

RELEVANT • INSPIRED • PRACTICAL • LIFE CHANGING

# WESLEY

## ADULT TEACHER

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June–August 2026  
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WESLEY  
BIBLE CURRICULUM

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*Faith at Work in Christ's  
Family: Paul's Letters  
to Timothy and Titus*

# WELCOME TO THIS QUARTER OF THE WESLEY BIBLE CURRICULUM!

## SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF FAITH

**T**imothy and Titus—Paul identified each as a “true son in the faith” (1 Tim. 1:2; also 2 Tim. 2:2; Titus 1:4). To be certain, Paul was used by God to lead them to the new birth of salvation, so they were in a very practical sense his born-again children—his spiritual sons. But just as should be the case with biological parenthood, there was more to their relationship than just bringing them into new life. Paul was their mentor, guide, and friend.

As we study Paul’s God-inspired direction and teaching to his spiritual sons, watch how God likewise inspired him to lead these leaders. Paul was a model for how we should lead our own sons and daughters of faith today. His counsel, advice, and challenges are no less directed by God’s Spirit to our modern Timothys and Tituses, though all of our circumstances are different. More so, these truths challenge us to pass along the same spiritual and practical theology to our own children of faith.

God led Paul to communicate these truths no less to our own spiritual sons and daughters. How we model, teach, and apply those truths is as personal and relevant for us today as it was for Paul.

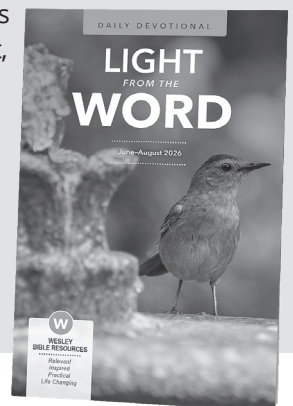
Let us in these weeks to come be trained, and furthermore be used by God to train up others, as daughters and sons of faith.

Wesleyan Publishing House Editorial Team

For more great Bible study resources visit  
[www.wesleyan.org/curriculum](http://www.wesleyan.org/curriculum)

### BIBLE STUDY TIP

You will deepen your reflection on these lessons by reading *Light from the Word* each day throughout the week. This helpful, daily devotional follows the theme of each week’s lesson with a relevant, practical message aimed at sharpening your spiritual life. You’ll be immersed in these Scriptures and related passages every day.



# HOW TO USE WESLEY BIBLE STUDIES TEACHER'S GUIDE



## EVALUATE

**Evaluate** offers the opportunity for you to *review* the important truths from last week's lesson and discuss the most relevant applications members saw throughout the week.



## ENGAGE

**Engage** includes suggested activities aimed at getting your class to think, discuss, react, or in some way *participate* in the lesson.



## EXAMINE

**Examine** draws members into the study of Scripture. Here they will look closely at the scriptural content, coming to *know* what the Bible says. There may be more information than you have time to use in class, but it will be helpful for you as you prepare for the lesson.



## EXPLORE

**Explore** guides members in *processing* the Bible content and grappling with its implications for their lives.



## EXERCISE

**Exercise** helps you guide members to *take action* on the truth they have discovered.

## DAILY BIBLE READINGS

*By reading for fifteen minutes each day, you can read every chapter of the Bible in one year. Begin anytime!*

june

1. 2 Samuel 14–15
2. 2 Samuel 16–18
3. 2 Samuel 19–20
4. 2 Samuel 21–22
5. 2 Samuel 23–24
6. Galatians 1–3
7. Galatians 4–6
8. 1 Kings 1–2
9. 1 Kings 3–5
10. 1 Kings 6–7
11. 1 Kings 8–9
12. 1 Kings 10–12
13. 1 Kings 13–15
14. 1 Kings 16–18
15. 1 Kings 19–20
16. 1 Kings 21–22
17. Ephesians 1–3
18. Ephesians 4–6
19. 2 Kings 1–3
20. 2 Kings 4–5
21. 2 Kings 6–8
22. 2 Kings 9–11
23. 2 Kings 12–14
24. 2 Kings 15–17
25. 2 Kings 18–20
26. 2 Kings 21–23
27. 2 Kings 24–25
28. Philippians 1–4
29. 1 Chronicles 1–2
30. 1 Chronicles 3–5

july

1. 1 Chronicles 6–7
2. 1 Chronicles 8–10
3. 1 Chronicles 11–13
4. 1 Chronicles 14–16
5. 1 Chronicles 17–20
6. 1 Chronicles 21–23
7. 1 Chronicles 24–26
8. 1 Chronicles 27–29
9. Colossians 1–4
10. 2 Chronicles 1–4
11. 2 Chronicles 5–7
12. 2 Chronicles 8–11
13. 2 Chronicles 12–16
14. 2 Chronicles 17–19
15. 2 Chronicles 20–22
16. 2 Chronicles 23–25
17. 2 Chronicles 26–29
18. 2 Chronicles 30–32
19. 2 Chronicles 33–34
20. 2 Chronicles 35–36
21. 1 Thessalonians 1–5
22. Ezra 1–4
23. Ezra 5–7
24. Ezra 8–10
25. Nehemiah 1–4
26. Nehemiah 5–7
27. Nehemiah 8–10
28. Nehemiah 11–13
29. 2 Thessalonians 1–3
30. Esther 1–4
31. Esther 5–10

august

1. Job 1–4
2. Job 5–8
3. Job 9–12
4. Job 13–17
5. Job 18–21
6. Job 22–26
7. Job 27–30
8. Job 31–34
9. Job 35–38
10. Job 39–42
11. 1 Timothy 1–6
12. 2 Timothy 1–4
13. Psalms 1–7
14. Psalms 8–14
15. Psalms 15–18
16. Psalms 19–24
17. Psalms 25–30
18. Psalms 31–34
19. Psalms 35–37
20. Psalms 38–42
21. Psalms 43–48
22. Psalms 49–54
23. Psalms 55–60
24. Psalms 61–67
25. Psalms 68–71
26. Psalms 72–75
27. Psalms 76–78
28. Psalms 79–84
29. Psalms 85–89
30. Psalms 90–95
31. Psalms 96–102



## KEY VERSE

I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience.  
—1 Timothy 1:16

## SCRIPTURE

- 1 Timothy 1:1–17

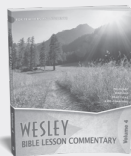
## LESSON FOCUS

God's grace is the basis for our relationship with him.

JUNE 7

1

# GOD'S ABUNDANT PROVISION OF GRACE



## CHECK IT OUT

Wesley Bible Lesson Commentary  
Volume 4 • Unit 4 • Lesson 1  
Activity: Life Graph

## SESSION OVERVIEW

**engage** God is a holy God and has given his holy law to humankind in order to establish a relationship with us. While that law has been effective in identifying sin in the ungodly, it has never been adequate to produce inward holiness in his people. And yet we have a tendency to misuse it as a kind of “club” to keep one another in line. But God is also loving, and his relationship with us in the new covenant is built on grace. Even the worst of sinners can be made right with God not by adherence to the law, but by faith in God’s provision of grace through Christ Jesus.

## INTRODUCTION

**examine** Try to imagine a world without any laws. What would life be like? If everyone did what was right in their own eyes, our world would be in serious trouble. Laws keep people in line and create order, structure, and security.

Now try to imagine a world without any grace. Without grace, the world would be harsh, oppressive, rigid, and unforgiving. Unfortunately, it sounds all too familiar, as grace is a rare commodity today, even within the church.

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## EVALUATE

Review the main points of last week’s lesson with your class.  
Encourage class members to share encouragement or words of truth they received from the study.



## ENGAGE

**Opening**  
Use a chart and topical Bible to contrast and compare the terms law and grace.



## EXAMINE

**Background**  
Paul first met Timothy in Derbe (Acts 16:1). He became a believer through the godly influence of his Jewish mother, Eunice, and grandmother, Lois (2 Tim. 1:5). We are not told that Timothy’s Greek father was a believer; only that he had resisted the Jewish custom of circumcision for his son Timothy (Acts 16:3). In fact, the subsequent bonding between Paul and the younger man (Phil. 2:22) suggests that Timothy’s father was no longer in the picture.

The partnership between Paul and Timothy was close and based on complete trust. At various times, Paul referred to Timothy as son (1 Cor. 4:17 and in these Pastoral Epistles to Timothy), brother (2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; Philem. 1), co-worker (Rom. 16:21; 1 Thess. 3:2), and servant of Christ (Phil. 1:1). Timothy became a part of Paul’s missionary team (Acts 20:4; 2 Cor. 1:19; Phil. 2:22; Philem. 1)—acting sometimes as anchor (Acts 17:14–15), sometimes as ambassador (Acts 19:22; 1 Cor. 4:17; 16:10; Phil. 1:1; 1 Thess. 3:2, 6).

Timothy was with Paul during one imprisonment (Philem.1) and was in prison on his own account at least one time (Heb. 13:23). When Paul was taken as prisoner in Rome, he sent Timothy to Ephesus. His letters to Timothy were written during this period and focused on Timothy’s pastoral role—encouraging and guiding the younger man as he dealt with problems in the Ephesian church. At the close of the second letter, Paul urged Timothy to join him in Rome because Demas had forsaken Paul, and his other coworkers were off on their own missions (2 Tim. 4:9–10). It is thought that after Paul’s death, Timothy returned to Ephesus as pastor and then bishop, and that he was martyred there at the end of the first century.

notes



EXAMINE

**ONE:** Recruit a member to present a report on Paul's relationship to Timothy, using the book of Acts as well as Paul's letters. Give the reporter three to five minutes to tell the class what they discovered.

**1:1** *command.* Paul called himself an apostle by the commandment of God. He didn't claim authority on his own merit but by God's choosing him to be God's voice.

**1:2** *Grace, mercy and peace.* From an early history of zealously promoting the concept that the way to God's favor is through works, Paul became an even more zealous apostle of grace. Central to his mission was the truth that God has extended grace and mercy to us, even though we do not deserve it.

God is not at fault. He established his law with the world through Moses, but he demonstrated his grace to the world through Jesus. And his grace is still available to all who will call upon him in faith.

1 What are the Pastoral Epistles (1 Tim. 1:1–2)?

KJV	NIV
1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope; 2 Unto Timothy, my own son in the faith: Grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord.	1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God our Savior and of Christ Jesus our hope, 2 To Timothy my true son in the faith: Grace, mercy and peace from God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord.

Among Paul's many letters written to various churches throughout the Mediterranean, several were written to individuals. Three of these letters—two to Timothy and one to Titus—have come to be known as the Pastoral Epistles, due in part to the guidance Paul offered them as pastors as well as the concern he expressed toward the churches they oversaw. The timing of these letters, however, does not coincide with any of the events of the book of Acts that record Paul's ministry. Nevertheless, it is generally conceded that Paul was eventually released from his first Roman imprisonment and that he carried on additional apostolic ministry until his martyrdom under Nero (around AD 67). In 2 Timothy, Paul anticipated that event to be imminent.

Paul considered himself to be **an apostle of Christ Jesus by the command of God** (1 Tim. 1:1). From the moment of his conversion on the road to Damascus, he knew God had placed an unmistakable call upon his life to take the gospel of Christ to the gentiles. That calling was ultimately recognized and confirmed by the other apostles in Jerusalem. But Paul did not need their confirmation. He already had God's.

On his first missionary journey, Paul traveled through Lystra, where Timothy was just a young man at the time. Both Timothy's mother and grandmother became strong believers. By the time of Paul's second journey through Lystra in Acts 16, he had recruited the young Timothy

notes

to join him in ministry. Paul became a mentor to Timothy, but even more than that, Paul regarded him as a **true son in the faith** (v. 2). As time wore on, Paul even entrusted Timothy with subsidiary missions (Acts 19:22). Paul's affection for Timothy was evident in the fact that Paul included him in the salutation of his letters to five different churches.

## ONE

explore

1. Tell about an apostle figure in your life who mentored you in your Christian development.
2. Whom are you mentoring in both faith and ministry?

## 2 Beware of false teachers of the law (1 Tim. 1:3–11).

### KJV

3 As I besought thee to abide still at Ephesus, when I went into Macedonia, that thou mightest charge some that they teach no other doctrine,  
 4 Neither give heed to fables and endless genealogies, which minister questions, rather than godly edifying which is in faith: so do.  
 5 Now the end of the commandment is charity out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned:  
 6 From which some having swerved have turned aside unto vain jangling;  
 7 Desiring to be teachers of the law; understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm.  
 8 But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully;

### NIV

3 As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain people not to teach false doctrines any longer  
 4 or to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. Such things promote controversial speculations rather than advancing God's work—which is by faith.  
 5 The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith.  
 6 Some have departed from these and have turned to meaningless talk.  
 7 They want to be teachers of the law, but they do not know what they are talking about or what they so confidently affirm.  
 8 We know that the law is good if one uses it properly.

*continued*

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notes



## One

### EXPLORE

1. Calls for a personal response, but could include parents, pastors, or other mature Christians who have contributed to one's spiritual growth and development.
2. Calls for a personal response. Be sure the class members are thinking of their own children and grandchildren as well as others they may be mentoring.



### EXAMINE

**TWO:** Lead your class through this passage one verse at a time, analyzing, interpreting, and applying each verse in order. Summarize and fine-tune your findings. Avoid taking verses out of context and the danger of drawing more substantial conclusions than reasonable.

**1:3 false doctrines.** Paul did not specify the false doctrines being propagated in Ephesus. Rather, he focused on their controversial nature. While there is room within the church community for differences of opinion, controversy implies contention and division (James 4:1). A controversy results when each party to a discussion entrenches behind a staunchly held position and cannot retreat because of pride. In a sincere search for truth, love (1 Tim 1:5) is not displaced by anger and alienation. The danger of "theological" discussions is that they keep the truths of God on a theoretical rather than practical level.

**1:4 myths.** The Ephesian church was planted in a city where the major industry was the worship of the goddess Diana (Artemis). In such a thoroughly pagan atmosphere, the church was highly habituated to mythology. One of the heresies this led to was the belief that the way to God was mysterious and that it involved worship of angels (Col. 2:8, 18). By embellishing Old Testament accounts, false teachers turned the truth into myths, thus weakening its impact and creating much controversy. Anyone who has taught a Sunday school class of children who get their biblical facts from movies should be able to understand the problem.

**1:4 endless genealogies; "meaningless talk" (v. 6).** To the Jews of Paul's time, ancestry was everything. Paul saw the resulting endless and undoubtedly scholarly discussions as a complete waste of time.

*continued*

**1:5** *goal of this command.* Paul referred to all of the above commands. As Timothy's spiritual father and ministry mentor, Paul had the right and the responsibility to "lay down the law." One of the prerequisites of ministry is the willingness to be held accountable to a spiritual mentor—to accept and respond when a trusted person speaks truth into the minister's life. Paul was not on a power trip. He earnestly wanted to see the fruits of love in Timothy and in the lives of the people he loved in Ephesus. These fruits are a pure heart, a good conscience, and a sincere faith (Acts 23:1; Heb. 10:22).

**1:6** *departed; turned.* Paul had seen firsthand the effects of false doctrine, beginning with his own training as a Pharisee. Note the use of the word *departed*. Paul used the Greek word for "departed" again in 1 Timothy 6:21 and 2 Timothy 2:18. In both cases Paul referred to those who adopted false teaching and who departed from the faith.

**1:7** *teachers of the law . . . do not know.* Good teaching cannot come from a desire for prestige and power. The task of teaching is a divine appointment (Eph. 4:11), demands exemplary living (Rom. 2:17–23; James 3:1), and implies spiritual maturity (Heb. 5:12).

**1:8** *good if.* The best doctrine can be warped by improper application (Matt. 5:19).

**1:8–9** *law.* Paul saw that the law can be good if used properly, but it can also be abused and misinterpreted. He stated that the law was not made for good people—they don't need it because they already choose to do good. So for us as Christians trying to walk with the Lord, the law is not to be our focus. The Lord, who is good, is to be our focus.

**1:9** *law . . . for lawbreakers and rebels.* Laws are necessary because of sin. In a perfect world, guidelines, rightly followed, would be adequate—and there would be no need for enforcement. But we do not live in a perfect world, and the less perfect it becomes, the more laws are necessary in order to prevent complete chaos (Rom. 4:15; 13:1).

**1:10** *the sexually immoral* ["whoremongers," KJV]. The Greek word  *pornos*  refers to sexual sin in whatever form it takes. The word is based on the Greek word  *pernemi* , which means "to sell."

#### KJV *continued*

**9** Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers,

**10** For whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine;

**11** According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust.

#### NIV *continued*

**9** We also know that the law is made not for the righteous but for law-breakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious, for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers,

**10** for the sexually immoral, for those practicing homosexuality, for slave traders and liars and perjurers—and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine

**11** that conforms to the gospel concerning the glory of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

The church in Ephesus had a problem. Certain people within the church were leading people astray by their teaching. The various descriptions Paul used of their teaching include **false doctrines, myths, endless genealogies, controversial speculations, and meaningless talk** (vv. 3–4, 6). Isn't it interesting how easily people can be led astray by a zealous and passionate teacher, no matter how bizarre their teaching might be? We may remember from American history the horrible consequences of Jonestown, Guyana, (1978) and Waco, Texas (1993). In addition, a host of less notorious examples may come to mind of good Christian people buying into the outlandish claims of a false teacher. In Paul's second letter to Timothy, Paul warned him that "the time will come when people will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths" (2 Tim. 4:3–4).

Paul instructed Timothy to remain in Ephesus, where he could command those people to refrain from their activities. Although Timothy was not an apostle, he was respected because of his association with Paul. And apparently he was successful in his efforts, for the Lord's commendation to this church in Revelation 2:1–7 includes the fact that they had been faithful in rejecting the claims of false teachers.

Among other things, these false teachers attempted to convince the people that they were **teachers of the law** (1 Tim. 1:7). Apparently they were knowledgeable about certain aspects of the Mosaic law and attempted to convince people that these were crucial to their salvation. Even today it is common to find people who impose legalistic standards on others as a badge of their Christian faith. But by doing so, they often spend endless energy chasing after things that are truly nonessential.

Paul indicated that **the law is good if one uses it properly** (v. 8). The law may remind the ungodly of their sin and provide a framework for punishment of wrongdoers. If every person was free to do what was right in their own eyes, society would eventually crumble. The law is also, as Paul told the Galatians, a schoolmaster that is able to lead us to Christ (Gal. 3:24 KJV). But the law can be abused. Unfortunately, it is sometimes used as a club. But the goal of a command should be **love, which comes from a pure heart and a good conscience and a sincere faith** (1 Tim. 1:5).

## TWO

explore

1. What were certain people in Ephesus attempting to teach the believers?
2. How can Christians guard themselves from being led astray by false teaching?
3. In what ways can the law be abused?

## 3 Praise the Lord for his abundant grace (1 Tim. 1:12–17).

### KJV

**12** And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry;

**13** Who was before a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious: but I obtained mercy, because I did it ignorantly in unbelief.

**14** And the grace of our Lord was exceeding abundant with faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

### NIV

**12** I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service.

**13** Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief.

**14** The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

*continued*

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**1:10** *slave traders* ["menstealers," KJV]. The Greek word is a compound word that literally means "bring men to their feet," implying enslavement by force. This seems to be the only occurrence of this word in Scripture, although the principle of Old Testament law permitted a type of temporary and basically voluntary bondage for those who could find no other way to resolve their debts (Lev. 25:39–43).

**1:10** *contrary to the sound doctrine*. In this context, the word *doctrine* goes beyond theoretical theology to practical life application—the way a person lives.

**1:11** *conforms to the gospel*. Any reference to the gospel reverts to the most essential facts of the Christian message—that Jesus died so sinners might live (Rom. 1:15–17). God's amazing grace is always at its center.



### EXPLORE

#### Two

1. False doctrines, myths, genealogies. Paul wrote to Titus specifically about "Jewish myths" (Titus 1:14). These were like legendary accounts of Old Testament heroes. The genealogies were apparently false family trees for Old Testament characters. These may have been portrayed as "secret teachings" of the Old Testament. (See Robert Black, *Wesley Bible Commentary: 1&2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, Wesleyan Publishing House, 2004, 2026).

2. By engaging in regular Bible study; associating with mature believers.

3. When we try to enforce obedience to a nonessential point (something ceremonial or cultural), the law becomes a club to ensure uniformity.



### EXAMINE

**THREE:** On a large piece of paper or whiteboard, ask the class to draw a caricature of Paul before his conversion. What would he wear, carry, or say before he experienced the grace of God? Then read verses 12–17 again to see the contrast in Paul's life when he found Jesus Christ as his Savior. After studying these verses, sing a song about God's grace, such as "Amazing Grace."

**1:12** *who has given me strength*. Paul acknowledged that the power to be faithful comes from God (2 Cor. 4:7; 12:9; Eph. 3:7; 2 Thess. 1:11).

*continued*



**1:13 blasphemer.** The irony is that Paul's early life was devoted to a search-and-destroy mission against blasphemers. In his zeal, it took the Damascus road experience to show him that he, the Pharisee, was the blasphemer. What he thought was knowledge was, in fact, ignorance. He recognized, however, that his former ignorance was linked with unbelief—thus acknowledging his personal accountability. Paul was not saying that because he was ignorant his actions were not sin (Rom. 11:30; Luke 23:34).

**1:14 grace . . . abundantly.** To imagine we are not sinful is to deny the abundance of God's grace. In the next verse, in fact, Paul identified himself as the worst of sinners (also Eph. 2:5–8).

**1:15 I am the worst.** Paul used the present tense even though his zeal for Christ surpassed the zeal he had previous to his conversion. To begin to think of ourselves as “pretty good” is dangerous because it feeds pride and teaches us to discount the importance of God's grace in our still-imperfect lives (1 John 1:8–10).

**1:16 for that very reason.** Paul's major qualification for mercy was his extreme sinfulness because, by contrast, it put the grace of God in a clear light. This statement is more significant because it came from a man who had made being righteous the primary goal of his whole life—even before his encounter with Christ. At that point, he was forever freed from the illusion that he was intrinsically righteous (Titus 3:5). It was, therefore, no problem with Paul that the reason behind God's mercy to him was that Christ Jesus might “display his immense patience.”

**1:16 mercy... immense patience.** God's unconditional love, generous mercy, and immense patience are our only hope of salvation.

**1:17 Now to the King eternal.** The unusual placement of this “benediction” in the middle of a letter draws attention to the immense importance of the truths that precede it. One can almost see Paul laying his pen down to ponder over again, perhaps for hours or even days, the reality of God's grace in contrast to the impossibility of ever earning or deserving that grace.

#### KJV continued

**15** This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

**16** Howbeit for this cause I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might shew forth all longsuffering, for a pattern to them which should hereafter believe on him to life everlasting.

**17** Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

#### NIV continued

**15** Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst.

**16** But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life.

**17** Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Paul was always keenly aware that he was a product of the Lord's grace. If the law had been able to save someone, it undoubtedly would have been him. As Paul once told the Philippians, he was “circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a Pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church; as for righteousness based on the law, faultless” (Phil. 3:5–6). But in his early life, the law was a club he used to try to beat the followers of Christ into submission. His misuse of it caused him to be a **blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man** (1 Tim. 1:13). And when the Lord met him on his way to Damascus, he became aware that he was not a righteous man at all, but a sinner—in fact, **the worst of sinners** (v. 16). And no matter how hard we might try to obey the law of God, all of us have sinned and fallen short of God's glory (Rom. 3:23).

Fortunately, Paul discovered the remarkable truth that **Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners** (1 Tim. 1:15). God is rich in mercy, not wanting to hold humanity's sins against us. As sinners we don't deserve mercy—“the wages of sin is death” (Rom. 6:23). That's what makes grace so amazing. And God is willing to pour it out on us **abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus** (1 Tim. 1:14). For that reason, he alone can receive the honor and the glory for our salvation.

Paul told Timothy that God displayed his mercy toward Paul so **Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for**

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those who would believe in him and receive eternal life (v. 16). If God could have mercy on Paul, God could forgive anybody! Paul's life was a testimony of God's love to everyone he met. Grace does that. It takes us from where we were and patiently lifts us to where God designed us to be from the very beginning. It motivates us to live our lives completely for the One who died to give us eternal life. It energizes our soul to worship him with our whole being.

### THREE

explore

1. What was your life like before you experienced the grace of God?
2. What difference has God's grace made in your life?

When we truly grasp the depth of God's grace toward us, we, like Paul, will sing a wonderful doxology of praise unto him: **Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen (v. 17).**

### LIFE APPLICATION

exercise

God's grace is a free gift, without any strings. But like any gift, it must be received. John wrote in his gospel, "Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God" (John 1:12). You can experience God's grace in your life by doing the following:

- Repent and confess your sins to God.
- Believe Christ died to save you.
- Receive God's gift by faith.

Once you take that step of faith, then you, like Paul, will become an example of God's grace to others. In the same way you have received mercy from your heavenly Father, you can in turn pass it along to others. In that way, your life will be a testimony of grace.

- Whom do you need to forgive?
- What hurts, grudges, or resentments do you need to let go of?
- To whom does God want you to extend his grace?



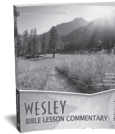
### Three

1. Calls for a personal response, and should include some recognition of our sinfulness.
2. Calls for a personal response, and should include some statement of contrast between the old way of life and the new.



### Closing

Allow your class members time to pray with thanksgiving for the life-changing power of God's grace.



Help class members connect with the truth from this week's study in the Word—try the activity "What If?" from *Wesley Bible Lesson Commentary Volume 4*.

notes

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# WESLEY

## BIBLE CURRICULUM

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Scope and Sequence with coordinating Wesley Bible Lesson Commentary

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	UNIT 1: Fall	UNIT 2: Winter	UNIT 3: Spring	UNIT 4: Summer
Volume 1 2029-2030	Revelation	Minor Prophets	1-2 Peter Jude	Life Issues Holiness Evangelism
Volume 2 2030-2031	Jeremiah Lamentations Ezekiel Daniel	Matthew	<b>James</b>	1-2 Samuel 1-2 Kings 1-2 Chronicles
Volume 3 2024-2025	Romans	Galatians Ephesians Philippians Colossians Philemon	Leviticus Numbers Deuteronomy	Call to Holiness: Dynamic Life from Spiritual Disciplines
Volume 4 2025-2026	John	Ezra Nehemiah Esther	1-2 Thessalonians	1-2 Timothy Titus
Volume 5 2026-2027	Hebrews	Exodus	Joshua Judges Ruth	Spiritual Heritage Stewardship Social Issues
Volume 6 2027-2028	Mark	Isaiah	1-3 John	Job Psalms Proverbs Ecclesiastes Song of Songs
Volume 7 2028-2029	Genesis	Luke	Acts	1-2 Corinthians

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