

### Permeating Grace

I used to wear contact lenses. These lenses were a type called gas permeable lenses, meaning that rather than forming an airtight seal on my eyes, they allowed air to permeate, or flow through. This was good for my eyes.

God's grace permeates our relationship with him, and that's good for us too. One of the ways grace flows is by his word, the Bible. In fact, when we speak of the Bible as being "inspired" we are using a word which itself carries the meaning of flowing air, wind or breath. This week we will study the grace that God delivers through that particular aspect of his word, which the Bible calls "law." We will see that God's law is grace to us – his people – and that God calls us to respond to that grace with love.

#### Monday – Words of Grace

*"The sacred books are pervaded by the Spirit. There is nothing either in the prophets, or in the law, or in the Gospels, or in the epistles, which does not spring from the fullness of the divine majesty."* Origen

1. Please read Exodus 20:1-17 (focusing on verses 1-2). What had God done for the people of Israel according to verse 2? How did this display God's grace? How is verse 1 itself an act of grace?
2. Now look at what had occurred immediately before, recorded in Exodus 19:1-9. What grace does God reveal in verses 3-6?
3. What is the people's response in Exodus 19:7-8?

**Digging Deeper:** As you consider the people's response, consider what your response might have been. Would you have been eager to respond the same way? How did God bless that response with grace (vs. 9)?

#### Tuesday – A Saved Community

*"Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, there a church of God exists, even if it swarms with many faults."* John Calvin, 16<sup>th</sup> c. French theologian

1. Please read Genesis 15:1-8. What promises did God make? What do you think of Abram's responses in verses 2, 3 and 8?

**Text Insight:** Abram (later called Abraham) is the grandfather of Jacob, who later became known as Israel. It is from Jacob's twelve sons that the twelve tribes of Israel arose and eventually became the nation of Israel.

2. What well-known occurrence is recorded in Exodus 14:10-30? What does God tell Moses in verse 15? How would you feel if God's response to your prayer were to tell you to stop praying and get moving?
3. Whose relationship with God is revealed in Exodus 14:31? How does it mirror Genesis 15:6?

**Making it Personal:** In Genesis 15:6, amidst all the doubts and contrary responses that Abraham gave God, he still believed. Sometimes faith and doubt exist side by side. In what area(s) of your life are you struggling with faith and doubt?

#### Wednesday – Called to be Different

*"The greater perfection a soul aspires after, the more dependent it is upon divine grace."* Brother Lawrence

1. Please read Leviticus 19:1-2. What word of grace is revealed there? In Leviticus 20:22-24, what does God say to reinforce the notion that God's people are not to be like the rest of the world?

**Text Insight:** The word "holy" means to be set apart.

2. 1 Peter 1:13-16 expands a bit on what constitutes holiness. Do you find it easy or difficult to follow the commands of verse 13? Why?
3. What insights from 1 Peter 1:17-21 help you to understand the reasons for being set apart (holy) for God?

**Making it Personal:** In what ways have you accepted God's invitation to be apart from the world's ways? In what way(s) are you struggling?

#### Thursday – The Status of the Law Today

*"There was never found, in any age of the world, either religion or law that did so highly exalt the public good as the Bible."* Francis Bacon, 16<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> c. English philosopher

1. Please read Hebrews 8:7-12. According to verse 10, does the law have any place in the lives of God's people today? What place does it hold? What do you allow to reign in your heart?
2. Look closely at verse 8. Where did the fault lie? How did God propose to fix the problem?
3. Take a look at Hebrews 10:15-22. What support do these verses give to the notion that Leviticus 19:1-2 still applies to God's people today?

**Prayer Focus:** Pray that we as a church will respond to God's call to be with him – set apart for his purposes – not conforming to the world's ways around us but living out his law as it is written on our hearts.

#### Friday – The Law Lovingly Fulfilled

*"Our love to God is measured by our everyday fellowship with others and the love it displays."* Andrew Murray

1. Please read Romans 13:7-10. What does Paul say about giving what is due to others? What debt does he encourage us to plan on continuing to repay daily? How can you do that today?
2. Now look at the rest of Paul's instruction, Romans 13:11-14. How do these verses correspond with the passage you read on Wednesday (1 Peter 1:13-16)?
3. Compare Mark 12:28-34 with Romans 12:1-2. How does the response of the teacher of the law in verses 32-33 show both a desire to be holy because God is holy and to daily repay the debt of love?

**Making it Personal:** Ask God for grace to repay the debt of love today.

**For the Weekend:** Psalm 19:7-14 lists a few of the wonderful attributes of God's law, and its impact on a believer's life. Ask God to guide you in your loving response to his law graciously given to you.