



*Assisting  
Children's  
Evangelists  
Worldwide*

## Devotional

**WHAT IS GRACE?** The Greek word "Charis" which is translated as "Grace" in the Bible means "favour, blessing or kindness." It carries with it the sense of "giving." Everything we receive "by grace" is a gift and cannot be earned.

**GOD IS A GOD OF GRACE** Grace is His nature. He is always ready to give and to bless. We saw last month that God is merciful. Because He is a God of mercy, HE DOES NOT GIVE the sinner who trusts Him the judgement and punishment which HE JUSTLY DESERVES. But God does much more than that. He is also a GOD OF GRACE, and through His grace, HE GIVES THE SINNER WHO TRUSTS HIM WHAT HE DOES NOT DESERVE. He gives him all the blessings of salvation. His mercy removes punishment; His grace bestows on him His favour, blessing and kindness -all the blessings of salvation.

# THE GRACE OF GOD

The greatest display and foundation of God's grace is seen in the life and death of His Son Jesus Christ. John records in John 1: 17 that "grace and truth came (to us)) through Jesus Christ." Someone has wisely used the acronym "God's Riches At Christ's Expense" to describe the meaning of grace.

**THE GRACE OF GOD IS A GIFT** The Bible

makes it clear that God's grace is available to sinners; but it cannot be worked for, earned, or purchased in any way. It is a gift which God gives the sinner who, by a simple act of faith, puts his trust in Him.

**SINNERS ARE SAVED BY THE GRACE OF GOD** The greatest problem in our churches to-day is the belief that we are "saved by works." That, if we go to church, or if we pray and read the Bible, or if we live good and clean lives or if we give money to the church and to charities, we will earn salvation. God's Word tells us that none of these, separately or together, are enough. God's clear dogmatic statement is that sinners are saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8). There is no other way. All these things are good, but they do not save. This saving grace is available to everyone, provided they put their trust in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Have you done so? Have you thanked Him for His wonderful saving grace in your life

**BELIEVERS ARE STRENGTHENED BY THE GRACE OF GOD** The wonderful grace of God is not just the source of our salvation; it is also the source of the strength, peace and blessing which we, as believers, need in our lives and service. God, in His grace, is always ready to give us the grace, the power and the ability to live for Him and to serve Him. In 2 Corinthians 12 Paul tells us in verse 7 that he had a problem, a serious problem, which he

Welcome

Thank you for joining the growing number of Mini Mag readers. You are very WELCOME, and we trust that you will receive help and encouragement as you download these four pages. Don't forget that there are 21 more issues of Mini Mag which have already been produced on this website. We invite you and welcome you to read, learn and be helped by all of them. We would appreciate it also if you would let others know about all these issues of Mini Mag so they could receive help for their ministry to children.

called his "thorn in the flesh". He prayed that God would remove it, but God did not take it away. Instead, He told Paul that His grace was all that he needed and that His grace would give him the power to deal with his problem. God's grace is enough, God's grace is sufficient, for all your problems. Ask Him, trust Him and thank Him for that grace.

**GOD WANTS US TO BE GRACIOUS** Grace is one of those attributes of God which He wants to see reflected and developed in our lives so we can become more and more like Him. At our conversion He gave us the Holy Spirit to live in us and develop in us His nine-fold fruit as listed in Galatians 5:22, 23. This fruit makes us more gracious like Him, and also makes us gracious in our relationships with our family and our neighbours. How gracious are you to them on a scale of 1 to 10?

## Children in the Bible

In earlier issues of Mini Mag we saw and studied Matthew 18 verses 1-14, the main passage about children in the Bible, and we learned much about their spiritual needs and about how we can meet those needs. The main passage in the Old Testament concerning the needs and the potential of children is Psalm 78 verses 1-8. (Please read these verses) What they teach us about children is equally important. Note carefully what this passage says, apply it to your own ministry and use it to challenge and help others.

**Verse 1 THE PEOPLE** to whom this passage was addressed needed to fulfil their responsibility to the children. Every believer should have an interest in and concern for children.

**Verses 2 and 3 THE PRIVILEGE** which had been theirs (as God's people) to hear, and to know the Word of God, from their predecessors.

**Verse 4 THE PROMISE** they had made, or needed to make, to teach the great truths about God to their children—the praises of the Lord (WHO HE IS), the strength of the Lord, (WHAT HE HAS DONE FOR THEM) and His wonderful works (WHAT HE WANTS TO DO FOR THEM). The three comparable terms in the New Testament could be -the deity of Jesus Christ, His work on the cross, and His salvation of believers.

**Verse 5 GOD'S PRECEPT** (or command). This verse makes it clear that teaching these truths to the children is not an option to choose or a choice to make. It is a command from God Himself.

**Verse 6 GOD'S PLAN** God wants the children who are alive, and also the children who will be born, to know and believe these truths so that they will, in turn, teach them to their children, thus ensuring the communication of this



message in the future. If the children are not taught, it will be both their loss and the loss of future generations  
**Verse 7 GOD'S PURPOSE** This verse is the climax of the passage, because in this verse God expresses His threefold purpose and goal for the children He has been speaking about in all the previous verses.

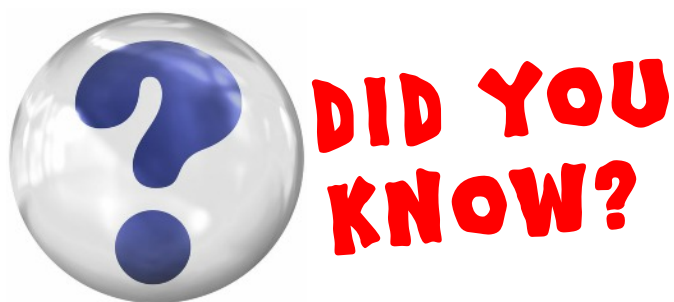
- Firstly, that "they may set their hope in God." The teacher's aim should not be just that they should know about God. His goal should be that they would have an experience with God and this verse makes it clear that it is possible for them when they are children to do so and to be saved.

- Secondly, that "they should not forget the works of God." They should remember that the God Who did so many great works in the Bible is ready to do great works in their lives.

- Thirdly, that "they should keep His commandments." Their hope in God should lead to a changed life.

**Verse 8 AN AWFUL POSSIBILITY** The Psalmist emphasises that if we do not reach and teach the children, they will become another "stubborn and rebellious generation" like so many of their fathers who were not reached and taught.

**GOD'S CALL AND CHALLENGE TO US—REACH AND TEACH THE CHILDREN AND DO IT NOW.**



- That helping children, who have trusted Christ, to grow is a very important part of your ministry, and that many teachers find it difficult to do this effectively.

- That ACEW has produced two series of 10 visualised doctrinal lessons entitled "Growth - the Plan of God." Each lesson has a detailed text and colourful visual which have recently been renewed.

- That many children's workers have found them to be a great help in their ministry to saved children.

- That these lessons will help you in your ministry and that they are available at no cost as PowerPoint presentations to you on our website at [www.CEFBookMinistry.com](http://www.CEFBookMinistry.com)



## YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

**Question:** I teach a Sunday School class. I teach my children about God, about sin, and about what the Lord Jesus has done for them. Am I missing something? Could you help me?

**Answer:** I commend you on your good teaching. These are very important subjects and an essential part of the gospel of Jesus Christ. These are facts which the children need to know. But there is a vital part of evangelistic teaching missing. The Bible teaches us that the teaching of facts should be followed by the application of those facts. It is not enough to tell the children what Jesus Christ did for them. They need to be told what they should do in response to the truth taught. They need to be challenged "The Lord Jesus wants to come into your life and save you. Are you willing to invite Him to come in?" Do it clearly but without pressure of any kind.



# Teaching Children



The teacher's main task is to teach the Word of God to his children, and to help them understand it, apply it and remember it. There are

a number of ways he can do this throughout his Good News Club hour. The main way is to teach a 15/20 minute Bible lesson. A Bible quiz can also be a help and be greatly enjoyed. But it is essential also to include in your programme the memorisation of a Bible verse. Bible verses which have been taught and remembered can play an important part in the children's lives.

- **CHOOSE** the verse you want them to memorise well in advance. You could relate it to the central truth of your Bible lesson, or you could choose a verse which would be helpful to both saved and unsaved children.

- **PREPARE** what you will do. You could simply print the words on a blackboard or on a piece of cardboard which you or a child will hold, or you could prepare a flashcard with the words on one side and an explanatory picture on the other, or you could use words or word strips on a board or a power point.

- **EXPLAIN** the verse to the children before and during repetition time.

- **ENCOURAGE** the children to memorise it by repetition. You can make this interesting and enjoyable in several ways. You could start with the words on the board or power point, repeat them several times, and then remove the words step by step challenging the children to repeat them; or you could scramble the words on the board and ask several children to reassemble them, or you could give the words to a child and ask him to put them together on the board. Other ways include dividing the group into two groups (boys and girls) to see which group can repeat it best, or you could ask each of the children to repeat one word of the verse-one after the other - until complete. Don't be afraid to use different methods so that this can be a quite enjoyable time for the children -as well as a helpful time.

- **REVISE** the verses memorised from week to week. You might even decide to have a monthly competition to see which children can remember the verses learned in the previous month.

**PRAY THAT GOD WILL PLANT AND USE ALL THIS GOOD SEED IN THE CHILDREN'S HEARTS AND MINDS.**



**Comments from those who have used our publications**

*"I am a school teacher and I teach Good News Clubs and Teen-ager clubs. I download your Mini Mags each month, and I really want to thank you for them. I pray that God will really continue to help me in my ministry. I have been discouraged by not seeing changes in the lives of the teen-agers I teach, and the children I teach in school and Good News Club. The Holy Spirit has spoken to me through your Mini Mags. I will read the 15 issues I have received. They are, after my Bible, a real blessing. Thank you for them"* (Elizabeth in Nigeria)



## ACEW CAN HELP YOU

Realising the need for good illustrations in our ministry, and the benefits they provide, we have produced a book entitled "Now I See It" which includes hundreds of illustrations that can help you explain and teach many of the truths contained in God's Word either to children or to teachers. You will find this book a great help for your ministry, and you can download it at [www.cefbookministry.com](http://www.cefbookministry.com).



## History of Children's Evangelism

The Sunday School Movement was founded in England, in 1757, and was the first organisation in church history to reach and teach the Word of God to children worldwide. It has been very effective in many countries, even though it has suffered a decline in recent years. The second great worldwide organisation aimed at the evangelism of children also started in England in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

In 1867 the Rev Payson Hammond came to London from America to conduct meetings for children and Sunday School teachers. The meetings for children were strongly evangelistic and caused some controversy in the churches; but God spoke to the hearts of two men, Josiah Spiers and Tom Bishop, and they both started children's meetings in their homes. The following year Josiah went on holiday to Llandudno in Wales. On the beach, one day, he designed, in the sand, a Bible text "God is Love" and when a number of children came and watched, he took the opportunity to speak to them and evangelise them. As he did so, he felt God was calling him to get fully involved in a ministry to children. As a result, he and his friend Tom Bishop started an organisation called Children's Special Service Mission or CSSM as it came to be called. Since then, this Mission has expanded into over 130 countries worldwide and has developed a number of ministries and projects to bring the gospel effectively to many thousands of children.

One of their earliest projects was to print and distribute a daily Bible reading programme to the children. This ministry would be greatly expanded in future years to become available to all groups. Their greatest direct ministry to the children was Beach Missions when groups of volunteer workers, with experienced

leaders, would conduct meetings and other activities for the children on holiday at resorts all over the country. In the 1890s they started a Boys' Camping programme and founded the Caravan Mission to Village Children. The camping programme was greatly developed after the 1<sup>st</sup> World War. In the 1940s they started their very effective Schools Programme with groups of children (mostly teenagers) meeting with a leader after school

hours in "a Scripture Union" to study the Bible together. (I was the founder and leader of one such Scripture Union in the school where I taught).

In 1960 they changed the name of the organisation from CSSM to Scripture Union so as to include all their ministries but they have maintained their ministry to children as their first priority.

We praise God for the way He has blessed the ministry of this wonderful organisation. (including their growing literature ministry) and for the way He has raised up, blessed and used the multitude of volunteer workers to engage and work with the full time staff. We are especially thankful for the continued emphasis they have maintained on the EVANGELISM of children, and their stated policy to "introduce children to Jesus and then help them to meet God through the Bible and prayer."

**WE WELCOME CSSM/SCRIPTURE UNION AND ALL ITS STAFF INTO THE MINI MAG HALL OF FAME**



## The Mini Mag HALL of FAME

### Personal advice from the Author

One of the best ways to help both teachers and children to understand what you are teaching is to use illustrations from the Bible or from everyday life. The word "illustration" simply means "cast light upon". For example, when I am teaching my outline from Psalm 78, and I want to emphasise the importance of reaching children when they are young, I include the illustration of a steep cliff over which many people are falling. At the bottom of the cliff a hospital has been built and an ambulance service has been organised to look after and mend these broken bodies. Then someone came up with the bright idea to build a wall at the top of the cliff, to prevent these poor people from falling over it. This illustration helps us to see that if we reach and teach children, we are building a wall at the

### TURN THE LIGHT ON

top of the cliff so that they will not fall over it and become like those at the bottom. There will then be much less need for a spiritual ambulance there, with all the work and expense involved. Are you willing and ready to be a "wall-builder", and reach children when still young? You can see the same principle involved in 2 Kings 2:19-22 when Elisha was faced with a problem of a river with poisonous water which was causing problems in the land around Jericho. What did he do? He went to the SOURCE of the river and cast his salt in there. As a result, the waters were healed.

**Don't be afraid to use good illustrations in your ministry. They will help your listeners to understand.**



The Mini-Mag is published by Assisting Children's Evangelists Worldwide and written by Sam Doherty with the assistance and advice of Terry Flannigan, Director of the ACEW Trust, and Kenneth Martin, Chairman of the ACEW Trust.

All of them have occupied leadership positions for many years in the worldwide ministry of Child Evangelism Fellowship®. The contents of each Mini-Mag are based upon the author's 70 years of experience working with Child Evangelism Fellowship, successively as national director of Irish CEF, as European CEF regional director and as founder of the CEF Specialised Book Ministry. Contact can be made at [www.CEFBookMinistry.com](http://www.CEFBookMinistry.com).

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