

פָּלָא (Pālā) — “To be wonderful, extraordinary, marvelous; to surpass ordinary understanding”

The Old Testament uses this word family to describe acts belonging uniquely to God's extraordinary power and wisdom. It reminds us that biblical wonder is more than emotional excitement. It is the recognition that God's character and works exceed ordinary human categories.

The mature believer does not outgrow wonder. Have faith like a child. Continue to wonder and be amazed.

Greek Insight

θαυμάζω (Thaumazō) — “To marvel, wonder, be amazed”

This word appears repeatedly in the Gospels as people encounter the words and works of Jesus. They marvel at His teaching, authority, power, and actions.

We become amazed by who Jesus is. Wonder reaches maturity when it moves beyond seeking extraordinary experiences and becomes worship of an extraordinary Savior.

Closing Prayer

Father,

I am grateful for you and I am amazed. Your grace has changed me. Sometimes I forget how astonishing the Word truly is. Forgive me when salvation becomes familiar, worship becomes routine, Scripture becomes ordinary, or Your daily provision passes unnoticed. Restore wonder without sacrificing maturity. Let deeper knowledge of You create greater worship rather than greater familiarity. Teach me to notice Your fingerprints in creation, Your faithfulness throughout my history, Your patience within my failures, and Your transforming work within my life. When I sing of amazing grace, remind me that I am singing your story. When I look toward the cross, remind me what my redemption cost. When I consider the empty tomb, remind me where my hope rests. Continue turning my heart toward You through daily repentance and obedience.

Show me where You have called me to serve, then give me courage to respond. Finally, place someone before me who needs to hear why I am still amazed by Jesus. May my wonder become worship, my worship become obedience, and my obedience become testimony.

In Jesus' name, Amen.

Final Charge

Grace did not become less amazing simply because you became familiar with it.

Look again at the cross. Remember the empty tomb. Consider where God has brought you, notice where He is working now, and remember where He has promised to take you.

Be amazed by His grace. Worship because of His greatness. Serve because of His mercy. Tell someone why Jesus still amazes you.

Sources

- The Holy Bible
- Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible
- Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon
- Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament
- **Mondays With Mark Video Series — LifeMark Ministries**