

A study on the Concept of Grace

Based on the usage of the word "grace" in the KJV.

By David Cox

Note that this study is a help/how-to study for using theWord to study a word in the Biu

A study on the concept of Grace. Calvinism makes great use of "grace" as a key defining concept for their doctrines, but a simple reading of all the Bible's mention of grace will show that (1) Calvinism's presumptions about grace are a redefinition never actually found or validated in Scripture. (2) Grace is the blessing of God on a person, and that it is not necessarily salvation, or just salvation, and the emphasis is not on selection (election) but on the spiritual blessing. Moreover (3) grace is conditioned by God (before God decides to give grace) on certain character and actions that please God being and existing sincerely in the individual before grace is given by God to him.

Introduction

The concept of grace is commonly understood to be the key concept "behind" or "underlying" salvation. This is very heavily promoted within Calvinist-Reformed circles. These theologians have shifted from "preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ" to preaching "the doctrines of grace", defending their shift by equating "grace=salvation". If this is true, then the evidence of the NT should fully support this fact, and since "the four gospels" are the clearest and most detailed presentation of salvation and of the Saviour, we should see the abundance of this grace doctrine abundant and overflowing in the Gospels. A simple word study in theWord will either support their assertions, or cause questions about their interpretations.

In TW, open a Bible, KJV version, and a Bible Search window.



Type "grace" in the Bible search box, and enter. "Grace" occurs 160x in the KJV.

From this image we can see a few interesting facts. Grace is most used in Romans, then in 2Cor, Ephesians, and Acts (and Genesis). Although the concept is found throughout the Bible, we cannot say that this word is very frequent, because many books have under 5 occurrences, and not every book of the Bible is represented.

We study the word "grace" in the Bible because the Calvinist equates grace=election, so we want to specifically establish this or disavow this. When the Bible uses the term "grace", is it a divine lottery where favor and good things are given no matter what the object of grace is or has done towards the person giving grace (a divine choice that has ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO DO WITH THE PERSON'S CHARACTER, ACTIONS, BEHAVIOR, SPIRITUAL LIFE, ETC.? Is that how Grace is defined in Scripture?

Or is grace (unmerited favor) shown towards those who respond towards the giver in such a way as to please him and have the grace conferred? In other words, God is not obligated to give anybody anything (there is no obligation

binding on God), but at the same time grace is "gotten" by pleasing God, and grace is lost by "enraging God" through our belligerence. Is that how grace works?

Finally, we want to ascertain the truth or lie of whether grace=election. Is the emphasis on the choosing of who receives grace, or on the generosity and gift of the giver?

Let's restrict those to different parts of the NT and study them.

"grace" in the Old Testament

Ps 84:11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them **that walk uprightly**.

Prov 3:34 Surely he scorneth the scorners: but **he giveth grace unto the lowly**.

Grace is promised from God on the basis of certain character or behavior in the person receiving that grace. There is no reference in these two verses that the person first received God's grace (God controlling or causing holiness first before blessing). The order is a character quality is found in a person by God, and then grace is given. Not the other way around.

The first verse using "grace" is

Gen 6:8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

How did Noah "find grace"? The concept of grace is something that you do before God, and God gives this favor to you. This is the first instance of the concept, which establishes a precedent.

The second place is Gen 19:19 Behold now, thy servant hath found grace in thy sight, and thou hast magnified thy mercy, which thou hast shewed unto me in saving my life; and I cannot escape to the mountain, lest some evil take me, and I die:

Lot's concept of God's mercy is that God examined Lot's life, and from what God found, God showed mercy on Lot or God would not, but the basis was not independent of Lot and the way he lived his life.

This is what we find throughout Scripture, so let's continue in abbreviated form.

Gen 32:5 Jacob "that I may find grace in thy sight" - Jacob's faithfulness with Laban should have engendered grace from Laban towards Jacob.

Gen 33:8 Jacob sends gifts or free will offerings to Esau so that he might "find grace in Esau's sight." - Grace was dependent on conduct

Gen 33:10 "Jacob said, Nay I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight..." - Again grace is given the giver discerning some quality or character in the life of the receiver of grace.

Gen 33:15 "let me find grace in the sight of my lord." - same observation as above.

Gen 34:11 And Shechem said unto her father and unto her brethren, Let me find grace in your eyes, and what ye shall say unto me I will give.

Gen 39:4 And Joseph found grace in his sight, and he served him: and he made him overseer over his house, and all that he had he put into his hand. - The basis of Joseph finding grace in Pharaoh's sight had everything to do with finding the right noble character that pleased Pharaoh living in Joseph.

Gen 47:25 And they said, Thou hast saved our lives: let us find grace in the sight of my lord, and we will be Pharaoh's servants.

Similar passages where some person finds grace in the sight of some other person:

- Gen 47:29 Jacob in Joseph's sight.
- Gen 50:4 Joseph in Pharaoh's sight.
- Exo 33:12 Moses in Pharaoh's sight.
- Num 32:5 children of Gad in Moses' sight.
- Ruth 2.2,10 Ruth in Boaz.
- 1Sam 1:18 Hannah in Eli's sight.
- 1Sam 20:3 David in Jonathan's eyes.
- 1Sam 27:5 David in the eyes of Achish
- 2Sam 14:22 Joab before King David
- 2Sam 16:4 Ziba before King David
- Esther 2:17 Esther before the king - character and beauty in the King's eyes were Esther prime reasons for grace being shown her.

Exod 33:13 Now therefore, I pray thee, if I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight: and consider that this nation is thy people. Moses in Jehovah's sight.

Exod 33:16 For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth. - Note here that the correct order of understanding is not divine selection (grace) then blessing then the people becoming acceptable in God's sight. Rather Moses and Israel found grace in God's sight (on the basis of what they were and God's thinking), and then God's hand of blessing became active on them, and finally after that, they were selected to be separate or apart from all others.

Exod 33:17 And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken: for thou hast found grace in my sight, and I know thee by name. Why did God do "this thing"? Because God examined their lives and found them to be pleasing to him. Godly character then selection/blessing is the correct order.

Exod 34:9 And he said, If now I have found grace in thy sight, O Lord, let my Lord, I pray thee, go among us; for it is a stiffnecked people; and pardon our iniquity and our sin, and take us for thine inheritance. Note here that finding grace is before holiness and even before pardon of sin. The grace in this case was grace given to these people's ancestors that still came down unto them, even though they were rebellious. Also note that God promises His blessing, only conditioned upon their putting away their other gods and destroying these false gods' altars, etc. Exod 34:11-13. So the grace shown is conditioned upon activity and character before it is given.

Judges 6:17 Gideon "If now I have found grace in thy (Lord) sight" - The phrase again refers to the grace giver encountering

some good conduct, attitude, or character or reason to show grace in the grace receiver's life before and conditioning the grace given.

Ezra 9:8 And now for a little space grace hath been shewed from the LORD our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and to give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage. - God's grace in this verse is the remnant that God left Israel. Specifically that remnant is also referring to "the nail" to hang themselves, or a reference to the Messiah.

Ps 45:2 Thou art fairer than the children of men: grace is poured into thy lips: therefore God hath blessed thee for ever.

Ps 84:11 For the LORD God is a sun and shield: the LORD will give grace and glory: no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. - Is there any doubt here that God's grace is conditioned on our walking uprightly? Why would people deliberately overturn and distort the true biblical grace into being something unrelated to our prior conduct and character?

Grace in Proverbs

Several of the passages using grace in Proverbs use the concept as a synonym for blessing. Prov 1:9; 3:22; 4:9;

Prov 3:34 Surely he scorneth the scorners: but he giveth grace unto the lowly. - According to Calvinism, grace is solely dispensed according to the




Prov 22:11 He that loveth pureness of heart, for the grace of his lips the king shall be his friend. - Here the concept of grace is actually a good quality of speech on a person's lips.

Jer 31:2 Thus saith the LORD, The people which were left of the sword found grace in the wilderness; even Israel, when I went to cause him to rest. - Again grace is found in a person by God before God's hand of blessing.

Zech 12:10 And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. - Grace is related to the Holy Spirit, being a blessing of God.

Other verses: Jer 14:21; Zech 4:7

"grace" in the Gospels

Bible	Book	Count/Graph
- KJV - 14 matches		
+ Luke		1 (7%) 
+ John		3 (21%) 
+ Acts		10 (71%) 

What we notice here is that if "grace=salvation", or grace is the best and most common representative word in the Bible for salvation, then why is it so scarcely used in the Gospels? Matthew, and Mark doesn't even have it once, and Luke only once? This doesn't check.

Luke 2:40 And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit, filled with wisdom: and the grace of God was upon him. - In this passage about Christ, grace is basically a state of blessedness. This is not a reference to salvation, but to Jesus Christ's holiness.

John 1:14 And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of

the Father,) full of grace and truth. John 1:16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. John 1:17 For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. - Again, this reference to grace is not referring to our salvation as being selectively given by God to some people, but rather it is a reference to Jesus Christ's character quality. This describes Jesus as "full of grace", or full of spiritual blessedness that he is willing to give. With these four verses, this concludes all the verses that mention grace in the gospels, and not once is it directly referring to our salvation but rather spiritual qualities of blessedness within the Savior.

Grace is never mentioned in the gospels as a synonym for salvation much less for our election by God to salvation!

"grace" as used in Acts

Acts 4:33 And with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus: and great grace was upon them all. - Grace in this passage means great power and blessedness.

Acts 11:23 Who, when he came, and had seen the grace of God, was glad, and exhorted them all, that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord. - If "grace=election" then this verse doesn't make much sense. This passage is best taken as Barnabas saw the blessing of God in the lives of these people, and reacted as he did.

Acts 13:43 Now when the congregation was broken up, many of the Jews and religious proselytes followed Paul and Barnabas: who, speaking to them, persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. - If you consider this phrase as "to continue in the election of God" or "to continue in the blessedness of God", whatever the choice, this continuing is something that people were able to do themselves. Paul's exhortation was for them to "continue" implying that they were doing something at first, and that Paul's desire is that they "continue to do it". This is therefore a key verse to define a few things about grace. The grace of God is something that we first of all receive by what WE DO OR ARE (ACTIONS AND/OR CHARACTER). Secondly, it is within our human ABILITY to do whatever provoked this grace of God on us. Therefore the entire Calvinistic concept of grace = election in which we nor our character, conduct, nor life have anything to do with God's giving that grace to us. This is simply not a biblical conclusion, neither is it a valid conclusion about grace. Calvinism is 100% wrong.

Acts 14:3 Long time therefore abode they speaking boldly in the Lord, which gave testimony unto the word of his grace, and granted signs and wonders to be done by their hands. - Again, grace is associated with God's word, and with spiritual blessings (signs and wonders).

In several passages we see people being recommended to the grace of God. Acts 14:26; 15:40. (See Acts 13:43 above) This most probably is a spiritual charge or exhortation that these people continue in the lifestyle that brought them into the favor of God.

Acts 20:32 And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. - Apparently God's Word of grace (a heart and essential element of the gospel) is something which people were commended unto, and to which it would edify the person and carry them to sanctification. How does that work? If grace = divine election (emphasis on elitism like being a son of Abraham), how does that make you holy? If grace is God's goodness to you, and you don't deserve it, then in gratitude we change our life to conform it to the image of that wonderful person that saved us, Jesus Christ. This makes sense, and the Calvinist is left with confusion and non-sense.

Acts 15:11 But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved, even as they. - Here God's grace is declared to be the instrument or avenue through which we receive salvation. It is a means by which one is saved, but in itself, it is not necessarily salvation itself, but rather a means through which we receive salvation. This grace is given by believing in Jesus Christ. This is the condition, action, conduct, or character quality (faith) that triggers God's grace to come to us.

Acts 18:27 (Paul) "helped them much which had believed through grace". This is one verse which would give some slight credence to the Calvinist mindset. Here grace is the vehicle through which these people believed.

Acts 20:24 But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. - Here again the grace of God is a part of the Gospel. It is not in and of itself all of the Gospel, but it is an essential part. Note that this is not mentioning "election" nor divine selection, because these concepts are not in the context at all. What is in the context is that God will give salvation even though we do not desire it. This is the heart of the Gospel.

"grace" in Paul's Epistles

KJV - 92 matches	
⊕ Rom	20 (22%)
⊕ 1Cor	6 (7%)
⊕ 2Cor	13 (14%)
⊕ Gal	7 (8%)
⊕ Eph	12 (13%)
⊕ Phil	3 (3%)
⊕ Col	5 (5%)
⊕ 1Thess	2 (2%)
⊕ 2Thess	4 (4%)
⊕ 1Tim	3 (3%)
⊕ 2Tim	4 (4%)
⊕ Titus	4 (4%)
⊕ Phlm	2 (2%)
⊕ Heb	7 (8%)

Titus 2:11 "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men,"

Here we see a high number of hits in Romans, 2 Corinthians and Ephesians. But, is it logical that Philemon would use the word "grace" more than twice as many times Matthew, Mark, and Luke combined together?

- Grace is used as a greeting, salutation, or parting exhortation: Rom 1:7; 16:20, 24; 1Co 1:3-4; 2Cor 1:2; 13:14; Gal 1:3; 6:18; Eph 1:2; 6:24; Phil 1:2; 4:23; Col 1:2; 4:18; 1Thess 1:1; 5:28; 2Thess 1:2, 12; 3:18; 1Tim 1:2; 6:21; 2Tim 1:2; 4:22; Titus 1:4; 3:15; Philemon 1:3; 1:25. Hebrews 13:25; 1Pe 1:2; 2Pe 1:2; 2John 1:3; Rev 1:4; 22:21.
- Grace is a concept received by means of Jesus Christ: Rom 1:5 because of our obedience to the faith. 1Co 1:4. Col 1:6 "since the day

ye heard of it, and knew the grace of God in truth."

- We are justified by grace: Rom 3:24. (again a means to salvation); Gal 5:4 if you believe you are justified by keeping the law, you are fallen from grace.
- Grace is the opposite of works: Rom 4:4 (as a means of gaining salvation)
- Salvation is by grace through faith: Rom 4:16; 5:2 (the condition of faith is what causes God to give grace). Gal 2:21 the grace of God can be frustrated if the person believes his righteousness is by his keeping the law or his good works rather than the mercy of God.

Titus 2:11 "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men," In this passage, Paul settles some matters. Grace is what brings men to salvation (and this is already noted above). But this grace appears to all men. It is not a selective grace only given in this capacity to some men.

- Grace is a free gift: Rom 5:15 (God's definition of grace has no recipients except those who have faith in Jesus Christ)
- Grace comes by Jesus Christ: Rom 5:17, 20, 21

- Grace gives us (means of) everlasting consolation and good hope): 2Thess 2:16
- Grace works in us: 1Tim 1:14 Paul seeing grace as God's forgiveness of him, pardon of his sins, and making him into something different.
- Grace abounds by usage: Rom 6:1
- Grace is a reigning force over us: Rom 6:14-15 (it must dominate us to reign over us, or for us to be "under grace"); Gal 5:4

Gal 1:6 I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel:

- Grace given should not be cause for arrogance: Rom 12:3 (Jewish problem is haughtiness in being found under God's grace which lead to carelessness in their personal life, and God's condemnation even while under grace.)
- Grace is responsible for what gifts we have from God: Rom 12:6; 15:15; 1Cor 3:10; 2Cor 1:12; 2Co 6:1 (workers receive grace of God). 2Cor 8:6-7 Titus worked a work of grace among the Macedonian churches and the Corinthian church - speaking of some ministry gift referred to as "a grace". In verse 9 this grace of Titus is compared to Jesus' grace that being rich he became poor in order to serve. Again in verse 19 of this chapter, Titus is referred to as traveling with Paul "with this grace" as if it was a special ministry that Titus carried on in the missionary team. Gal 1:15 God called Paul by means of God's grace.

1Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. - Grace is what accounts for what we are before God. But before you conclude that that means God decides whether we are elected to salvation or not, the context of this verse is more speaking of spiritual gifts, and not eternal destination.

2Cor 9:8 And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work: - again, grace appears to be more something of a ministry gift exercised among God's people in God's work rather than eternal election to salvation.

2Cor 9:14 And by their prayer for you, which long after you for the exceeding grace of God in you. - Grace would appear to be a great spiritual desire for spiritual fruit in others in this verse.

Phil 1:7 "ye all are partakers of my grace" Here Paul considers his ministry gifts as being "his grace towards his hearers."

Col 3:16 "singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord" Grace is a way you sing, that is singing with grace is singing with a heart of ministering spiritually to others.

Col 4:6 "Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt" Grace is also a way of speaking to one another, such that your speech ministers spiritually.

2Tim 2:1 Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus. 2Tim 2:2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also. Note here that grace is something that you can "be strong in", and obviously Paul's concept of grace is that it is the gospel of Jesus dying on the cross for the sins of mankind. This is both a belief as much as it is a ministry (to announce it).

- Grace is a synonym for spiritual gifts: Gal 2:9
- Grace is a thanking of God for what God gives us, especially over a meal: 1Cor 10:30; 2Co 4:15.
- Grace is given to churches in affliction: 2Co 8:1. Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honour; that he by the grace of God should taste death for every man. Grace is something that even Jesus Christ can have shown on him. In this verse, Jesus experienced the grace of God in that God gave him the power to endure death for the benefit of mankind. Because Jesus experienced God's grace, does this mean that Jesus was a robot, and could do nothing else? No. What it means is that Jesus desiring in his own being to do the thing, God helped (empowered) him. If this case is so clear in Jesus, why deny it entirely in the case of a man wanting to be saved?

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. Okay. So the Calvinist says grace is the same as an irresistible force (Irresistible grace) that forces a person to do God's will. Scripture never presents this as irresistible, but rather a powerful resource we draw upon to obtain help from God in our need. So grace is the willingness of God to respond to man's need in his problems when the man humbly comes before God requesting and seeking God's help and power. This is starkly different from the Calvinist's presentation of irresistible grace that forces a person into salvation even against his own will (divine robot manipulation).

Special passages on Grace: Rom 11

Rom 11:1-2. 5-7 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work. 7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded

Paul's argument here is against the Jew who prided himself in his special selection by God as being Abraham's seed. Yet this special divine selection was overturned because God did not find the correct spiritual character in them over time, and therefore God "cut them off" from the divine promises and God's grace. This is Paul's argument, and the Calvinist that prides himself on never having to worry about his salvation because he is elect, and therefore let's his life slip into unrepentant sin, this person is under jeopardy of hell and the condemnation of God. Grace does not protect the individual who cares not for pressing into the kingdom by imitating Jesus.

The concept of "grace" is used in this passage with the concept of election, making this an important passage in our understanding of Calvinism's errors. Grace is a means whereby we receive salvation. That point we can agree with the Calvinist. We disagree that grace = election though. Paul's argument is against the Jew that claimed that they had a special selection of their group, and even though that was true in a sense, that divine selection was conditioned on Israel's obedience (faith in the Messiah changing their life) before God would honor that divine selection. In the end, God "de-selected" or "unelected" Israel from its place of special divine selection. Even so, Paul argues, that even when all looked like God had abandoned Israel totally in the Old Testament, God still had his few (remnant) out there. So grace in this passage is more clearly seen as something opposed to works. Works is not the same as faith. As seen above in "Salvation is by grace through faith" Rom 4:16; 5:2, etc. grace is a concept which is a means to be saved. It is set coupled with faith. (Eph 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:) The two are equal in importance in "getting salvation". Paul's epistle to the Romans belabors the point that salvation is not by works of righteousness, but rather by grace through faith. The motive of salvation is not obligation on God's part, but rather a generosity that is not obligatory. That is the motive of salvation. Faith is the means, that is, we "get saved" by believing in Jesus Christ. That is the actual technical "way we get saved". The Calvinist claims that this way is by divine election.

"Election of grace". Rom 11:5, although this verse places election and grace in the same verse, this is not talking about divine election to salvation. Paul quotes the OT where all of Israel was under persecution, and when it would appear that all true believers in Jehovah were dead, God selected a few from being physically killed. This election was an election to salvation from physical death, not spiritual death. The concept of the elect here is actually more elected to be God's true witness than to be elected to eternal salvation.

Special passages on Grace: 2Cor 12:9

2Cor 12:9 And he said unto me, [My grace is sufficient for thee](#): for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. - Paul's reference here to God's grace in relation to his persistent problem that God would not resolve for him is interesting. Grace then is God's empowerment to suffer through affliction and distress. Rather than a divine election to "skip the condemnation and suffering", grace here is longsuffering to endure it.

Special passages on Grace: Eph 1:3-11 and 2Tim 1:9

Paul's discourse here again mentions grace in the context of predestination (1:5, 11). So this passage deserves special attention. First of all, Paul sets the context of "being blessed with spiritual blessings" (1:3). To me, this would be the most powerful passage to support Calvinism's claims. God has chosen us in eternity past to be holy and blameless "having predestinated us... to the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."

2Tim 1:9 Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

This certainly "sounds" like the Calvinist's position. But is it? In this passage, what is the cause of this blessed grace upon us?

Eph 1:12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. Eph 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

The point is that we FIRST TRUSTED IN CHRIST. The order is that we heard the Gospel, believed, and then were sealed by the Spirit. The cause of salvation is stated as a believing in Christ. This passage does speak strongly of election and predestination before the foundation of the world. Note that in 2Tim 1:9, Paul uses the concept of God's grace towards him personally as the reason of Paul being anointed and called into the ministry.

Eph 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, Eph 1:19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power [to us-ward who believe](#), according to the working of his mighty power, .

Yet the element of our believing is still very present in all of this. We note that grace as a concept is not prominent in this passage (occurring only in verse 6, "to the praise of the glory of his grace"). We do not deny that "God chooses us" (election), and this is a point to be made. GOD DOES CHOOSE US. The basis of this divine selection is the crux of the Calvinist heresy and biblical truth.

Our pre-creation selection is focused "in Christ" (v4), "in the beloved" (v6), and "by Jesus Christ" (v5). "he might gather together in one all things in Christ... in him" (v10), "In whom..." (v11) "in Christ" (v12). Everything focuses on Christ. It is that tight integration with Christ that gives us this hope of salvation, our inheritance.

Paul's climax here is Eph 2:1 "and you hath he quickened who were dead... 4 But God, who is rich in mercy... 5 hath quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved). 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. 9 Not of works lest any man should boast. So the entire focus of chapter 1 hangs on chapter 2.

Eph 2:8 **For by grace are ye saved through faith:** and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Eph 2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Again the purpose of God extends beyond salvation into good works, and this is what God is also ordaining us to, not just salvation. The rest of Paul's references (Eph 3:2, 7-8, 4:7) to grace in Ephesians seems to be explicitly references to spiritual gifts or spiritual dispensations (opportunities to minister that God gives His servants). Eph 4:29 speaks of "grace" as something administered by God's ministers to "hearers" which edifies them.

What is amazing in this book of Ephesians (in consideration of Calvinism) is not that God explains some things about election here, because election to salvation is under the work of God, but that in all of this, the word "grace" is so much left out of this discussion. Where the Calvinist would equate "grace" = "salvation by election" without our participation, Paul in Ephesians attributes grace as a means of salvation ("by grace ye are saved" Eph 2:5, "for by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God" Eph 2:8) something we established above, Paul's use of grace here is that grace is a means of salvation, but really, the concept of grace = divine election to salvation is not the meaning nor understanding of Paul at all.

"grace" in the General Epistles

KJV - 16 matches		
Jas	2 (12%)	<div style="width: 12%;"></div>
1Pet	8 (50%)	<div style="width: 50%;"></div>
2Pet	2 (12%)	<div style="width: 12%;"></div>
2John	1 (6%)	<div style="width: 6%;"></div>
Jude	1 (6%)	<div style="width: 6%;"></div>
Rev	2 (12%)	<div style="width: 12%;"></div>

Here we see more of the same. Jude's scant few verses uses the word the same as all four gospels combined.

- The Holy Spirit is identified as "the Spirit of Grace": Heb 10:29
- A person can "fail" of God's grace: Heb 12:15 The cause of this failing is bitterness which defiles. This is caused by the same disdain of spiritual things that Esau experienced. This was a willful action and attitude in Esau's own heart. This verse would seem to unilaterally

disavow the Calvinist's irresistible grace.

- Grace is the basis of Christian service: Heb 12:28
- Grace establishes the heart: Heb 13:9 This probably has a slight reference to giving thanks to God for what God has given you. For those who do this, there is a recognition and submission to God's authority (spiritually establishing the person). The author of Hebrews mentions meats as something opposed to this, and this is probably an attitude of not caring (in eating things without returning thanks to God for them), which destroys the soul.
- Grace is a "comeliness" (beauty): James 1:11. The idea is again rooted in the idea that grace is given when something is pretty in the eye of the giver of that grace.
- Grace is gotten by humility: James 4:6. Whereas the Calvinist says that God's grace is given by election, and has no foreknowledge nor has any reference to anything about the receiver of that grace, the Bible teaches the opposite. 1Pet 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for **God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.** Why do Calvinists insist that God's grace is never given on the basis of any character qualities within us? Why do they insist that there is nothing (nor ever can be anything) within us that would please God? Humility is obviously a character quality that we control, and which opens God's windows to shower God's grace upon us. Why do they deny the obvious Bible of these verses?
- Grace is God giving us salvation: 1Pe 1:10.
- Grace is a process (means) to salvation: 1Pe 1:13.

- Life on this earth can be considered a result of the grace of God to us: 1Pe 3:7
- Grace is involved with ministry gifts: 1Pe 4:10
- God is the God of all Grace: 1Pe 5:10
- Grace is a position wherein you "stand" spiritually: 1Pe 5:12
- Grace is something that you can "grow in": 2Pe3:18
- Grace can be perverted from its true essence into lasciviousness: Jude 1:4 Indeed many (not all) Calvinists turn the grace of God from something good, into a spiritual elitism similar to the Jews' boasting of having an eternal election to heaven because they were Abraham's children.

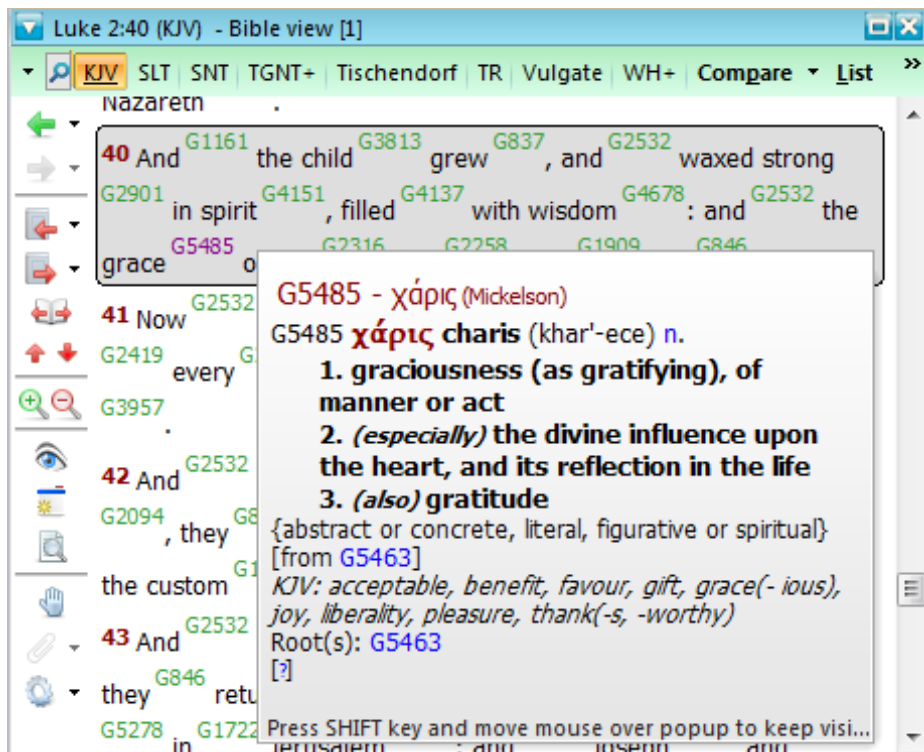
God gives grace to the humble.

Getting into the Greek

It is at points like this that I want to see what is happening here. I want to know what the Greek word for "grace" is, and I want to study it on that level.

To do this in TW we will go back to our basic study, KJV version in the Bible window, and "grace" in the Bible search window, and enter to do the search.

At this point, you need to click on the plus before "Luke" in the Bible Search results window, and then click on Luke 2:40. Now click in the KJV Bible window, and press Control+S, and this will give you the Strong's numbers. Now hover the mouse on the strong's number G5485 after the word "grace" in Luke 2:40. This should give you the pop-up for Mickelson-Strong's Dictionary, and it should look like this...



Troubleshooting: **My** **Strongs**
Numbers don't show up.

What we see now is the Strong's definition of "charis" (grace). First of all, notice that Strong's Mickelson has graciousness, not salvation as the base or most common definition of the word. Also "gratitude" is another meaning of the word. The second meaning is perhaps what Calvinist-Reformed people hold to, but even so, we don't see a super-abundance of occurrences in the Gospels like what we would think it should be.

Searching for charis G5485

Now that we have found out what our original Greek word's Strong's number is, we have a handle on being able to slice and dice the Bible and study very specifically this concept in Greek.

First, we will just do a simple Bible Search (KJV version, NT range). This is just like what we did when we searched for the English word "grace", but now we will search for G5485. Note that this will not work unless the Strong's numbers are showing in the Bible window.

The results are 147 hits in the NT (above was 122x on the English word "grace"). Luke has 8 hits instead of 1. So what we have is some different things happening between on the translation side of things, even though this still doesn't explain the great lack of use of the word/concept "grace" in presenting us the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

But now let's go even more specific on the studying side. Up til now, most Bible programs are very similar to theWord in doing a search on the words in the Bible. Perhaps many will even allow you to search on the Strong's numbers. But few will allow you to do what we are going to do next.

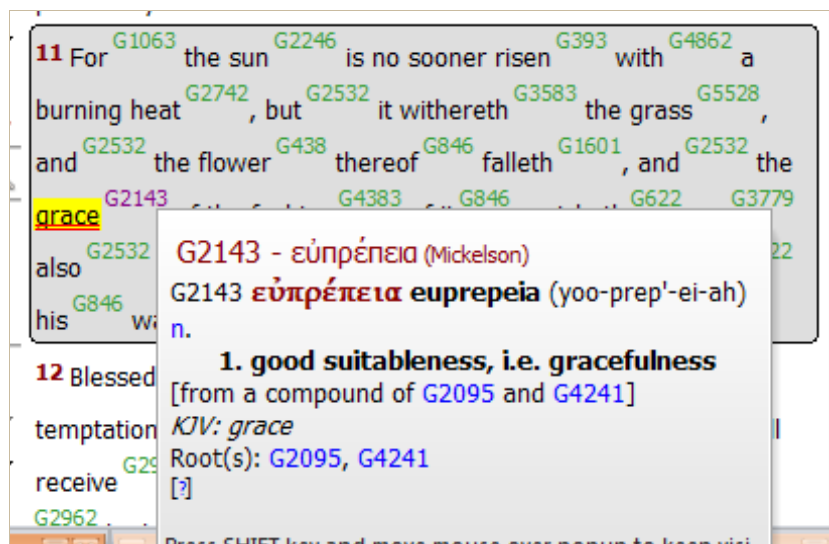
Searching on "grace" but not charis G5485

In the Bible search box, type

NOT G5485 TR grace

then enter.

This search only gives us James 1:11 where the word "grace" occurs in our English Bibles, but the underlying Greek word is not G5485 charis



Searching on "G5485" but not translated "grace"

In the Bible search box, type

G5485 TR NOT grace

then enter.

What this will give us is all the places where the Greek G5485 occurs in the NT, but the resulting translation is not "grace". There are 26 times this happens. Click on the icons above the results to open the tree and then

show the verses. (See [How to search the Bible](#) for more help on how to do that if you don't know).

Conclusion

I will leave the theological ramifications for you to decide, but this is how you use theWord for digging deep into the Word of God, going into the Greek and Hebrew even if you don't have skills or profound learning in those languages.

Appendix

Question 1 - Is there is valid or warrant for qualifying grace into two types: general grace, and efficacious grace?

No. This concepts are not assigned to grace, but grace is seen more as universally the same grace among all examples in Scripture. What we can divide grace into is grace from God towards man, and grace of man towards man.