

Fifty Days of Grace

The great fifty days of Easter are always a wonderful time to reflect on all of the many blessings God offers. A blessing for which I give thanks everywhere is always the gift of Grace. God's grace of course is eternal and stretches far beyond the 50 glorious days of Eastertide, but the season of Resurrection is a lovely time to think on such things.

I love that our sweet salvation resides firmly in God's loving hands. Our salvation is just that—a merciful and life-giving gift from God. This is a gift that comes at our birth and is ours to enjoy each and every day until forever. There are no words I can speak that will save me, no great deeds that will elevate me, no level of moral purity that will make me worthy. The simple truth is that it is God who gets all the credit for gifting us with this blessed state of grace. Grace...it is such a blissful state of being that it could have only been born of God's limitless love for all of us.

One of my favorite authors, Frederick Buechner, says it best. As I enjoy a few days of post-Holy Week rest---grace upon grace, I offer you this snippet from his book *Wishful Thinking, a Seeker's ABC*^[1] and if you are looking for a wonderful little book to pick up, this is one I highly recommend...from Mr. Buechner:

After centuries of handling and mishandling, most religious words have become so shopworn nobody's much interested anymore. Not so with grace, for some reason. Mysteriously even derivatives like gracious and graceful still have some of the bloom left.

Grace is something you can never get but can only be given. There's no way to earn it or deserve it or bring it about any more than you can deserve the taste of raspberries and cream or earn good looks or bring about your own birth.

A good sleep is grace and so are good dreams. Most tears are grace. The smell of rain is grace...

The grace of God means something like: Here is your life. You might never have been, but you are because the party wouldn't have been complete without you. Here is the world...beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don't be afraid. I am with you. Nothing can separate us. It is for you that I created the universe. I love you.

There is only one catch. Like any other gift, the gift of grace can only be yours if you reach out and take it... maybe being able to reach out and take it is a gift too.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound...Let's give thanks to God and celebrate God's grace each and every day. Christ is Risen, Alleluia! Alleluia! Happy Easter, Stephanie+

[1] Frederick Buechner, *Wishful Thinking, A Seeker's ABC*, HarperSanFrancisco, 1993.