

Extravagant Grace

Scripture Reading — Ephesians 1:3-10

In him we have redemption ... in accordance with the riches of God's grace that he lavished on us. Ephesians 1:7-8 —

Extravagance. Now, that's something few of my friends accuse me of! I'm guilty of many things, but wasting money or spending lavishly is not among them. That's too bad, because I'll never be fully like Jesus until extravagance is a part of my behavior.

Extravagance can be a good thing. Paul writes that God has blessed us with "every spiritual blessing." God's grace is "freely given" to us. "The riches of God's grace" are "lavished on us."

Look at the stories of Jesus. Aren't 180 gallons of wine for a wedding reception extravagant? (See John 2:1-11.) Jesus didn't think so. Aren't twelve baskets of leftover bread and fish an extravagant miscalculation of what it takes to feed a crowd? (See Mark 6:30-44.) Jesus didn't think so. Isn't a miraculous catch of fish that breaks the nets and begins to sink boats extravagant? (See Luke 5:4-11.) Jesus didn't think so.

We might think, "If God really knew what I am like, he wouldn't be so extravagant toward me." But God does know what we are like. Paul notes that God lavished his grace on us "with all wisdom and understanding."

As with the people who enjoyed wine and bread and fish with Jesus, there are only two reasons for God's extravagance—our need and his grace.

Prayer

God of abounding grace, we thank you today that you do not give in moderation but that you pour your grace lavishly on us. Through Jesus Christ, Amen.

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