

**Lavish Grace Week 3:
Acts of Love, Humility and
Selflessness Create Graceful
Relationships**

By Allison Dillaberry

This week, we will dig deeper into how to have graceful relationships with family, friends and even strangers. We will examine Bible verses that look at three main ideas that help us to learn behavior tools of grace. These are love, humility and selflessness.

First, let's look at *grace poured out and overflowing* into our lives. God chooses to give us grace even when we don't deserve it. He forgives us for our sin and makes us whole again, if only we repent and change our ways. God gives grace to us through his love and blessings on our lives. That love can be expressed in so many ways: through the love of others, through opportunity, through healing, etc.

Let's begin by learning to give grace to others through our actions.

What are acts of love?

Referring back to the idea of *agape*' love, remember that it is love bestowed on us by God even when we behave badly or are undeserving. This is the type of love God wants us to show to others.

This is what it looks like:

- It gives without looking for love back
- It is acceptance even during difficulty and hardship
- It doesn't keep score in relationships
- It is freely given without pride or haughtiness
- It doesn't expect to have its own way
- It is patient and kind
- It is forgiving and merciful
- It holds no grudges and is not envious
- It does not get angry

Use one of the bulleted items above and share how you might use one of these in the future to show grace to another person and to diffuse a difficult situation.

Read 1 Corinthians 13:4-5 for a better understanding of what true and real Godly love looks like.

Write out some aspects of a Corinthian type love and pray about how you can show love more like this to others.

What are acts of humility?

Behaving in a humble way can be really hard to do. It is the act of constantly putting others' needs before your own. We are selfish beings, and that is why it is so important for us to get this part right. We are second to God and to others. Let's look at some scripture to help us understand what humility is.

Ephesians 5:21 says "to submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." This suggests that the only way to truly be humble is to do it out of respect for Christ. By yielding to God, we can yield to others as well.

How can you show an act of humility to a close friend? Have you ever been humble with a friend and what did that look like?

Also read Phillipians 2:3-4 to better understand what being humble is like. Paraphrase the verse below.

How can you look to the interests of others in your own life? Give an example of how you could show humility to a stranger.

What local charities are available to you where you might serve others? Look online if necessary to find a homeless shelter or foodbank where you could volunteer.

Write out words that begin with the following letters that explain what humility looks like to help you remember how to act in humility. I've done one for you.

H

U

M

Inferior

L

I

T

Y

Also read 1 Peter 3:8. Write out the character traits that are described. How can you apply at least one of them to your life? What does it mean to have a “humble mind”?

What does selflessness look like?

How do we act in a selfless way? We are inherently selfish creatures. Behaving in a manner that makes us second does not come naturally. So, we have to learn how to be selfless.

We have to be doers of the word, not just hearers. In James 1:22-25 tells us to not just hear the word of Christ, but to act on it. We have to learn that selflessness is an act.

Read James 1:22-25 and then paraphrase it.

How can you be selfless toward a family member in your life? Think of one action that would put you, second, and try it this week with a family member. Then, record the anecdote below. How did it go? Was the result what you expected?

When we behave selfishly, we often get into quarrels or fights with others because we want things our own way. We behave in a selfish manner because we are trying to fill the desires of our hearts, which are really the desires of the world, NOT God's desires for us. Again in the book of James, Christ's brother, James, talks to us about putting aside our fleshly desires for the things of God. If we can do this, it will truly help us to be unselfish.

Read James 4:1-10. Write out one thing that stuck out to you about how putting aside things of the world can help us be less selfish.

What one thing of the world can you put aside to help you be more selfless and less selfish in your life?

What actions can you take to keep your eyes more on Christ rather than on the things of the world? For example, attend church weekly. List at least three things and be specific.

Here are a few more scriptures that highlight what selflessness looks like for your reference.

Ephesians 4:32 English Standard Version (ESV)

³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you

This is another example of how to show humility to others. We forgive because we have been forgiven.

Walk in Love

Ephesians 5 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Questions for Reflection

What made the most impact on you about acts of love?

What made the most impact on you about acts of humility?

What made the most impact on you about acts of selflessness?

What have you identified as your strengths when it comes to graceful relationships?

What are your weaknesses?

Thank you so much for digging in deeper with me about how to show acts of grace to others. As I've written this lesson, I've learned that I can improve in all three areas, especially with my family. I am learning right along with you, sweet friend!

When things get tough, remember to go to God in prayer and ask for His help. Look to scriptures like this one for meditation and even for memorization. You *CAN* have healthy and graceful relationships. Keep the faith!



Allison Dillaberry is a former high school and middle school English teacher who now edits and writes for a blog website about all things MOM. She is a devoted wife, mother and caregiver to her elderly mother. She loves to write, garden, eat cake and then walk it off with her excitable Wheaten Terrier, Kallie. She believes that God always has a plan and trusts faithfully in her Lord. She and her husband, JD, work diligently to serve the Lord in all things, and they believe that God saved them from great sin to be a testimony of His healing power. You can read more of her writing at her blog **AllisonD.com**.

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