

II. WHAT IS GRACE?

In the NIV version of the Bible the word "grace" is used in 123 verses. These uses fall roughly into four categories of meaning.

Some uses refer to God's free gift of justification. These would include the following:

Romans 3:24 – "and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus."

Galatians 2:21 – "I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"

Galatians 5:4 – "You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace."

Jude 4 – "For certain men whose condemnation was written about long ago have secretly slipped in among you.. They are godless men, who change the grace of our God into a license for immorality and deny Jesus Christ our only Sovereign and Lord."

Some uses refer to God's blessing. These would include a large number, including those found in the greeting or the complimentary closing of letters. -

John 1:16 – "From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another."

2 Corinthians 8:7 – "But just as you excel in everything – in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in your love for us – see that you also excel in this grace of giving."

Colossians 4:6 – "Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone."

2 Corinthians 13:14 – "May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all."