

# GRACE

# Grace

2014 Salvos Women Resource Manual





**‘For it is by *Grace*  
you have been saved, through  
faith – and this is not from  
yourselves. It is the gift of God’**

**Ephesians 2:8**

# Message from Commissioner Jan Condon

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**Dear Sisters in Christ,**

*Grace!* What a wonderful theme for our resource manual for 2014.

It really is a beautiful theme and word.

Max Lucado said: 'Of all God's wondrous works, GRACE in my estimation, is the magnum opus.' I wholeheartedly agree with him.

We are so undeserving of God's grace but he keeps giving without measure and drenches our world with grace.

Grace has many facets. It could be likened to a diamond that has many facets. Mined rough, diamonds are converted into gems through a multi-step process called 'cutting' and the final goal is to produce a faceted jewel where the specific angles between the facets would optimise the diamond lustre.

This is like grace – it has many different aspects and is truly a beautiful gift from God and when we allow God's grace to be fully accepted in our lives, our real beauty is discovered.

Grace is totally undeserved, unexpected – saving, empowering, changing.

And we have the privilege of dispensing God's grace to others.

The first letter of Peter chapter four verse 10 says – *'Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God's grace in its various forms.'*

These resources are prepared to assist you in sharing this wonderful gift of grace with your women, with the prayer that you and your women will discover a transforming facet of God's grace.

I am grateful to all who have contributed to this resource.

The grace of the Lord be with you all.

*Jan Condon*

**Jan Condon  
Commissioner  
Territorial President of Women's Ministries**





# The Freedom Manifesto

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The Salvation Army is about people finding freedom. It's a pretty broad statement, but we're a pretty diverse bunch. Across the country we're engaged with every demographic and every age group. We're active in the big cities, the country towns and even outback cattle stations. You'll find us involved in national issues and you'll also find us one-on-one in your local cafe.

But regardless of where we are or what we're doing, one thing always remains true: we're about people finding freedom.

Freedom from fear. Freedom from neglect. Freedom from poverty and addiction.

Freedom to dream. Freedom to love. Freedom to make a difference.

Freedom to live life to the full.

We believe in freedom through community. We believe in the power of community. People loving other people, and people helping other people. Those who 'have' sharing generously – sacrificially – with those who don't. People finding acceptance, encouragement, healing and support without discrimination. We believe no-one should have to 'go it alone'.

Our goal is to be community builders, not just service providers. We don't give up on people – not only responding to immediate needs but journeying with people for the long haul, helping them to find freedom and stay free as well.

We believe in freedom through action. We're not afraid to get our hands dirty to help secure freedom for others. If the environment is unpleasant, we'll still go. If the task seems impossible, we'll try anyway. We're convinced that freedom is for everybody. No exceptions.

We see ourselves as a movement rather than an institution – inspiring, equipping and inviting people from all walks of life to join the fight and be part of helping secure freedom for someone else.

We believe in freedom through faith. We believe that true freedom encompasses body, mind and spirit. Our faith convinces us that hope, purpose and fulfilment can be everyone's story. Our freedom journey started with Jesus, and he continues to be the foundation, inspiration and driving force of everything we do. We believe Jesus was, is, and always will be about people finding freedom.

**We're about people finding freedom.**





# SALVOS WOMEN TERRITORIAL PROJECT 2014

# TANZANIA

Empowering rural women through training in midwifery and sewing.



## MIDWIFERY COURSE:

- Training for 50 participants
- Transport to 5 day seminar
- Facilitators
- Teaching aids
- Midwifery first aid kits

TARGET: \$110,000



The Salvation Army  
Australia Eastern Territory

## SEWING PROJECT:

- Purchase 35 sewing machines
- Tailoring course
- Purchase of material and tailors kits
- Teaching fees for professional tailors





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*The amazing grace of  
the Master, Jesus  
Christ, the extravagant  
love of God, the intimate  
friendship of the Holy  
Spirit, be with all of you.*

(2 Corinthians 13:14 TM)

AMAZING

Grace



# Celebrate Life!

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Major Vicki Strong

## Party to celebrate cancer survivors

Most women's ministries groups include women who have survived cancer or have family members who are survivors. Plan a party that celebrates life after cancer. Contact local cancer survivor support groups and send them an invitation to the party. Use the Internet to find the support groups in your area.

## Hostesses

Assign several women to be hostesses. Their responsibility will be to make each guest feel welcome, introduce them to others and encourage their participation in the games and activities. The hostesses should also find out how women's ministries can meet their needs throughout the year.

## Refreshments

Serve refreshments that are healthy such as fresh vegetables, fruit, whole grain bread, crackers and pasta. To add to the celebration, serve a slab cake decorated with the words 'Celebrate Life!' Keep it healthier by cutting into small size servings.

## Getting to know you

Print easy to answer questions on slips of paper and place in a basket. Invite the women to choose a question and ask others to answer it. Make the questions general so that the women will feel at ease.

Give an opportunity later in the program for them to share some of the responses.

## Games

*Give Yourself a Point*

Participants accumulate points by answering general questions. For example:

- 5 points if you took the bus today
- 5 points, for every year you've been cancer free, if you are a cancer survivor
- Deduct 5 points if you left dirty dishes in your kitchen sink today.

For additional questions check the Internet under 'Give Yourself a Point'.

## Balloon games

Plan for both active and inactive games so all the guests can participate. The website [www.party-games-4-free.com](http://www.party-games-4-free.com) has many ideas and instructions for playing balloon games.

## Speaker

Arrange for a speaker to share information about resources available for cancer survivors and their families. The Cancer Council Australia can be helpful in this regard. Their website is: [www.cancer.org.au](http://www.cancer.org.au)

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## Entertainment

Line dancing is good exercise. Have the women in the women's ministries group learn a couple of dances before the party. Ask them to perform and encourage the guests to join in. The website [www.helenandnitalinedancing.com](http://www.helenandnitalinedancing.com) has instruction videos.

## Service Projects

The following are suggestions for on-going service project ideas to help those going through cancer treatment:

- Recruit individuals willing to provide meals to the family during surgery and the recovery period
- Offer prayer support to individuals and families facing cancer
- Send cards and gifts throughout the recovery period, not just while the patients are hospitalised
- Find ways to give support to the families of cancer patients

the encouragement and strength they needed to carry on. *'May our Lord Jesus Christ Himself and God our Father, who loved us and by His grace gave us eternal encouragement and good hope, encourage your hearts and strengthen you in every good deed and word'* (2 Thessalonians. 2:16,17).

We can take encouragement from the fact that whatever hardships we go through here on earth are only temporary. The amazing grace of God is the source of our courage; the hope of the Gospel is in the resurrection of the body. This resurrection was something the early believers expected, something they hoped for. Today, we who trust in Christ have that same hope.



## God's Grace

Begin the devotional time by inviting the women to sing the song 'Amazing Grace'. Print the words and use them as part of the table decorations. Paul writes, *'But whatever I am now, it is all because God poured out His special favour on me – and not without results. For I have worked harder than all the other apostles, yet it was not I but God who was working through me by His grace'* (1 Corinthians 15:10, NLT).

Paul was a highly educated Jewish man who was so devout that he felt it was necessary for him to persecute Christians and put them to death. After Christ appeared to him in a vision, he made a drastic change in his life and became a follower of Jesus. Paul came to realise that what had happened in his past was just a backdrop on which to display the grace of God. It seems that because he had so much to overcome, he worked harder than any of the other apostles. He travelled more, suffered more opposition, wrote more New Testament letters and founded more churches. Through all of that, he recognised that what he was able to accomplish was not through his own strength but through God's power.

In the church that Paul founded in Thessalonica, the new believers were experiencing difficult times. They were facing contempt and violence from their neighbours. Paul understood what they were going through. He knew they needed a lot of encouragement. In his second letter to them, Paul prayed that God would give them



# Codes and keys – access granted

Major Leonie Ainsworth

## Overview

In today's world access into some buildings, security areas or even bank accounts requires codes or keys or some form of personal identification.

When it comes to the spiritual realm access into the family and presence of God the Father is made possible through FAITH in Jesus Christ. When we enter God's presence, instead of condemnation we experience God's amazing GRACE.

## Décor

Display Keys Locks, Credit Cards, Computer, or other items that need personal identification to enter.

## Bookmarks (See CD)

Two types – 1 with a thumb print & 2 with lock & key Suggestion:

Ladies thumb print could be taken and put onto Bookmarks provided as they enter meeting room – you would need to have an ink pad and a packet of wipes if you do this.

(Just delete the thumb print that is on the bookmark before printing them off. Or just use the book marks as they are, and hand out to the ladies during the meeting.)

## Songs

Source 408	Only by grace can we enter, only by grace can we stand....
Scripture in Song 54	Into Thy presence we come, not by the works we have done...
Source 191	I am a new creation, no more in condemnation
HLSB 56	Jesus came to save me
HLSB 78	Oh what a wonderful, wonderful day

## Participation

Guess Who?

Ask a few ladies to bring you a photograph of themselves as a baby (organize this so photos come in the week before) and set pictures on a board or scan them and put them on power point if that is available for your meeting) and see if the ladies can identify them.

Choose a number of pictures of famous people (Faces) e.g. Prime Minister, Queen, Prince William, Princess Mary, etc and cut the picture leaving a partial view of them. See if ladies can identify who the famous people are.

If you want to have a bit of extra fun, you might like to try this!

Choose four ladies before the meeting (without letting them know the details). At a certain point during the program get the ladies to go somewhere close where

they cannot be seen. Hide them behind a blanket or partition and bring them back to the group, unseen. Lift the blanket to reveal just their legs / feet, and see if ladies can identify them.



## Competitions and Quizzes

Word search

Crossword Bible Search (Bibles required)

Code Breaker Competition

## Devotion

In this increasingly complex and competitive world we live in, it is becoming necessary for people to identify themselves to obtain access to various places, be that entrance into a complex of units or into areas of national security, a bank account, or a safe, a work place or a building.

If you do not have the right identification, know the code or have a key, then there is no way you will be able to have access and enter in.

Maybe you have seen movies or shows where personal identification has been required to enter into certain areas – many of the super heroes have to go through various processes to gain entry into their secret headquarters or hideaways.

In the animated picture 'The Incredibles' Edna Mode, fashion designer for the Superheroes has her own security process to follow to enter into her design centre. It's really quite extensive starting with a keypad, hand print, eye camera, and finally voice recognition.

*The Incredibles* – clip showing Edna Mode with security identification.

Link to YouTube below if you have ability to show this.  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iOpH6E7T6l0>

## Scripture

Read Romans 5:1–5.

Paul reminds us that since we have been justified through faith.

The Concise Oxford Dictionary describes justification as: *declared free from the penalty of sin on the grounds of Christ's righteousness*. Something that happens the moment we hand over our lives to Jesus and take hold of his salvation – we become a part of God's family, we are



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covered with Christ's righteousness and all the resources of God are available to us.

If we were to think that we could stand in God's presence on our own goodness – we would be fooling ourselves.

The Psalmist in Psalm 130:3 says: *'If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?'*

We are reminded in Isaiah 64:6 that our righteous acts, in the presence of a Holy God is like filthy rags.

Warren Weisbe in his commentary says: *'The Jew was kept from God's presence by the veil in the temple; and the Gentile was kept out by a wall in the temple with a warning on it that any Gentile who went beyond would be killed. But when Jesus died, He tore the veil and broke down the wall.'*

*In Christ, believing Jews and Gentiles have access to God and can draw upon the inexhaustible riches of the grace of God'.*

GRACE – amazing grace – the undeserved favour of God – that is ours because of Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8 *'For it is by GRACE you have been saved, through faith-and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God – not by works, so that no-one can boast.'* (NIV).

We are covered in Christ's righteousness that is why we can stand in the presence of a holy God and not be condemned.

When we look at a new born baby we see that they have the capacity and potential to grow and develop and become whatever they choose to be, right from that moment of birth. And so it is with the Christian, from the very moment we are born into the family of God,

everything we need to live a life that honours God is at our disposal. But often we do not really understand what we possess and therefore do not take hold of it.

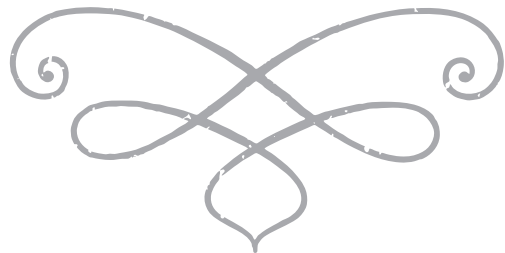
The KEY is recognising that we are IN CHRIST and because of this, and only because of this, we can enter into God's presence at any time – access has been granted – and it is our privilege as God's children to take hold of these resources. We don't have to punch in some special code, or have our finger print scanned. God knows us completely, our names are engraved on the palm of his hand. He will never forget us, or condemn us, or turn us away for when we enter God's presence, he sees that covering of grace, Christ's righteousness and we are accepted and embraced.

### **What is so amazing about grace?**

Jesus has made it possible for you and me to have access into the very presence of God and to be received as one of his precious children. To have all the resources of heaven that we need, available to us so that we can please God and live a victorious Christian life.

How wonderful, how liberating! God doesn't see my flaws, my failures, my sin, my unworthiness – it's covered with Christ's righteousness.

That is what is so amazing about Grace!



# Fruitcake and ice-cream (Easter)

Lt-Colonel Sandra Godkin

## Concept

Easter is a wonderful opportunity to share our faith with the women who attend our groups. This night is aimed to do just that. It must be clear what you are inviting ladies to.

Invites could be done and given to women who attend your groups, such as Home League, Mainly Music, Play Groups. Once again, the advertising should be clear! This is a night that looks at the message of Easter.

If you would like a well presented invite that is not too expensive, invites can be printed off as photos for very reasonable prices.

Sermonspice.com has some clips you can purchase for around US\$15

Purse Scavenger Hunt – divide the group into two teams – team A and team B and allocate a 'runner' for each. Have a table at the front divided into two with a sign team A on the left and team B on the right. (This is where the runner takes the items that are called out by the leader and places them on the table in team name A or B). The leader calls out items that ladies could have in their bags and the first runner to place the item on the table leaves it there (therefore getting a point). The group with the most items found in bags is the winner. Have a prize for the winning team.



## Program

Welcome Ladies

**You could have some ice-breakers**

### **Suggested Ice-Breakers**

Have some gifts that can be given to:

- The lady with the most children
- The lady wearing the most 'red'
- The lady having the most people for a meal over Easter
- The lady who travelled the furthest to get there
- The lady who travelled the least to get there
- The lady who left work the latest
- The lady/ladies who are here for the first time

Invite a soloist. If a soloist is not available, you could use video clips. For example: Silvie Paladino – Your grace still amazes me.

Show *'Fruit Cake and Ice-Cream'* DVD with Louie Giglio (available at Christian Book Shops). DVD goes for about 30 minutes and costs around \$10.

After the DVD, the ladies could be encouraged to talk to their friend or identify someone who would be happy to answer any questions that they had about the presentation.

Prayer

## Supper

Supper could be Fruitcake and Ice-creams. Allow a good amount of time for supper as this will encourage the ladies to talk.



# Put the amazing back in to grace

Captain Jodie Pethybridge

## Decor

Completely and/or partially fill glass tanks or vases with rocks of varying sizes then spread the containers throughout the room. If you're able to, set up a copper pot and an old fashioned stove kettle. Keep in mind the phrases 'people in glass houses shouldn't throw stones' and 'it's the pot calling the kettle black.'

## Songs

Chris Tomlin	Your grace is enough
Chris Tomlin	Amazing grace/My chains are gone
	Amazing grace (Instrumental)
Hillsong	Blessed

## Chalice Prayer

Start with the chalice prayer.

With arms raised in a 'U' shape each individual will ask God for the thing that they wish to be filled with this day. Then with arms crossed over the chest with a hand resting near each shoulder, pray that God would transform thinking, behaviour and attitudes as you hold that gift close. Finally with arms outstretched pray for someone or people you may know to whom can be shown the quality you have asked for so that we can be a blessing just as we have been blessed.

Close with a short prayer on behalf of everyone.



## Introduction

Quote:

*'The many uses of the word in English convince me that grace is indeed amazing – truly our last best word. It contains the essence of the gospel as a drop of water can contain the image of the sun. The world thirsts for grace in ways it does not even recognise; little wonder the hymn 'Amazing Grace' edged its way onto the Top Ten charts two hundred years after its composition. For a society that seems adrift, without moorings, I know of no better place to drop an anchor of faith.'*

Philip Yancey, 'What's So Amazing About Grace?' p13

Someone I knew explained their experience of grace by saying that it was God looking through their circumstances, failings and fears and seeing *them*. Perhaps grace is God looking through our circumstances, failings, and fears and seeing our identity in *Christ*.

Is this amazing? Why take on the task of putting the amazing back in grace? As Philip Yancey asks in the title of his book 'What's so amazing about grace?' Hopefully we will reveal some of the mystery of grace today.

## Reading (See CD)

## Activity (See CD)

*What's wrong with this picture?*

Have people identify what's wrong in each of the 10 images.

We commonly look for *what's wrong* rather than *what's right* in our own lives and the lives of others. Grace acknowledges what we have done wrong but it doesn't go looking for what we could do wrong. Grace likes to see what we can do well or what we could do better. Grace empowers us to live a life that is 'clean in thought word and deed' as the Junior Soldier promise states. It calls forth the best in us and sets us up to live spirit filled lives. If anything, begin to look for what is good in yourself and others. Don't focus on what you could do better or what you didn't do right, instead focus on what you are already doing well.

## Poem (See CD)

Have someone memorise this in advance and perform it as a dramatised reading.

## Meditation and sharing time (See CD)

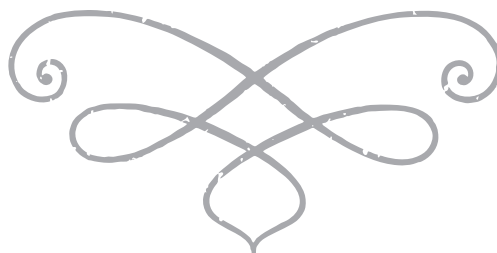
With instrumental 'Amazing Grace' playing in the background have each individual read John 8:1-11 and follow the instructions on the attachment. Encourage a sharing time once you think everyone has heard from God and they have returned to you. Ask them to share their thoughts of what God was saying as they meditated on the scripture.

## Video clips

- From DVD 'Passion of The Christ'. Show Mary coming to Jesus feet and Jesus writing in the sand.
- YouTube 'Woman Caught in Adultery' 1:36  
Link: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFyymEvM6Dw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rFyymEvM6Dw)

## Devotions (See CD)

## Prayer



# Outrageous Grace

Major Janet Sidens

## Songs

HLSB 3	Amazing grace (traditional)
iWorship	Amazing grace/my chains are gone
<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDOJkfxnjJs">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kDOJkfxnjJs</a>	
Graham Kendrick	My Lord, what love is this

## Choruses

HLSB 42	There is grace enough for me
SASB 303	Grace there is my every debt to pay

## Introduction

Outrageous... Song "How do you solve a problem like Maria..." for a nun she was outrageous... use DVD or CD or read words  
<http://www.stlyrics.com/lyrics/thesoundofmusic/maria.htm>

## Discussion

Words that are like or describe something that is  
 Outrageous – over the top, extravagant, expensive, an over reaction – from the dictionary definition it has a negative side to it, a shock factor.

## Examples of outrageous actions

The treatment that refugees, or women, or children receive from their homelands is outrageous. The Salvation Army has a ministry that fights for social justice for people who are oppressed, mistreated.

For more information go to [www.salvos.org.au/more/get-involved/social-justice/what-is-social-justice](http://www.salvos.org.au/more/get-involved/social-justice/what-is-social-justice)

Slave traders of the 18<sup>th</sup> Century England because of the effort of John Newton, eventually England changed its law.

Actions by Nazi's under Adolph Hitler to the Jews during World War II.

Ladies may have suggestions or experiences of outrageous behaviours / actions.

The Salvation Army's work with trafficked people, with refugees and with people who are treated very badly takes the form of rescue, providing a safe haven, and giving them a chance of a new start – that brings us to the idea of showing grace.

## Grace

A gift given though undeserved or an action taken that allows the debtor or aggressor the space to change and act differently in the future. Ask ladies if they have known of a gracious action.



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## Example of an act of grace

The story of Les Misérables starts when: Jean Valjean, released on parole after 19 years on the chain gang, finds that the yellow ticket-of-leave he must, by law display, condemns him to be an outcast. Only the saintly Bishop of Digne treats him kindly and Valjean, embittered by years of hardship, repays him by stealing some silver. Valjean is caught and brought back by the police and is astonished when the Bishop lies to the police to save him, also giving him two precious candlesticks. Valjean decides to start his life anew. That was grace, giving him undeserved favour. It was a gracious act that inspired Jean to pass it on to others who were not faring well.

When the two words “outrageous” and “grace” are added together we see the description of the grace that is found in the Bible.

Grace given to unworthy people:

- Zacchaeus – Luke 19:1-10
- The Samaritan woman at the well – John 4
- Woman caught in act of adultery – John 8



## God's outrageous grace

God acted with outrageous grace when Jesus was charged and found not guilty yet he was still punished for wrong doing. Jesus died because of one of the most outrageous trials – he was found not guilty yet he still faced capital punishment. It was prolonged, cruel and demeaning and was usually reserved for the worst criminals in society. This execution given to Jesus was outrageous.

God was so extravagant with his actions to save us that the outrageous punishment Jesus suffered for all humans gave us the gift of grace for all eternity. It can be ours. For none of us are worthy of the love of God – it is a gracious gift, we can't earn it nor can we buy it. It is an outrageous gift given by one who suffered terribly on our behalf so that we could have life eternal.

## What can this outrageous grace look like in our life?

In Romans 5:1-3 we learn:

- We have peace with God
- We have a place with God
- We can share in God's glory

Do you experience the outrageous grace of God? You can! Today take this opportunity to take hold of the grace offered by God with all that it brings to you.

## Prayer

Heavenly Father

Thank you that you loved us so much that Jesus went through an outrageous execution for us. Help us to live in the abundant grace it gives us. Outrageous love and peace and joy will be mine if I accept the gift Jesus brought when he overcame the outcome of sin, death and rose again victoriously. Help me to share this outrageous grace with everyone with whom I come in contact. Thank you for including me and giving me your grace. Amen.

## Other Resources

Max Lucado 'In the Grip of grace' Ch 9 Major League Grace p101

Philip Yancey 'What's so amazing about grace'

Greg Asimakoupoulos 'Give thanks with a grateful heart' p59



# Radical Grace

Captain Cheryl Kistan

## Preparation

Watch a movie titled *Amazing Grace* to select a section of the movie that is apt and relevant for your group.

## Songs

Matt Maher	Your grace is enough
John Newton, Chris Tomlin	Amazing grace, my chains are gone
Helen Howarth Lemmel	Turn your eyes upon Jesus

## Interaction

What do you think of when we say the word Grace?

- Grace at meals – some examples of grace that we say (Gentle Jesus, Lord we thank you for our food...)
- Acrostic poems – example *God's Riches At Christ's Expense*. If the group is creative you could give time to write an Acrostic or poem about grace
- People named Grace – example My Auntie is called Grace, a friend etc
- Music Group – *Point of Grace*
- Fruit of the Spirit
- Jesus

What are some Bible verses that talk about Grace?

- 2 Timothy 4:22 – God be with you, Grace be with you...
- Hebrews 13:25 – Grace be with you every one.
- 1 Thessalonians 5:28 – The Amazing Grace of Jesus Christ be with you!
- Psalm 145:8 – God is all mercy and Grace – not quick to anger, is rich in love
- Psalm 145:9 – God is good to one and all: everything he does is suffused with grace.
- Philippians 4:22 – Receive and experience the amazing grace of the Master, Jesus Christ, deep, deep, within yourselves.

What are some of the characteristics of grace-filled or gracious people?

- Polite
- Gentle
- Peace-loving
- Peacemaking
- Peacekeeping
- Loving
- Kind
- Friendly
- Forgiving

Excerpt from Movie *Amazing Grace*.

**Talk**

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A matter of honour: accepting, respecting and valuing each other.

## Counter cultural grace

In almost every culture, the ultimate insult is a slap in the face. Jesus though, says in Matthew 5:39: *'If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also'* (NIV). Why would Jesus say such a thing? Why would he encourage us to allow people to touch us in such a fashion?

As disciples of Jesus, our minds need to operate differently than most of society; we need to be motivated entirely by our personal relationship with Jesus. This means a different way of thinking, a different attitude with different values and a different lifestyle. We must be willing to be different and sometimes radical in the eyes of the world.

## Radical grace

Jesus disagreed with society's view that people need to be compensated for things that happened to them. Compensation had, in fact, been written into the laws of society from its very beginning: *'If anyone wounds his fellow, he becomes liable to compensate the injured party for five different aspects of the injury: damage, pain, healing, loss of time from work, and insult ...'* (taken from the Mishnah, the first written record of the Jewish Torah).

When Jesus speaks in Matthew 5, he is actually challenging the fifth point of compensation for insult as stated in the Jewish law. He was essentially saying to take the insult and ask for more. A ruling from the Talmud, the central text of mainstream Judaism of which the Mishnah is a part, says: Does he give him a blow upon the cheek? Let him give two hundred zuzes; if with the other hand, let him give four hundred.

What Jesus says in Matthew 5 is in contrast to the Talmud's ruling which allows for suing a brother for every possible infringement.

Jesus is talking about putting up with insult, and even a moderate amount of abuse, before you take someone to court. Let people have space to be human, to make an error. Don't take the attitude of an opportunist, ready to exploit every wrongdoing.

## Going the extra mile

At the time of Jesus, Israel was under Roman occupation. A Roman soldier could legally constrain any non-Roman to carry his supplies for one mile or 1000 paces. When Jesus speaks of going the extra mile (Matthew 5:41), he is talking about voluntarily going beyond the requirement of the Roman law. Yet Jesus does not say to go as many miles as someone demands. He encourages us to offer generous but reasonable boundaries. He is urging us

toward an attitude of service, grace, giving people space, and generosity.

To do this we need to be:

- Loving our enemies, which means choosing to override any feelings of disgust we may have. Not all forms of love are the same and the secret of loving our enemies is not the Greek word, but the context. This kind of love in Matthew 5:44 refers to a form of duty, not merely a feeling.
- Aiming at the right target – to know God and become more like him every day (Matthew 5:48)

## Focus on Jesus

The chorus *Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus* shows the great truth of how our perspective turns to becoming like Jesus when we get our aim right:

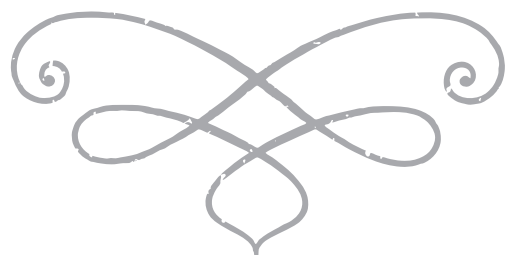
*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in His wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely dim,  
In the light of His glory and grace*

When we look at Jesus, everything else fades into insignificance. As we recognise his most amazing love and grace, we will see his glory and want to be more like him; who we are and the lives that we live will be completely changed.

## Response time

How could you show Jesus' radical grace in the way you live your life? Some examples:

- Polite in your interactions with people
- Kindness to people even when they are rude, always saying hello
- Forgiving even when it's hard to do
- Praying for people
- Reaching out to the least, lost and last e.g. serving in a soup kitchen, homework club, Sunday School, SAGALA, Family Store



# Re-gifting Christmas

Captain Gai Cathcart

## Décor

Gift boxes of various size and shape in Christmas wrap

## Introduction

Re-gifting is usually perceived negatively, but the greatest gift ever given is Jesus Christ and what he meant for the world, and still means today. It is in re-gifting Him and his love each Christmas that we are reminded that "Jesus is the Reason for the Season". This is Christmas Grace, so let's re-gift Him this year.

## Songs

HLSB 3	Amazing grace
HLSB 61	Joy to the world
HLSB 75	O come all ye faithful
Hillsong	Because of your love

## Game

Pass the Parcel. Each layer has a small gift with a part of the Christmas story to be read out. Matthew 1:18-24, 2:1-12 and Luke 2:1-20.

## Article

Google: Dayana Yochims – The Dos and Don'ts of Regifting  
December 6, 2007 – [www.fool.com/personal-finance/general/2007/12/06/the-dos-and-donts-of-regifting.aspx](http://www.fool.com/personal-finance/general/2007/12/06/the-dos-and-donts-of-regifting.aspx)



## Craft (See CD)

Make a cardboard cross/box. Either make this for yourself to use with devotions or as a group activity.

## Scripture

Ephesians 2:4-9



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## Devotion

Christmas time is for remembering and celebrating the best gift ever given. Not only was Jesus the best gift ever given, but the best and most expensive ever purchased. Why? Because it cost God and his Son Jesus, everything. Life was purchased for us through the birth and death of Jesus so that we can experience life to the fullest. That means life in the here and now, and eternal life.

So what is a free gift to us cost God everything; here are three ways to consider the cost.

1. He humiliated himself; God came down to our level in the person of Jesus Christ.
2. He lived in our world for 33 years, working and communing with the human race.
3. He was misunderstood, spat on, rejected, hated and crucified. He died in our place. The result?

Grace! God's Riches (given to us) At Christ's Expense. GRACE. Grace is what you and I need, not what we deserve. So Jesus Christ was the ultimate gift and he is only gift that keeps on giving (John 3:16). The ultimate re-gift and if we continually open, reuse and re-give this gift, we discover over and over again the amazing gift of God's Grace. May you experience the re-gifting of God's Christmas Grace this year.

## Reflection

Your grace still amazes me – Available on YouTube





*So here's what I want  
you to do, God helping  
you: Take your everyday,  
ordinary life—your  
sleeping, eating, going-  
to-work, and walking-  
around life—and place it  
before God as an offering.  
Embracing what God does  
for you is the best thing  
you can do for him.*

(Romans 12:1-2 TM)

**EVERYDAY**

*Grace*



# Cupcakes

Hazel Ford

## Preparation and décor

Invite a cupcake expert to give a demonstration or prepare some cupcakes yourself.

You will need a cupcake for each person. Mini ones from the supermarket are an easy alternative. Also separate containers (bowls) with the ingredients in each – butter, sugar, eggs, flour, milk, vanilla.

Tablecloth made with cupcake print – Spotlight sell a few designs. Display of tins, containers, paper cases, books and some of the many accessories – cups, mugs, place mats, oven mitts, candles, soaps, chocolates, etc. some of which could be given as prizes.

## Introduction

Cupcakes are one of the fashion foods of the moment, along with brownies, cake pops and cookies – but what could really be better than a cupcake?

There are hundreds of cupcake bakeries popping up all over the world. Even your supermarket is in the production of cupcakes – in normal size and minis.

There are numerous books, magazines and websites devoted to cupcake making and decoration. Chefs and bakers, as well as ordinary cooks are publishing books with decorating ideas and a multitude of different ingredients to use to make the cake itself.

Open sharing time on what is available – tins, icings, papers, carriers, stands, presentation boxes etc and some of the 'décor' items with a cupcake theme.

## Songs

SASB 711 Tune 838	As the varied way of life we journey
SASB Chorus 130	I believe in the word of God
SASB Chorus 122	God is still on the throne
SASB 712, v 4 Tune Hanover 531	Since all that I meet, shall work for my good



**Bible Reading – responsive** (See CD)



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## History of cupcakes

Where did the cupcake come from? Some say France, some say England and some say America. According to the Food Timeline, food historians have yet to pinpoint exactly where the name cupcake originated.

There are two theories –

- The cakes were originally cooked in cups.
- The ingredients used to make the cakes were measured by the cup.

The term 'cupcake' is first mentioned in E Leslie's 'Receipts' of 1828 and it was revolutionary because of the amount of time it saved in the kitchen.

When baking was done without the luxury of electricity or gas, it would take a long time to cook a large cake and keep the oven at the set temperature. So the mixture was often baked in individual pottery cups and thus the name 'cup cake' was probably taken. The cupcake name has persisted and is now used to describe any small cake that is about the size of a tea cup. The name 'fairy cake' is a description for a smaller cupcake.

The second theory is that the ingredients were measured by the cup and were originally called number cakes – one cup of butter, two cups of sugar, three cups of flour, four eggs, one cup of milk and a teaspoon of soda. This is one of the first recorded recipes.

Since these times cupcakes have remained popular. Most adults would remember them as being popular at parties and picnics because of the ease of preparation and serving. You may also have called them 'patty cakes'.

What is different today is that cupcake making has gone crazy. Traditionally they were made in basic flavours but as we said at the beginning cupcakes have gone gourmet being made in every shape and size, every flavour or combination of flavours and decorated for fun or to suit a theme with ganaches, fondant, fudge, buttercream or anything that is sweet and cute.

## Demonstration

Have someone demonstrate icing or having a display of cupcakes already done and explain some of them.

(I used the Women's Weekly book 'Easy Cupcakes by Colour' and did about a dozen or so of the simpler ones, displayed them on a stand and talked briefly about how each one was decorated.)

## Message

Give each person a cupcake... Are they good?

Our cupcakes today are going to represent life.

(Place bowls with ingredients that are used in the cupcakes on display.)

Now which of these ingredients would you like to eat as it is? The milk would be OK but some of the others would be pretty awful to eat.

These ingredients represent all of the things that happen to us during our lifetime. Our lives are made up of good things and bad things that happen to us but we can rely on God's promise that '*All thing work together for good to them that love God.*' (Romans 8:28)

If we put all these ingredients together and bake we have great cupcakes, which we can all eat and enjoy.

Without the not so pleasant tasting ingredients the cupcakes would not have turned out.

So too with our lives – if we love God then the sweet and bitter experiences of our lives will come together and be good for us.

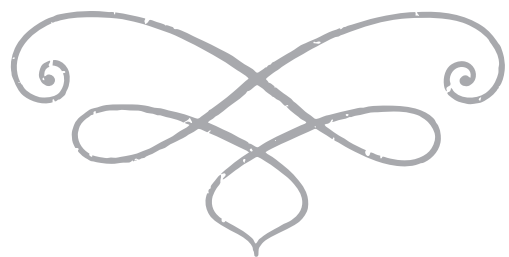
Later on have a look over the songs and choruses and reading that we have had today as they talk about these experiences – good and bad, highs and lows but also the promises that God has given us.

Let's finish with a verse of a song written by John Newton, who also wrote *Amazing Grace*.

## Benediction

*What the Lord ordaineth will be for the best,  
Just to trust and follow him is perfect rest  
Never will he fail us if our faith is pure,  
For we know the promises of God are sure.*

(SASB 755, V2)



# Everyday Grace

Yolande Soper

## Décor (See CD)

Distribute place cards for each lady and decorate with flowers and balloons, for everyday Grace is a celebration in life. Have the letters for everyday grace put around the walls and little ones on table displays.

## Songs

HLSB 3	Amazing grace
HLSB 80	How great thou art or DVD iWorship B
HLSB 123	What a wonderful change
HLSB 78	O what a wonderful, wonderful day
HLSB 108	There's a song that's ringing
HLSB 125	What a friend we have in Jesus Your grace still amazes me
Source 185	How deep the Father's love
Source 225	In Christ alone

## Preparation

Gifts with gift tags attached (ladies to think of God's grace every day for 21 days while they use the body wash or nice soap).

Bookmarks (See CD)

Ladies to think of someone they can help this week and through acts of kindness, pray that opportunities will arise to share about God's grace.

21 Day challenge – 21 days to form a good habit – 21 days of everyday grace scripture verses and thanking God for one thing in your life (See CD)

Grace gifts for pass the parcel

Place cards (See CD)

## Introduction (See CD - MS PowerPoint 1)

What does everyday grace look like?

Have you ever received a gift that you felt unworthy of but had to accept because of it being given out of love? A gift that you didn't deserve. God gives us a gift such as this – it is the gift of grace. It is something that we don't deserve. We cannot buy it or even earn it but freely God gives us his grace out of his love for us. We don't deserve to be saved from sin and given eternal life. But the moment we accept Jesus as our Saviour we are saved by God's grace from sin and its punishment because Jesus has paid the price for you.

Consider for a moment the price that Jesus paid for you upon the cross at Calvary. Every day God shows his grace to us by giving guidance and strength. God's grace gives you strength to handle what life throws at you.

God's word says, 'For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith...' (Ephesians 2:8 NIV). Every day you need to come to Jesus and receive the grace that you need to live successful for Him. Once you experience this true grace then you can't help but share it with others. Take time now to thank God for his grace in your life today.

## Skit

Skit Guys-Grace clip can be bought on Sermon Central [www.sermoncentral.com/video.asp?Video\\_ID=34228](http://www.sermoncentral.com/video.asp?Video_ID=34228)

## Game

Wheel of fortune Biblical challenge (See CD)

## Ladies to share

Ladies selected to share stories of grace in their lives.

## Game

Pass the parcel (perhaps purchase some texts from Koorong and place in each layer that speak about grace and then have a nice gift or plaque with grace words on it.)

## Quotes (See CD MS PowerPoint slide 2 and 3)

## Have a worker auction

Someone might be bought to clean up after meeting or make everyone's cups of tea and coffee

Remind the ladies that Slavery even in our country is an issue and many people are being sold into slavery

## Quote

Strong Woman  
© Copyright 2002  
Contact [www.greatprayers.com](http://www.greatprayers.com)

## Devotion (See CD)

Evidence of Grace

## Clip

'There is nothing greater than grace' – Point of grace  
[www.godtube.com/watch/?v=kzpywlnx](http://www.godtube.com/watch/?v=kzpywlnx)

21 Day Grace Challenge  
(See CD – MS PowerPoint slide 7)

## Benediction

2 Thessalonians 2:16 (MS PowerPoint slide 8)

## Other resources (See CD)

# Garden Graces

Leanne Plon

## Décor

Lots of flowers – artificial or real, use the picture on bright coloured paper, watering cans, garden gloves, gardening tools – small decorative ones from cheap shops. (See CD)

## Bible Reading

John 15:1-8  
Easy-to-Read Version (ERV)

Jesus is like a vine

*‘Jesus said, “I am the true vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch of mine that does not produce fruit. He also trims every branch that produces fruit to prepare it to produce even more. You have already been prepared to produce more fruit by the teaching I have given you. Stay joined to me and I will stay joined to you. No branch can produce fruit alone. It must stay connected to the vine. It is the same with you. You cannot produce fruit alone. You must stay joined to me.*

*“I am the vine, and you are the branches. If you stay joined to me, and I to you, you will produce plenty of fruit. But separated from me you won’t be able to do anything. If you don’t stay joined to me, you will be like a branch that has been thrown out and has dried up. All the dead branches like that are gathered up, thrown into the fire and burned. Stay joined together with me, and follow my teachings. If you do this, you can ask for anything you want, and it will be given to you. Show that you are my followers by producing much fruit. This will bring honour to my Father.’*

## Songs

HLSB 15	Brighten the corner where you are
HLSB 21	For the beauty of the earth
HLSB 36	I come to the garden alone
HLSB 69	Morning has broken
HLSB 80	How great thou art
HLSB 117	This is my Father’s world

Chorus 20      Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Lily of the valley

## Competitions

Suggestions for prizes – seed envelopes, pots, gardening tools, artificial flowers, flower brochures. Cheap shops can also have flower note paper, sticky notes

## Competition 1 (See CD)

Garden – write in the box a name that relates to topic in column at the top, that starts with the letter for that row. See Garden competition for clarification. You can ask for answers to be read out and if anyone has the same answer it is crossed off. The person with the most

answers left is the winner. This can also be played with a winner.

## Competition 2 (See CD)

Write down the flower for each the Commonwealth, State or Territory. This could also be done with the answers jumbled up and then unscrambled.

## Humour

[www.garenhumour.com](http://www.garenhumour.com)  
Google ‘The Italian Garden Tomato’

## Quote

*‘The glory of the garden: hands in the dirt,  
Head in the sun, heart with nature.  
To nurture a garden is to feed  
Not just the body, but the soul.’*

Alfred Austin 1835 – 1913 taken from ‘The Garden That I Love’ 1894

## Devotion

I am not a gardener even though I love flowers and enjoy their beauty and especially the smell in spring and summer with all the fragrances. I was very keen when I first moved into my place and it was very exciting to watch the garden grow with what I had chosen and planted. These days I often say that God looks after my garden, especially with the watering, as I don’t have as much time to spend watering, pruning and weeding.

I live in a complex of villas and we have common areas which include garden beds. The other day when I was outside and looked at these gardens, I saw in the middle of the geraniums just one single Dietes and then in the middle of the cacti was one kangaroo paw. It reminded me of how when we look we can find plants in places they don’t belong. To me this is God’s garden graces, something we don’t expect.

Have you ever seen a flower growing on a rock face or out of gutters? Sometimes these may be weeds, but even a weed that has a flower can brighten up a footpath. You may live in a place where you can’t have a garden but God shows his care with flowers in so many places for us to enjoy. Next time you see a flower in a place it doesn’t belong remember to thank God for his garden grace.

## Gift

At the end of the meeting, give each person a small pot filled with soil in which a seed has been planted. You could mix up the seeds and put a few in, so the type of flower is not known. This is like God’s grace, nothing done to deserve it but given freely.

# Grace is enough... but decaf is not!

Major Romona Kinder

## Concept

This meeting is an evening fellowship event. It is designed to be a low key event in which the emphasis is on fellowship and fun. Australia has very much become a coffee culture. You only have to look at the number of coffee shops that have sprung up over recent years and how many people enjoy going to them.

Invite ladies on the fringe of the corps and encourage the women of the corps to invite their friends and family.

The purpose of the night is about building relationships in a relaxed and familiar setting. Who doesn't enjoy a good chat over a cup or two of coffee? (May need to make sure that all of the new people don't sit at the same table and that ladies are not left out).

## Invitations (See CD)

Send out invitations at least a month in advance.

## Coffee and dessert night

Take the ladies out to a Restaurant or other venue, for a coffee and dessert night. Will need to confirm when final numbers are required for venue and what they will allow you to do in the venue.

Or

An in-house coffee and dessert night.

## Preparation

If using own venue:

Pre-arrange cakes which may be purchased or made prior to the event. Pre cut the cakes and place them on plates before the night starts. Decorate with whipped cream and cut up strawberries.

Purchase nice coffee, can use plunger, coffee satchels – different varieties: cappuccino, latte, caramel latte. Please ensure sure you have tea and hot chocolate in case some ladies do not like coffee.

Maybe hire a coffee van from a neighbouring corps or social centre, for a donation.

## Décor

Set up tables to look like a coffee shop. Table cloths with vases of flowers or jam bottles with candles in them. Just think of coffee shops that you have been to and let your imagination run wild. Have soft music playing in the background.

## Please remember

The aim of the night is fellowship not filling in every minute. Most of the night should be given to allowing the women to talk to each other.

## Special Guest

Invite a Barista to talk about the different types of coffee and how to make the perfect cup.

## Gifts For gift tag (See CD)

Purchase coffee mugs from a two dollar shop, fill them with lollies and wrap them in cellophane with a ribbon tied at the top attached to the gift tag.

## Chocolate Spoons

Pre make chocolate spoons that can be melted in the coffee. To find recipes Google; chocolate spoons.

## Competition

How well do you know your coffee? (See CD)

## Devotion

Coffee shops have sprung up everywhere; we have become a coffee culture.

People arrive at work with a cup of coffee in their hand to help kick start the day.

Many need that hit of caffeine in the morning to help get them started.

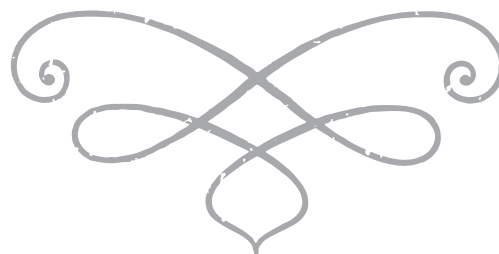
In our society many people rely on external stimulants. Did you know that if you drink more than eight cups of tea or coffee a day then you are considered addicted.

What are we relying on to help us through the day or should I say who are we relying on? We as the women of God need to rely on God's supply of grace that never runs out.

It is through God's grace we are able to enter into a relationship with Jesus. Romans 5:2 *'Through (Christ) we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand, and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God' (NIV).*

Anne Lamott said *'I do not at all understand the mystery of grace – only that he meets us where we are but does not leave us where he found us'.* God through Jesus not only saves us but changes us and sustains us.

Let us not rely on things like coffee to get us through the day, although it is nice to have a cup from time to time. Instead, rely on the all sufficient grace of God.





# I see grace

Lieut-Colonel Simone Robertson

This theme is suitable for an hour or hour and a half spiritual encouragement time with the aim of helping those present to see grace in the everyday through creation, people and the Word of God.

The time is broken into three sections being 30 minutes each – but this can easily be adjusted to three segments of 20 minutes each.

## Décor

Have the room filled with posters, photographs and pictures of the following:

1. Creation scenes – beach/ocean, rainforest, sunrise/sunset, fields of wild flowers, mountains, gardens, trees, flowers, animals.
2. People – ultrasound images of a baby in the mother's womb, women at all ages and stages of life.
3. Books – various books, Bibles, people reading the Bible, Bible reading plans, promise box.

## Creation

Choose one of the many video clips of 'What a wonderful world' that is on YouTube, to set the scene of seeing grace in creation. After viewing this, have the song playing in the background and ask the ladies to walk around the room and choose a poster, photograph or picture of a creation scene that they are drawn to.

Ask the women to share why they chose the particular poster, photograph or picture that they did. What is it about that particular scene that drew them in?

## People

Give everyone a pen and paper and ask them to write down names of people in whom they see grace. People who perhaps have had an influence on their life, or that they see Christ being represented through them.

Alongside the names, list the qualities that they see in this person that through them they see the grace of God.

Go into pairs and share with each other about the people they have written about. Then to pray for these people thanking God for their influence in the lives of others.

Spend as long as you can repeating the pairing so that there is opportunity to share with as many women as possible.

## Word of God

Create an atmosphere where the women are encouraged to look into the Word of God and to ask the Holy Spirit to help them see grace – God's undeserved favour for them.

This section is a time for a response to seeing God's grace.

This could be done in one of the following ways:

- A Bible study
- Asking women to read a passage of Scripture or particular verse that speaks to them about seeing God's grace at work
- Read an account in Scripture that is about God's grace and then have discussion about this asking how the women see God's grace and what is their response to it.

## Ministry time

Allow time for the women to come for prayer, bringing to him their desire to see his grace through his creation, his people and his Word.



# Gracious Goodness

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Major Christine Tamsett, Major Joy Bergen

## Concept

In this meeting we are going to explore how family life and society has changed but the goodness of God has not. And that he wants us as his children to demonstrate his goodness to the world in which we live. The ladies will be given the opportunity to do this in a very practical way.

## Gracious Goodness Baskets

Ahead of time decide who will be the recipients of the baskets that the group prepares. You will need to pre-arrange for the ladies to bring items for the baskets.

Wicker baskets are great and can be purchased from two dollar stores for very little money, you will also need coloured cellophane to wrap the gift baskets. Tie them with ribbon and attach cards with scripture verses on them.

## Ideas

Invite the women to donate some of the items that will be included in the Gracious Goodness Baskets. Put the baskets together during the meeting.

Have some of the women deliver the baskets. Ask them to pray with the recipient, assuring them of the groups continued love and concern.

If the recipient is a senior, find out their favourite food. A future follow up visit could include this dish.

Do follow up phone calls, cards and visits with the recipient of the baskets.

## Suggestions for Recipients

Seniors who are home bound possible former Home League members who can no longer attend the meetings.

Single parents whose funds are tight and the budget may not allow for luxury purchases.

Women who are participating in a rehabilitation program. Some of them will have left children behind. A toy basket that they can give to their children may be appreciated. May need to ring the centre and see what would be helpful.

## Types of Gracious Goodness Baskets (See CD)

## Décor

Bring along things from a 1950's house e.g. mincer, steamer, apron etc. and things from a modern kitchen.

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## Morning tea

- Embroidered tablecloths
- Use special cups from a crazy tea set.
- Beaded lace cover for milk jug
- Cup cakes
- Home made biscuits
- Lamingtons

## Competition

Ladies to wear special 50's style apron

Cup cake decoration competition (Pre make the cup cakes and icing, bring things that they can decorate the cakes with).

## How things have changed (See CD)

### Discussion

What are some of the differences in the family unit that they have experienced? What would a film clip of today's household look like?

### Blessing acrostic (See CD)

### The Rules of Life

[www.kordellnorton.com/nort%20notes/great\\_truths\\_that\\_little\\_children.htm](http://www.kordellnorton.com/nort%20notes/great_truths_that_little_children.htm)

That is the example that Jesus left for us. He humbled himself to minister to everyone, including those others ignored. He healed the demon possessed, those with diseases and taught his disciples to care for the widows. He preached love to everyone, including women, children and people that were considered inferior in his day. His hand of gracious compassion was outstretched to everyone, with no exception.

The apostle Paul wrote to the Philippians *'Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves'* (Philippians 2:1-3 NIV).

We live in a world that has changed with values that have changed, but God still calls us to live lives that are like Jesus. To experience the grace of God in our own lives and share that grace with others. Today we are going to have the opportunity to do this in a very practical way by making the Gracious Goodness Baskets.

## Make the Gracious Goodness Baskets

Have the ladies distribute the baskets where possible.



## Devotion

Life has changed greatly since the 1950's and this is demonstrated in the differences of the family unit. The world in which we live has greatly changed but God has not.

God is still slow to anger abounding in love and grace, full of mercy and compassion. In Mark 10:45 we are reminded that 'Jesus came not to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many'. What a wonderful demonstration of the grace of God.

To be gracious or good means to be kind, courteous, merciful, compassionate or generous. I am sure that we have all met people who are gracious. People that we see Jesus in because they live their lives with a servant heart and hands.



# Wear grace well

Jill Entwistle

## Preparation

Invitations given out a few weeks ahead of time inviting the ladies to a fashion parade in (Milan, Paris, London). Ask the ladies to wear formal clothing – hats, gloves etc.

Or ask the ladies to find a definition of 'grace' and bring it to the next meeting.

Or find a verse in the Bible that tells of 'grace' and bring it to the next meeting.

## Décor (See CD)

Arrange chairs in the room to accommodate a rectangular space for a 'catwalk' or 'runway' for models to parade. Drape long pieces of material from ceiling or a high position around the room to give an atmosphere of high fashion.

Lighting (even in daylight) using spotlights, lamps, candles can help create an ambience. Flowers – fake or fresh add beauty to the room.

Have someone design or reproduce fashion houses/cities posters to place around the room – Paris, Milan, London. Later these posters could be turned around with 'grace' verses and quotations on the reverse side. Or have separate posters for 'grace' to be used throughout the series of meetings on 'Everyday Grace'.

Even if you are not having a fashion parade, the room could still be set up in this way to enhance the theme and to use for the other activities.

## Activity

**Fashion Parade** – Have a clothing store/line present a fashion parade or have clothing from the local Salvo store and present using 'in-house' models (preparation needed for models to find right sizes and fashionable clothing to present). Clothing could be sold after meeting.

**Newspaper Fashions** – Divide the ladies into groups of twos or threes. Distribute newspapers, sticky tape, staplers (extra craft material could be on a table for use by all groups) to create their own designer label (part of the competition could be to work out a name for the 'label'). Using the newspapers, design and create an outfit, a dress – long or short – with maybe a hat, a handbag etc. Then use the 'runway' to model the creations and judge the most creative outfit. Choose an event for which the ladies can design an outfit – a wedding at Government House, a high tea at the Palace, a formal dinner at Parliament House etc.

**Honeymoon Game** – Place, in two suitcases, an equal number of men's and women's clothing (the bigger and unfashionable the better). Long pants, shirts, ties, shoes, coats, skirts, blouses, hats, gloves etc. Have two teams



of two ladies competing to put on all the clothing in the suitcases and run down the 'runway' to the finish line. This can happen a number of times depending on the ladies enthusiasm.

## Drama (See CD)

### Songs

SASB 585	I am Thine O Lord
SASB 579	He giveth more grace
SASB 308	Amazing grace
SASB 283	And can it be
SASB 58	How sweet the name of Jesus sounds

Geoff Bullock	I am carried
Chris Tomlin	Amazing grace (my chains are gone)
Chris Tomlin	Amazing love how can it be!
Chris Tomlin	Here I am to worship
Brooke Fraser	You'll come
Paul Baloché	Your name
	Move Holy Spirit (move in my life)

### Witness

Have a guest speaker testify to God's grace in their lives.

Or have one of the ladies witness to God's grace and what it means to them.

Or tell of someone who showed God's grace to others when they were undeserving of it e.g. Corrie Ten Boom and the Nazi prison guard; Elisabeth Elliot and the Aucas of Ecuador.

Or explain the Old Testament story of Esther - how she 'put on' God's grace under threat of death; Ruth - 'put off' her old ways and 'put on' God's way to live.

### Word

(Have Bibles available to follow scripture reading and thoughts on the passage.)  
The aim is to cause us to learn that as Christians we are *in* Christ and we *must* live like him by his grace.

### Scripture

Ephesians 4:17-24

## Devotion (See CD)

### Prayer

Music listed could be playing while personal prayer is offered to God.

Almighty God,  
Today I confess it is You I need in my life more than anything or anyone else. I am sorry for ignoring Your promptings, Your presence, Your power. So many times

my mind has been filled only with the material and the temporal, the tangible and physical, the known and the visible – worldly things that I have thought to be so important and essential to my personal happiness. I need to "put off" all those sins that would build a barrier between us. I confess them now (name the sins).

I thank You for Your love and for Your forgiveness. I thank You for the desire to spend time with You so that I will know You more and so become like You. My desire is to "put on", with Your grace, more of who You are so that I can reflect You to others in my everyday. Your grace is always available, is always my strength and is always sufficient for me.

You are enough! I love You! Amen.

### Benediction

*'For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people. And we are instructed to turn from godless living and sinful pleasures. We should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness and devotion to God, while we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Saviour, Jesus Christ, will be revealed. He gave His life to free us from every kind of sin, to cleanse us, and to make us His very own people, totally committed to doing good deeds.'*  
Titus 2:11-14 (NLT)

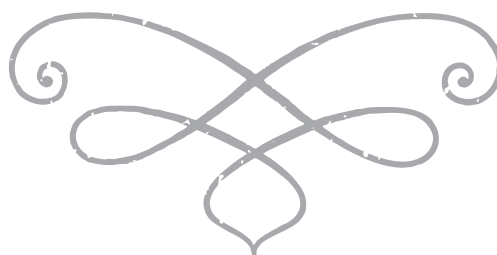
### Everyday Grace Reminders

Bookmarks – Grace verse(s) listed or Benediction prayer or just Everyday Grace / Wear Grace Well as an everyday reminder.

Bracelet – Everyday Grace or W.G.W" (Wear Grace Well) as a reminder to live out God's grace every day.

Write your testimony witnessing to God's grace in your life. Share it with others.

Share in a conversation with someone (over a coffee) – a believer or a non-believer – about how you are now determined to live for Christ, to be obedient to God and with his Spirit's help to reflect his grace to others every day. Tell the ladies next meeting the outcome.



# What's so amazing about saying grace?

Major Carolyn Wright

## Preparation

Have the ladies bring plates with a grace, prayer or blessing written on them.  
Google 'kitchen prayers' for ideas.  
Decorate your room with pictures of people saying Grace (American Artist Kathy Fincher in her 'Mama Always Says'... 'Grace...' series...).

## Prizes for competitions

Could be a 'Precious Promise Prayer Box'. Small Book of Prayers. Handkerchief with 'God is Love' embroidered on it. (All purchased from a Christian Book Shop) Or Dove chocolate or Dove soap (To represent Peace).

## Welcome / Opening Prayer

All say 'The Lord's Prayer'

## Songs

SASB 42	This is my Father's world
Tune 186	Terra beata

SASB 854	You can't stop God from loving
Tune 361	You can't stop God from loving

## Competition

Finish the Grace's (See CD)

## Why Do We Say Grace? (See CD)

(Ask for response)  
Saying grace before a meal is a Christian's response to God's provision of our needs here on earth. Jesus gave us many examples of being thankful in the way he acknowledged his Father before eating.

Remember the feeding of the 5000? It tells us after he had directed the disciples to put the crowd into groups then 'taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves and gave it to the disciples to set before the people and he divided the two fish among them all.' They ALL ate and were satisfied' Luke 9:16-17.

We can remember the Lord's last meal with his disciples before he went to the cross; he told them every time they broke bread together, to remember Him. After the cross he met the disciples on the road to Emmaus. We are told they didn't recognise him but when they invited him to have the evening meal with them 'He gave thanks and shared the bread with them' (Luke 24:13-35).

Saying grace helps to remind us of Christ's free gift of undeserved grace he gave to all of us through his death on the cross. We have so much to thank him for. Every time we sit down to break bread we need to thank the One who deserves our honour and praise.

Hand out some scripture verses on grace. Perhaps the ladies would like to share their verse with everyone.

## Humour

Saying Grace (See CD)

## Ladies Participation

What grace do you remember?  
(Show Plates / Prayers they have brought along)

## Superman Grace

Thank You God for giving us food  
(Right arm stretched out in front with clenched fist)  
Thank You God for giving us food  
(Now Left arm stretched out in front with clenched fist)  
For the Food we eat  
(Sway to right side with arms still outstretched)  
For the Friends we meet  
(Sway to left side with arms still outstretched)  
Thank You God for giving us food—Bop Bop Bop Bom  
(On the bop bop bop bom part bend your knees as you sing it)

## Quiz (See CD)

## Reflection

Psalm 106:1  
Praise the Lord.  
Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
his love endures forever.

It's wonderful to say grace every time we eat a meal throughout the day. This is a starting point for many people to acknowledge who God is and all the good gifts he provides for us on an everyday basis. It helps us to become accustomed to conversing with him. The more we do speak to him, the easier it becomes to have a real conversation with him.

If you find it difficult to have personal devotions with God each day, start off with your breakfast or your lunch. Each day add something more to your usual grace. Look up a scripture verse that praises God and share that verse with him. Did you know God longs for ALL His children to converse with Him daily?

## Closing Prayer

Give ladies 'Prayer' book marks



*Receive and experience  
the amazing grace of  
the Master, Jesus  
Christ, deep, deep  
within yourselves.*

(Philippians 4:23 TM)

# *Grace* **WITHIN**



# As graceful as

Colonel Margaret Martin

As graceful as  
A bird in flight...  
A swan on a lake...  
A ballerina...  
God's Spirit working within us

## Décor

Floral arrangements  
Pictures of birds in flight or video from YouTube

## Songs

SASB 386	The Saviour sought and found me
SASB 192	For the mighty moving of Thy Spirit
SASB 204	Who is it tells me what to do?

## Participation

Play recording of *Swan Lake* and invite members to be 'ballerinas'

## Prayer Poems (See CD)

By Flora Larsson from *Just a Moment, Lord*

1. About Mrs Fell
2. Annabella Jones

## Competition (See CD)

## Devotion

As graceful as God's spirit within us

1. In the way we live our lives  
At times, we may be like a swan: gliding through each day, appearing to be in control and at peace but paddling furiously below the surface 'Lord, help me to live in your strength, to be genuine, and to be calm in mind and heart'.

2. In the way we relate to others  
Not ruffled or erratic in our relationships but constant and gracious – in our attitudes and words. Let's be like Flora Larsson, talking over our relationship needs with the Lord.

3. In the way we follow the example of Jesus  
Consider the way he related with his disciples; patient and loving, while living with them 24 hours a day. In the Gospels you note the gracefulness of his conversations and the thoughtfulness of his actions. 'Holy Spirit, teach me to be graceful in all my living.'

## Benediction

Pray this closing prayer together:  
*Gracious Spirit, dwell with me;  
I myself would gracious be,  
And with words that help and heal  
Would Thy life in mine reveal.*

Grace  
WITHIN



# Be Yourself

Captain Jenny Hall

## Welcome

'Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness...' (v 26)  
'God saw all that he had made, and it was very good...' (v 31)  
(Genesis 1:26-31 NIV)

## Song

He knows my name

## Getting to know you activity

Ask the group to pair up with someone they do not know very well and find out as much about that other person as they can in five minutes by asking the following questions:

- What is your name?
- Where were you born?
- What is your favourite food?
- What is your favourite thing to do in your spare time?

Then come back together and ask each person one of the questions above to see who can remember the most about the person they were talking to.



## Heritage

Ask one of the members attending to share the story of their heritage.

## How do you see yourself?

Is it positive or could you have an attitude adjustment?

Are you far too critical of yourself?

Write three positive things about yourself and one negative thing.

If you struggle to do this then perhaps you need an attitude adjustment.

Pair off to share and encourage each other. For example 'I really appreciate seeing your smile every time I come into this place', 'you inspire me with the way that you deal with difficult situations in your life'.

## Bible Reading

1 Corinthians 12:14-18

## Clip

Youtube – No One Alive is more Youer than You!  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_Q3L2sFmucc](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_Q3L2sFmucc)

## Devotion

No matter what your heritage is, no matter how you see yourself, no matter how people see you, you have to be yourself.

You see God made you exactly how he wanted you to be. The world can tell us what it thinks we should be, but God knows best.

God gifted us all with many gifts and talents and they all fit together just like a jigsaw puzzle. If we were all the same there would be no more new creations, nothing would be new. We would all look, act and live the same way.

Dr Seuss said;  
'Today you are you, that is truer than true. There is no one alive who is Youer than You.'  
Dr Seuss 'Happy Birthday to You!'

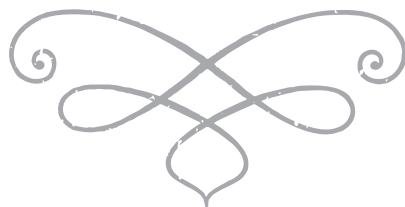
No one else can be us and we cannot be anyone else either. No matter how hard we may try to imitate another we will not achieve it.

We can only truly be fulfilled when we are being ourselves and working with what God has given us.

Remember in the YouTube clip the gentleman said that if we are not using the gifts and talents we were given then we are being selfish.

This is true. We do not exist solely for our own benefit, we are a part of a big picture. We fit into the picture and we fit right alongside someone else.

Claim what God has given you and use it to benefit the Kingdom and others and see how fulfilling it is for you.



# Read manual B4 operating Grace

Captain Jodie Pethybridge

## Décor

Gather as many gadgets or electrical items as you can find along with their manuals and arrange them around the room. If you give your congregation enough time you could ask them to bring their most favoured electrical item with them as well as its manual.

## Introduction

Ever tried to chart a course, reach a destination or correct your route without a map? How about being given the task of creating or making something with no template? Challenging to say the least! When we have little information to guide us it can be rather difficult to feel as though we are on our way to achieving the task set before us or on our way to reaching our desired location.

You may have heard the saying; 'what would Jesus do?'. The bible provides the backdrop to providing the clearest answers to that question. And although there are shades of grey in some of the answers grace will always be the overarching theme of Jesus' ministry. If we wish to know how to be like Jesus and thus be filled with grace the bible is to become our operating manual.

## Songs

Lynn DeShazo	Ancient words
Joel Houston	From the inside out
Marty Sampson	Now that you're near

## Quirky and odd instruction labels (See CD)

## Reading & Prayer

Ephesians 2:1-10

In his commentary on Ephesians the late John Stott asked the question; 'what prompted God to act on our behalf and reunite us with himself?' He says it was his sheer love, grace and kindness.

*'We were dead, and so helpless to save ourselves: only 'mercy' could reach the helpless, for 'mercy' is love for the down and out. We were under God's wrath: only 'love' could triumph over wrath. We deserved nothing at God's hand but judgement, on account of our trespasses and sins: only 'grace' could rescue us, for grace is undeserved favour.'*

But it's more than this. Stott goes on to say; 'For as living evidences of his kindness we shall often point people away and beyond ourselves to him to whom we owe our salvation.' You may have heard it said that we may be the only Jesus people come across. The implication here is that we aren't just recipients of God's grace but that we're givers of God's grace – living examples of his mercy, love, grace and kindness.

*(John Stott, The Message of Ephesians, Leicester: England, Inter-Varsity Press, 1979, p.82)*

Grace  
WITHIN

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Select someone prior to the meeting to read through the above passage of Scripture and craft a prayer based on its contents.

### Activities

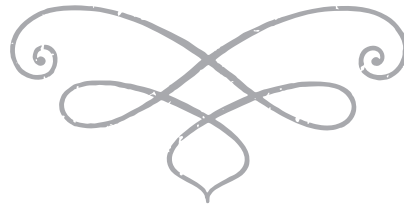
Group people into teams of no more than four. Then, finances permitting, either purchase an item that requires some kind of assembly and provide each team with the same item. BUT only provide half the teams with the manual. Instruct each team to assemble the item and ask them for feedback once completed.

Alternatively (I would suggest as well as) provide teams with children's puzzles (usually 24-60 pieces). Have half the teams complete them using the picture as a reference and the other half without. Puzzles can, but don't have to be, the same.

Give teams an operating or instruction manual. Then give one individual the tune to a current or well known song. They must sing the song using the words in the operating manual and the other team members must guess the name of the song.

point and be reminded that God has travelled with them and his word is filling their life.

### Devotion (See CD)



### Clips

- The Simpsons: Homer vs the BBQ pit  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnN8k9JRihs](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gnN8k9JRihs)
- Toy Story 3: Buzz Lightyears Memory resets  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG9VLxlccx4](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iG9VLxlccx4)

### Touch Points & sharing time

Purchase thick coloured cardboard or scrapbooking cardboard with patterns on it and place these, along with permanent coloured markers on a table. Instruct the members of the congregation to write down particular memories they possess or passages of Scripture they have come across or pictures which filled them with God's grace, hope, faith or promise. People can do more than one if they wish. Give them ample time to create the cards.

Once it looks as though they are finished ask if anyone would like to share the story behind what is written on their cards. You might even like to have someone else from the congregation pray for those who share if you think there would be people who would respond well to that suggestion.

Suggest that they take these cards and stick them up in their house somewhere in a prominent position or where they are likely to come across it several times throughout the day. Every time they walk past it they can touch the

# Leaving Footprints

Major Leanne Elsley

## Décor

Have pictures of footprints on the beach, carbon footprints, plaster cast of a child's feet or a baby's feet.

Each person could leave a footprint (shoeprint) as they come into the meeting. This could be achieved by simply tracing around each person's foot or shoe then cutting them out and placing around room. Alternatively be adventurous, use paint and do some 'feet painting'- apply the paint on with a roller. (don't forget water and towels for clean up).

## Songs

HLSB 85	Make me a Blessing
HLSB 108	Let the sunshine in your heart shine out.
YouTube/CD	'Find us faithful'

## Introduction

What is a carbon footprint?

When you use fossil fuels to keep your house warm or to run your family's car, these things create carbon dioxide, CO<sub>2</sub>. Carbon dioxide is called a greenhouse gas. Many scientists believe that greenhouse gases are making the earth too warm. Your carbon footprint is the total amount of CO<sub>2</sub> you create. (There is a lot more information available relating to 'Carbon Footprints'. You can focus on this as much or as little as you like depending on the type of meeting you are running.)

Calculating your own carbon footprint can be something interesting and fun to do. 'Carbon Footprint calculators' can be found on websites such as this one: [www.wwf.org.au/our\\_work/people\\_and\\_the\\_environment/human\\_footprint/footprint\\_calculator/](http://www.wwf.org.au/our_work/people_and_the_environment/human_footprint/footprint_calculator/)

If you have internet access on an iPad or laptop, one or two volunteers could go online and calculate their 'carbon footprint', or do a few before hand to share. Provide information for those who may like to have a go in their own time.

## Share

Ways to reduce Carbon Footprint.

The best way to make your carbon footprint smaller is to use less electricity and less fossil fuels. Be sure to turn off your computer, television and lights when you're not using them. Walk and bike whenever you can instead of using the car or bus. Reduce the amount of garbage you create by recycling and reusing items. When buying appliances check energy ratings.

## Guest speaker

Invite someone as a guest speaker on saving energy and reducing related costs. HESS (Home energy saving scheme) or equivalent.

## Fun (See CD)

Game: Identify and name a variety of footprints.

## Talk

You leave footprints when you walk in the sand, the mud and when you've got wet feet. You also leave something called a carbon footprint. You can't see your carbon footprint, but it impacts the earth and leaves a mark just like the ones in the sand and the mud do. We can leave our print or mark on the world in different ways.

The way we live our lives also leaves a mark or footprint on the people around us. (Share about someone who had a positive influence in their life eg. Sunday school teacher, family member, etc).

The bible encourages us to leave the footprint of Jesus as we go through life. Our words and actions should imprint the grace and mercy of God. Leaving the footprint of Jesus comes from a relationship with him. If we allow God's spirit to work in us we develop not only his footprints but his character (Gal 5:22) and his mind (1 Cor 2:16).

The more time we spend with God and reading his word the more we are transformed by him. When we are transformed and renewed by Jesus we begin to walk through life with his justice, truth and love.

We cannot walk this earth without leaving footprints. We have a responsibility to reduce the negative effect they have on our planet. In the same way we cannot interact with others without leaving a mark. We don't want to leave behind a trail of destruction as we walk but a trail shaped by Jesus which leads others to him.

At this time a suitable song could be played or sung.

## Prayer

## Card (See CD)

Provide each person with a colour laminated copy of the verse.





# Reflections from the heart of God

Major Bev Demopoulos

We do not fall from Grace, we fall into it.

## Songs

Hillsong	Ancient of days
Hillsong	My Redeemer lives
Hillsong	All things are possible
Hillsong	The Potter's hand
Hillsong	Amazing grace

Have a sharing time when *the impossible* happens. Would be good to prep some one for this, or find a good story from isalvos or the web.

Focus on God's grace potential in all situations. Have as many pictures as you can of people, both young and old reflecting many nations. God sees each of us as a human being, a precious life that he sacrificed Jesus upon the Cross, for all these faces in all their circumstances.

## John 1:16

*'Because of all that the Son is, we have been given one blessing after another. The Law was given by Moses, but Jesus Christ brought us undeserved kindness and truth. No one has ever seen God. The only Son, who is truly God and is closest to the Father, has shown us what God is like.'* (CEV)

## Ezekiel 37:11 - 14

*'The Lord said; Ezekiel, the people of Israel are like dead bones. They complain that they are dried up and that they have no hope for the future. So tell them, "I, the Lord God, promise to open your graves and set you free. I will bring you back to Israel, and when that happens, you will realise that I am the Lord. My Spirit will give you breath, and you will live again. I will bring you home, and you will know that I have kept my promise. I, the Lord, have spoken.'* (CEV)

## For some life is:

I knelt on the concrete floor, talking through an open slot large enough to receive a cup of coffee, a salad roll or some toilet paper. I listened to a story of great loss, personal disappointment and a heart breaking for his loved ones. Court was coming up in 15 minutes, he had already been on remand for quite some time, and today was sentencing. He was a bundle of nerves; would he get home to his family? He talked about his family, gave me their names and I said a prayer with him as he quietly wept.

Upstairs outside the court I met his family, talked with his little daughter who was holding her stuffed toy. We all went to court, the prosecutor made his remarks, defence council made his. The man was asked to stand up; his little girl sees the cuffs on daddy's hands. Then the judge

handed down the sentence, more time is needed to be served behind bars and separated from his family. Tears flow, the word sorry is mouthed, kisses are blown and dad is lead away. I walk out with the family, mum and wife are embracing through tears. The lawyer comes out to speak to them and a little girl looks up to me and asks "Is my daddy coming home today, is he free?"

I will remember this scene as long as I live, it was one of the hardest things I have ever had to do, to kneel down and talk to this little girl about what is happening.

My precious Abba Father and the Creator of all things, spared not even the most pure so that you and I would not be taken away to be locked in darkness and torment for all eternity. He paid the high price of Jesus' blood that has the power to cover all sins to remove the handcuffs, the shackles that bind us, the evil from within us to set us free. He looks upon each of us as a precious little child and makes the announcement of Forgiven and Free. Yet he does not stop there, he restores, he transforms and he lights our path. There is no darkness that His light cannot break through.

## Lamentations 3:21-24

Then I remember something that fills me with hope. The Lord's kindness never fails! If He had not been merciful, we would have been destroyed. The Lord can always be trusted to show mercy each morning. Deep in my heart I say, 'The Lord is all I need; I can depend on Him'.



# Mothers of Grace – Christmas

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Major Pam Robinson

## Décor

A comfortable chair, throw rug over chair, small coffee table with fine china cup and saucer, flowers or lamp on, Bible opened up and a pair of glasses opened on it as if someone has just been there praying.

To the side a pram or cradle. A small Christmas tree.

## Welcome

As each lady arrives give them a hand shake and welcome them to the meeting today (What they won't know yet is that you have put on your hand lovely perfume (the more expensive the better) don't let them know about it yet (carefully check to make sure the smell is still strong, you may need to practice at home to know how much to use).

## Songs

Choose Christmas Carols

## Sharing

Ask the ladies to share stories of their mother who has impacted their lives and why? What was it that made them stand out from others?

As the leader, listen to their stories. Is there a common thread that you can pick up on?

Listen to or watch the song 'Mary did you know' on YouTube by Jchoueiri.

## Devotion

As we approach Christmas our thoughts usually go to what gifts do we buy each other, what bargains can we get. It is also time to dig out the old tested and faithful recipes and to bring out the decorations.

The challenge in this materialist day and age is to stop and consider the greatest gift of all given to us, and that is our Saviour Jesus – Jesus, God in the flesh.

For God to come to earth, and be born as a human baby so we could really understand and know who God was and what he was really like, he had to choose a perfect vessel, a woman who would allow his sovereign will to be fulfilled for humankind. To Mary, a young pure woman this honour was bestowed. Why her? Because God knew her heart.

When we think of Mary we think of her as being gentle, but not in a weak way, but a woman with an inner strength and tenderness, an encourager.

You know the sort of graceful woman who walks into a room and talks to you and makes you feel so important that she really cared deeply about you and wants to help make things right in your life. When she leaves her

influence, you know (like a sweet perfume) lingers and you feel touched and refreshed just by being around her. Now get the ladies to check their hands. Can they smell the perfume?

## Bible Reading

Luke 1: 26 – 38

Imagine Mary, young and innocent and going about her normal duties as a woman and all of a sudden her life is interrupted by an angel.

*'Greetings, you who are highly favoured! The Lord is with you' (Luke v 28 - NIV)*

I spoke of her as being gracious. We see this in the account of the wedding at Cana where she saw a need and went to Jesus to do something about it.

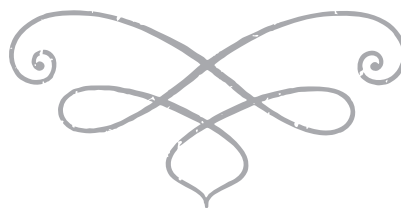
Let's look at what she does in John 2: 1-11

This is an amazing insight into Mary who knew her Son so well, she believed the impossible even though she had no evidence yet of his miracles.

Mary was not only confident enough to ask Jesus to fix the situation to save the embarrassment of the wedding hosts, but to recognize that he would involve others in the unfolding of the miracle, which she believed was about to come forth.

What a wonderful example of a tender gracious mother who believed her son could do the impossible.

How life changing it is when others believe we can do more than we ever have before. May we all be an example, a sweet smelling offering of grace to those around us.



# Enfolded in your arms of grace

Major Romona Kinder

## Concept

Today is based around experiencing the grace of God. Through different stations the ladies will have time to reflect and experience the Grace of God in their own lives. It is a time to stop and come aside from our busy lives and be. Be aware that this may be a totally new concept for some of the ladies. It is a self guided prayer activity, where the emphasis is on experiencing God. Please feel free to change the activities in any way or add more.

Because this is different you may like to start by having a special morning tea and over a relaxed cuppa explain what will be happening. Please encourage the ladies to be open to the experience.

## What you will need

A room that can be set up similar to a 24/7 prayer room (if possible not the room that they normally meet in).

Have soft music playing in the background.

Have a few chairs in the room in case the ladies would like to sit down and contemplate for a while.

## Activity: Stone and glass bowl

Calico cloth, smooth stones that can be bought from a dollar shop, glass bowl and water.

Place the calico cloth on the ground with the bowl half full of water in the middle. Place the smooth stones randomly on the calico cloth.

## Activity: Cross and Nails

Large free standing wooden cross or a smaller cross that can be placed on a table, large nails, red or purple cloth, flat dish.

Place the cross in the middle of the room with the coloured fabric draped around the base (large cross) or on the table if it is smaller. Place the nails at the bottom of the base of the cross in a flat dish.

## Activity: Hand wipes

Small table, table cloth, hand wipes, nice bowl for used wipes, words that can be brought from a dollar shop e.g. 'Love, Peace, Joy, Faith'.

Set up small table with table cloth on it. Place the hand wipes and bowl on the table and the words behind.

## Activity: Candles

Table, table cloth, large candle with holder, tea light candles, and matches. On the table place the cloth, large candle in the middle lit. Have tea lights randomly placed on the table around the large candle. Please note only light the middle large candle, the ladies will light the tea lights from the large candle.

## Activity: Fan

A pedestal oscillating fan.

Put the fan on in the room, may need to make sure that it is not affecting the candles.

## Activity: Sand

Table, bright blue or green fabric or table cloth, large glass bowl and sand.

Place fabric on the table slightly scrunched up so that it looks like the ripples of water.  
Place the bowl on the table with the sand in it.

Hand outs – Enfolded in your arms of Grace (see CD)  
You will need to print the hand outs with enough for one each.

You will need to be well prepared in advance with the room set up before the ladies arrive.

Concepts from: [www.salvationarmy.org.au/corps\\_prog/24/resources.html](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/corps_prog/24/resources.html)



# Still Before the Lord

Major Ruth Dollin

## Concept

To encourage ladies to explore and contemplate the importance of being still before the Lord and developing this in their own journey with Jesus.

To present ideas / suggestions to assist them in their individual journey.

## Songs

The Source	Be still for the presence of the Lord
SASong: 549	You are beautiful beyond description
YouTube	This is my desire to honour you
Hillsong	None but Jesus
Hillsong	All my hope (from the new Hillsong, Cornerstone album)
Soaking in Prayer	<a href="http://www.secretplaceministries.org">www.secretplaceministries.org</a>

## Preparation

Ask the ladies to bring along a hard covered book that can be used as a journal.

Include time in the meeting for ladies to be able to cover the book, i.e. with Lace etc.

Refer: [www.buttonsandstitching.com/2012/06/lace-journal-cover.html](http://www.buttonsandstitching.com/2012/06/lace-journal-cover.html) can be included as craft.

## Sharing

Ask ladies to share their experiences of their journey in relation to being still before the Lord.

Or if there is someone in the group who can share from her journey in relation to the topic, ask her to come prepared to share from her experience.

## How to keep a journal

Refer: How to keep a Journal 10 steps (with pictures) wiki How [www.wikihow.com/...>writing>journal writing](http://www.wikihow.com/...>writing>journal%20writing).

This has some good suggestions which will assist the ladies in keeping a journal in relation to their times with the Lord.

## Quietness and Reflection on God

From the word STILL, use the following for a time of quiet reflection

Surrender: Lord I open my heart and mind/emotions to you Lord,

Thanksgiving: I thank you Lord for

Invite: The Lord to come and be present with them individually  
Listen: Allow some time for the ladies to listen for Him  
Love: Sense His presence and Love

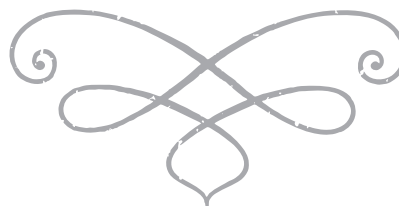
## Conclude with time of prayer

In the stillness in the quietness / None but Jesus I know you are God...

Psalm 62:1 *'For God alone my soul waits in silence; from Him comes my Salvation.'*

## Other Resources

Being still before the Lord by Mark and Patti Virkler  
[www.rgcmministries.com/bbls/dsfpl7.htm](http://www.rgcmministries.com/bbls/dsfpl7.htm)





*We have all received  
one blessing after  
another. God's grace is  
not limited.*

(John 1:16 NIV)

# *Grace* **WORKS**



# Between a rock and a grace place

Major Catherine Rogerson

This meeting would be good as a healing or wellness meeting. It could be connected to a series on physical, emotional and spiritual health meetings. This would be the last in the series.

## Concept

All of us no matter what our background have hurts (rocks that seem un-moveable) that need to be addressed. Some hurts might seem minor but to the person who has experienced that hurt it is major.

To bring out the healing that comes from God's grace in our lives. Looking at what grace is and how it can work to push those rocks away and in their place put a new grace place of calm and assurance.

## Songs

Magnify 53	Purify my heart (Refiner's fire)
Chris Tomlin	Amazing grace, my chains are gone

## Bible reading

Matthew 1:18-25

## Décor

If it is possible halve the meeting room with paper mache rocks, so you have a room with rocks and hazards and then a calm and peaceful room.

The first section is where the ladies come in at the beginning of the meeting, at the entrance there will be rocks or pebbles for the ladies to walk over or on either side of door way as they come into the room.

A piece of carpet or a long piece of material for the ladies to walk on weaving towards the big rocks behind which is the sanctuary would be great.

If you cannot halve the room, set it up with the sanctuary at one end and the rocks at the other end.

Have some music playing (not much décor needed).

Chairs to sit on to start the meeting.

The big rocks (boulders) can be made out of paper mache so they are easy to move (maybe your youth group or Sagala group could make the rocks). (See CD)

These rocks will be pushed aside by the ladies to reveal the other half of the room.

A water feature, maybe a small fountain or small pebbles in a glass bowl. I find water features are very calming.

A Cross would be the centre point of this room with soft lights or lamps behind it.

Grace  
WORKS

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A table or chairs to kneel at for prayer.

A nice jug and bowl to wash the ladies hands.

Hand towels for the ladies to keep after they have washed their hands.

Scatter cushions and calming music.

Chairs for the ladies to sit on.

For morning tea you could have rock cakes and rocky road. (See CD)



## Introduction

I travel many times between Tamworth and Armidale and a lot of the landscape in that area is made up of large boulders and the cattle and sheep graze amongst the boulders. Some of the farmers who have sheep grazing around these boulders have talked to me about the sheep getting stuck between the boulders and how hard it is to release them.

Bush Rangers used this rocky landscape to hide from the law enforcement officers. Thunderbolt 'gentleman bushranger' Frederick Wordsworth Ward, was one such bush ranger. Thunderbolts Rock was the perfect vantage point for monitoring the approach of unwary mail coaches. He used the rock as a hideout and a look out.

Thunderbolts Rock is a time-worn cluster of granite boulders located six kilometres south of Uralla on the New England Highway. I would not like to try and move these rocks as I am sure they would not budge.

At times life brings with it rocks that are not easy to move, sometimes we can blast away that rock with detonators. Sometimes those rocks seem to go deep and will not budge and need to be chipped away at. So this morning we will be looking at how we can move from the rock into a grace place.

## Prayer

### Guest Soloist

Magnify 47      Oh kneel me down again (Humble King)

### Guest to speak

Her rock and a grace place

We will now move into the Sanctuary.

Each lady will walk along the material or carpet and has a go at moving or pushing the rock away then sit in the Sanctuary.

### Guest Soloist

SASB 304      She only touched the hem

## Message

Matthew 1:18-25

Matthew 26: 36-42



# Chocolate covered grace

Major Angela Eyles

## Introduction

God's word reminds us to love others. This doesn't happen by pretending, by putting on a fake smile and chocolate coating our conversations. But by remembering God wants us to live lives that reflect his love for us in our relationships with others.

Today we will have the opportunity to enjoy some of God's creation in the combination of two favourite items, chocolate and fruit. But also to consider how we show God's grace for us through how we live in our everyday relationships. So join us in a fun time and take home more than a recipe for fun but a desire to share the grace of God with others.

These ideas can be arranged any way you wish. Focusing on fun and food to pass on a message that sugar coating life doesn't make it easier but incorporating the truths of God's grace in our everyday lives gives us joy and we can delight in life regardless of our circumstances.

## Preparation (See CD)

You may choose to use this as an evening event – girl's night out, decorating the place with special items, tea lights in votive containers and food set out on good platters etc. so as to set the atmosphere for the event.

You may also wish to use a chocolate fountain and various fruits to dip or even use the recipe provided and prepare the chocolate covered strawberries as a part of the event.

This could also be combined with a pamper night using the cards, recipe and devotions to complement the evening of showing women that they are truly valued.

Prepare a 'taste test' of items that are pleasant and others not so. For example – smelling an onion while tasting an apple (confirm no allergies).

**NB:** This is a trick, the body can smell an unpleasant smell and convince us we are eating something gross when the item is good – you don't need to go in to serious challenge mode and serve up inedible items.

## Songs

Hillsong	In your freedom I will live
Hillsong	You are faithful

## Happiness cards / Joy & Hope cards (See CD)

When women are entering have these cards ready, with pens for them to write down; 'I will be really happy when....' This can be a fun thing – remind them it is light-hearted as some are going to be read out for a giggle, e.g. 'I'll be happy when my teenage son remembers to bring out his dirty washing and not wait for it to come out to the laundry on its own'.

Grace  
WORKS



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Later you will be giving them cards that remind them that 'joy' and 'rejoicing' is different to 'I'll be happy when...' and this sort of living changes us from focusing on self and passing on God's grace and blessings to others.

## Participation

'Taste test'

To remind the women that life is not always as it seems. As stated above have some foods prepared for a few to participate and encourage the others to express disdain or enthusiasm, and try to trick the 'volunteers' and have container ready for them to 'dispose' of unwanted foods. You may want to use jelly, oysters, pickles, vinegar, ice cream, smell onions but offer apple – see the reaction. In other words use your imagination but this is not reality TV so no need to go extreme.



## And now for some real delights (See CD)

Depending on your team confidence or skill, now is the time to display or present some chocolate covered fruit, primarily strawberries. Or you may just want to hand out the recipe. The recipe has been used for many years and was handwritten from a friend who saw it on a TV show.

## Devotions

Everyone wants to be happy. A whole industry has been set up to remind people they will only be happy if they win a million dollars, or lose those extra kilos or purchase that special item. And somehow, in this day and age, have the message that we must act happy even if we are not. We most certainly must look happy. It's been conditioned into us to the degree of how we normally react to being asked "how are you"? (ask the ladies).

Let's be honest life doesn't always turn out the way we expect or desire. And yet there is a way to show God's love to others even on our worst of days. But we can't do this unless we feel confident in our relationship with God.

Trying to fake our happiness is little better than trying to eat chocolate covered onions. No matter how good the chocolate is we would still be eating onions.

However our relationship with Christ can give us confidence and hope based on Him not our circumstances. It is a '*peace that passes all human understanding*' (Philippians 4:7). As we recognise God's gift of grace, his love for us that we could never earn, we realise we are truly blessed.

It is like the joy of the strawberry with the extra delight of the chocolate. We can hand our hurts over to God and allow our attitude to reflect that shown to us by Christ (Philippians 2:4-5). We can see beyond people's actions and faults and see their needs. Then we can learn to love, to truly love and that will affect not only our lives but open the door to changing lives around us. This will affect our everyday lives, our everyday relationships and, if we allow it, even how we react in traffic!

Romans 5:1-11 speaks of the grace of God, it speaks of peace and joy and indeed the gift of God's own son and especially of our relationship with God. We can enjoy our lives not just endure our circumstances.

As we have the opportunity to enjoy the fruits covered in chocolate we can also enjoy the grace of God as we can rejoice – we receive grace by faith and we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God and so much more, so very much more!

*So every time you eat a chocolate covered strawberry think of the amazing gift of God's grace and ALL that it comes with.*



# Costly grace (Easter)

Lt Colonel Elaine Rowland

## Welcome

Introduce the theme for the day. Ask ladies to think about what the topic means and if it is relevant to their lives. Have an opportunity for the ladies to share their thoughts later.

## Songs

SASB 124	Leaning on the everlasting arms
SASB 28	He giveth more grace
Chorus 33	Sacred hands of Jesus (TB 525)
Song 31	How sweet the name of Jesus sounds There is a Redeemer (Keith and Melody Green)

## Prayer

## Sharing

What is Costly Grace?

Introduce Scenarios of people in our lifetime who have had to pay a price for what they believed.

**Scenarios** (See CD)

**Activity** (See CD)

What are the things we value? TAX Form

At Easter time we contemplate again the life of Jesus.

It is a time when we see God's grace really come alive. Because of grace he gives us his own son, Jesus, as a price to pay for our sins.

**Is this Costly Grace?**

**It is the ultimate Costly Grace!**

It is what we don't deserve, it was costly to God, it cost God the life of his son, a price he was prepared to pay. It was costly to Jesus. But because of his love for us he willingly gave of his life so that we could be free.

Bonhoeffer reminds us again of this cost:

*'Costly grace is the gospel which must be sought again and again, the gift which must be asked for, the door at which a man must knock. Such grace is costly because it calls us to follow, and it is grace because it calls us to follow Jesus Christ.'*

Grace is costly because it compels a man to submit to the yoke of Christ and follow him; it is grace because Jesus says: *'My yoke is easy and my burden is light.'* (Matthew 11:30 NIV)

## Prayer

## Devotion

Costly Grace as seen in Jesus

Matthew 13:44-46

Parables of the hidden treasure and the pearl

When we discover something of great value and we really want to have it, it is amazing how we will struggle, work, even connive to be able to buy it. Costly grace is the treasure hidden in the field; for the sake of it a man will gladly go and sell all that he has. It is the pearl of great price to buy which the merchant will sell all his goods. It is costly because it costs a man his life, and it is grace because it gives a man the only true life.

Deitrich Bonhoeffer went to great lengths to convince his readers that grace cannot be cheapened; we may have to give up all that we hold dear to find it. He could not have imagined when he wrote his thesis on the cost of discipleship that all he believed and stood for would cost him his own life.



# Heaven's Applause

Major Joanne Slater

## Introduction

What does applause mean for you? Acknowledgement for something well done, completing a task or even in celebration of achieving a special milestone in life like a birthday or a wedding anniversary.

## Preparation

In preparation you may like to ask a number of ladies to come prepared with what heaven's applause means for them personally. I found in preparing, it became a very personal time with the Lord. Thinking of heaven's applause will do that! It certainly will put a lot of life into perspective.

## Décor

Using soft blue and white chiffon fabric draped loosely from a free standing cross or from a smaller cross sitting on the centre of the table with fabric draped softly from it. You also might like to add some candle lanterns with a picture of hands applauding laminated sitting on a nice stand. You may also like to show this picture through the data projector and have applauding in the background as the women enter and exit for the day.

## Extra Reading

The 'Applause of Heaven' by Max Lucado

## Reflective Music

'Applause of Heaven' – Martin Shrout  
(The story behind this song is from the final chapter of the book – The 'Applause of Heaven' by Max Lucado.)

## Songs

SASB 10	Joyful, Joyful, we adore thee
SASB 37	How great thou art
SASB 12	Now thank we all our God
SASB 19	Praise to the Lord
SASB 42	This is my Father's world
Matt Redman	Bless the Lord
	Blessed be the name of the Lord
	Here for you
	Here I am to Worship

## Scripture Reading

Matthew 5:1-12  
1 Corinthians 9:24-27

## Devotion (See CD)

What comes to mind when we think of the word applause? (Allow time for discussion for the meaning of.)

- Hand clapping as a demonstration of approval, appreciation, acclamation, or the like.
- Any positive expression of appreciation or approval, acclamation.
- Appreciation or praise shown by clapping the hands.

Encourage discussion of when they have heard an applause that was absolutely breathtaking (allow sharing).

Ask the Ladies when they themselves have given applause for something that has overwhelmed them personally. It can be different because what brings one person to applause can be different to that of another person (allow sharing).

What brings about applause is something that has a beginning and that takes you on a journey to the end which brings about a response.

Applause can bring you to your feet and also can bring tears to your eyes.

The scriptures teach us that living for God's approval requires us finishing well. Paul encourages us to run the race and fight for the prize. This simple training tip will help us to live for God's approval by finishing well. Paul tells us to run the Christian race with the intent to win the prize at the end of the race. Paul begins with the question – 'Do you not know?'. Paul uses this question whenever he is confident that his readers already know the answer – you all run in such a way that you all may win. The prize is offered to each and every believer. Unlike a running race we are not competing against each other. Every Christian can win the prize.

When a person believes in Jesus they become a runner in the Christian race. Paul encourages us further by saying 'Run in such a way you may win'. The Christian's prize is the honour and glory of eternal rewards. It is the joy of hearing Jesus say; 'Well Done.'

'Heaven's Applause'. What does this life for Christians look like?

The Beatitudes are given to us by Jesus to help us reach the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 5: 3-12)

Can you imagine what 'Heaven's applause' is going to be like after hearing the beatitudes being read to you? Jesus is standing and waiting. Can you imagine the applause he will give to each of us when we live a life that is shown to us through the beatitudes? What a wonderful thought of Jesus standing and waiting – welcoming us and giving us a wonderful applause and receiving us into his Heavenly Kingdom.

## Resources

[www.e-water.net](http://www.e-water.net)  
[jesuschristsavior.net/Beatitudes.html](http://jesuschristsavior.net/Beatitudes.html)

# Just desserts – showing grace

Major Wendy-Sue Swann

## Décor

Have pictures of the desserts or deserts.

## Songs

HLSB 3 or Chris Tomlin	Amazing grace
Phillips, Craig and Dean	Your grace still amazes me

## Participation Ideas

Have a just desserts morning tea. Ask everyone to bring their favourite desserts. There are great recipe ideas on [taste.com.au](http://taste.com.au)

Hold a Just Desserts Fundraising Morning Tea. Charge everyone an entry fee or have everyone give five cent vote charge for their favourite dessert. Get everyone to bring a dessert and have a prize for the most popular dessert.

## Links

[www.taste.com.au/recipes/collections/desserts+recipes](http://www.taste.com.au/recipes/collections/desserts+recipes)  
[www.heartoftexas.themovie.com/](http://www.heartoftexas.themovie.com/)

## Quotes

*'Heaven goes by favour. If it went by merit, you would stay out, and your dog would go in.'* Mark Twain

*'Grace isn't cheap – just paid for. The only thing it costs us is admitting we're completely broke. And for some, that's too big a price to pay.'* Stuart Townsend

## Scripture

Ephesians 2:8 (1-10) (CEV)  
2 Timothy 1:9 (8-10) (CEV)

## Devotion

*(If you can, I suggest you watch ahead of time "The Heart of Texas" DVD, available from Koorong.)*

We've probably all heard or used this saying before, 'hope he gets his just desserts', especially when someone has hurt us, or we think that some injustice has happened.

We may have hoped that they get what's coming to them. That's what our human nature wants. But fortunately for us God is not human and he showed us another way to deal with people who have done us wrong.

God showed us that we should be showing grace, not serving up just desserts. Showing grace is all about giving what people don't deserve, the exact opposite to giving them just desserts.

It's saying, 'You know what? You did me wrong, I am hurt, according to human thought you deserve to be hurt back, however, I choose to live under God's thought which says I should give you what you don't deserve, which is grace, and forgiveness.'

I watched a documentary/movie called 'The Heart of Texas'. To get the full effect you really have to watch the movie, which is about a family who loses their four year old daughter in a hit and run and the way they react when they find out that the person who did this was a very close friend, someone they thought of as family. To most of us we would probably think this man deserved go to jail, he deserved to pay for what he did. However, the father of the little girl firstly went and comforted this man, bought clothes for him and his wife to attend the funeral, had them sit with his family at the funeral, asked the courts not to charge him with anything because the father knew the man would not be able to stand one night in prison. Then the father, knowing that this man and his wife were living in a rundown, unliveable house, got his friends and church family to build this man a new house. I can't think of anything that shows the true meaning of grace better than this.

Could we show this type of grace? Do we show any type of grace? It's very easy to give people what we think they deserve, but it's very hard to give them what they don't. Jesus is the ultimate example of showing grace. If we truly looked at ourselves and thought about what we deserve, we would see that Jesus has given us the exact opposite of what we deserve. If he can do that for us, then surely we can show grace to those who hurt us.

Take the challenge today to show someone grace. Give them what they don't deserve.

## The Whipping

[www.bibleteachingnotes.com/templates/system/details.asp?id=29183&fetch=20118](http://www.bibleteachingnotes.com/templates/system/details.asp?id=29183&fetch=20118)

## Just desserts or just deserts?

[www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/just-deserts.html](http://www.phrases.org.uk/meanings/just-deserts.html)





# Life is a ribbon

Major Angela Eyles

## Introduction

Have you ever wondered how clever people, like Martha Stewart, can wrap presents so beautifully? The ones where the ribbon simply falls off the box with one glorious pull? Or are you more of a collector of ribbons that end up in a knotted mess in a drawer somewhere?

Unfortunately, there are times when our lives feel a little more like the basket of knotted ribbons rather than the beautiful bow. Today we can have a little fun with ribbons and reflect on how we each choose to use the life that God has given us.

## Participation

There are countless sites on YouTube you may be able to use to show some amazing methods for constructing bows one really good one is Martha Stewart, web site below.

<http://www.marthastewartweddings.com/226403/three-perfect-bows>

Cheap rolls of ribbon can be purchased from the bargain stores. Good wire edged ribbons are available from Spotlight and specialist stores.

- a. An activity could easily be having the women join in a bow making competition or arrange for those who are gifted in craft to bring bows ready done for the day.
- b. You may even have someone who is able to demonstrate how to make a simple gift look glamorous by adding a special bow.

It is worth bringing a 'bunch of messy, knotted ribbons' as part of a simple display to illustrate the way unkempt, disorganised ribbons can end up.

- c. Discuss with the ladies the different uses for ribbons – hair ties, dresses, wedding décor, gift wrapping and lavender weaving – to name just a few.
- d. If you are able to, have a couple of bunches of knotted ribbons for one or two ladies to attempt to untangle
- e. Word search – focusing on words included in devotions
- f. Making a necklace with knotted ribbons and beads – as a reminder that knots can have their uses

## Devotion

There is a saying that has been around since the times of Mark Twain but its source is officially 'unknown' and it goes like this....

*'A bar of iron may cost \$5, made into horseshoes its worth is \$12. Made into sewing needles it increases to \$3500 and made into balance springs for watches its value increases again to \$3,000,000. Your own value is determined also by what you are able to make of yourself'* (source – unknown).

However, many have tried to make changes in their lives themselves and some may succeed but on the whole this is temporary as worry and stress come in when circumstances outside of their control overwhelm them. There are times when we feel like we have 'knots' in our stomach and there is no way positive thinking will fix things.

There is a reason for that. Positive thinking alone will only ever take us so far. Our lives are meant to be lived in partnership with God. In Philippians 2:12–13, Paul tells us of this partnership, *'...work out your own salvation...' ... 'it is God who works in you'*. Imagine a physical workout. God has given us all the muscles etc to accomplish great things but if we are to be fit and strong we must use those muscles and exercise. God is working in us, strengthening us and we have to trust him and use what he has given us.

Thinking about 'Life is a ribbon – what are you tying – knots or bows?', there are times when the knots are useful – the necklace with the beads is secured by knots. A boat is secured to the dock with a special kind of knot. A load is secured to a truck with knots. And even a bow, as pretty as it is would soon come undone without the knot to secure it.

God can use those difficult circumstances for our growth but we must choose to rely on him at all times. We gain the strength to choose God by daily reading his word. Know the truths of God's Word, share with Christians who can help us along the way and share our experience with non-Christians who will see the differences in our lives.

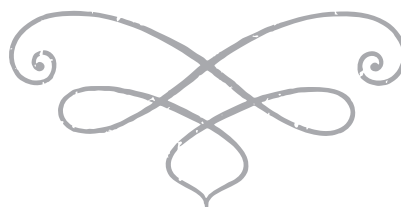
Jesus says *'let not your hearts be troubled, trust in God; trust also in me'* (John 14:1 NCV). Whatever is causing your life to be in 'knots' you can take these problems to Jesus. You can discover if this situation is a 'knot' to secure your faith or eventually show the beauty of the 'bow'.

Remembering too, that the 'bow' does add beauty and delight to all who see and appreciate it. We can be used by God to bring beauty into someone's situation.

## Recommended reading

*'The power to change your life'* by Rick Warren  
ISBN 981-0502684-9

While there are no direct quotes included here I recommend its usefulness both in personal spiritual development and for a book group that could be a ministry group in your corps or centre.



# Pursuing freedom

Major Karen Elkington

## Welcome

### Songs

HLSB 4	Are you seeking joys
HLSB 42	In Christ there is no east or west
HLSB 53	I will sing the wondrous story

## Prayer

### Introduction

Today's theme is about "pursuing freedom".

Questions:

1. When has there been a time when you have felt absolute freedom?
2. As a child did you ever roll down a grassy slope?
3. Did you ever run away from school?
4. When you left home did you feel free to do as you pleased?
5. Are you retired from work? How does it feel?
6. The housework is all done and you are now free to do as you like! What do you do?
7. How did you feel when you gave your life to Christ?
8. Has there ever been a time when you have been frightened?
9. Has there been a time when your freedom was restricted?

Today we are going to be talking a little about Asylum Seekers and Refugees who pursue freedom in Australia.

### Poem

*'Burdens are things God turns into wings'* by Helen Steiner Rice from 'Just for you a special collection of inspirational verses'



### Interview

Invite any members who were born overseas to come and sit up the front and ask them the following questions:

10. What country did you come from?
11. How old were you when you first came to Australia?
12. Is there a reason why you left your home country?
13. Tell us about your first impressions of Australia?

(Small prize for the members who participate. Suggestion:

Grace  
WORKS

# and the pursuing love of God

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A small sample of food from another culture for each of the people who were interviewed and a sample for everyone else for "listening well"!

## Asylum Seeker Facts (See CD)

### Quiz

### Scripture Reading

Luke 15:3-6

### Message

An Iranian asylum seeker came to visit The Salvation Army Asylum Seekers Support Services in Melbourne for help for the very first time. On the wall of our interview room we have a simple line drawing of Jesus, sticky taped to the wall. In this picture Jesus is wearing a crown of thorns and his anguish and suffering for us is evident.

Iran is a Muslim country where Islam is the official state religion. To follow any religion other than Islam is a crime.

The Iranian client looked up at the wall where this simple picture of Jesus was taped. His eyes shone with joy as he said, 'Jesus – yes Jesus. This picture is good! This is exactly what Jesus looks like! I'll tell you why – because he appeared in my dreams in Iran! This is what he looks like!'

'You are a Christian?' I asked.

His face now beaming, this man from Iran replied, 'Yes, I am a Christian', as he pulled the clothing away from around his neck to reveal a small cross on a chain.

'I am a Christian as well', I said to encourage my brother in Christ.

'In Iran you can only be a Muslim,' he told me, 'but I am a Christian.'

This intrigued me as I have met many Iranian people who have told me how strictly the Revolutionary Guard enforce people to follow the Muslim faith. So, I asked my Iranian friend how he had heard about Jesus when it was against the law in Iran for people to talk about Jesus.

He told me in his broken English how he had been watching television late at night of a broadcast from overseas where the gospel message was preached. Eager to know more about Jesus he searched on the Internet. He told me that Jesus spoke to him in his dreams and in time he committed his life to Christ. This is why his life was in danger and why he escaped from Iran. This man had come by boat to Australia and had found an Iranian Church in Melbourne following his release into the community from Immigration detention. This Iranian

Christian was enjoying the freedom to worship his Lord and Saviour here in Australia.

This man's story reminded me of the parable of the lost sheep. God will go to great lengths to search for lost souls and to help those who do not know him come to discover his love. In the most difficult of circumstances, God actively pursued this man with his love and this man responded by accepting Jesus as his Saviour – even though he knew it would endanger his life to follow any faith other than Islam.

Here in Australia God also pursues us with His love. God wants us to have a relationship with Him. If anyone here is lost and is far away from God, you can be sure that God is pursuing you now, searching for you, finding ways to get your attention and wanting to lead you into the safety of his care.

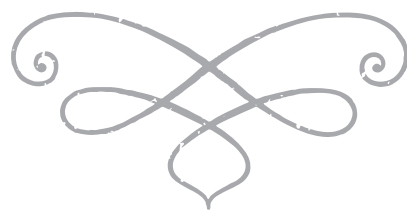
Are you experiencing the joy and freedom that a close and personal relationship with God brings today? God is reaching out to you. Won't you accept the invitation to follow him today?

### Prayer

### Other ideas

- Invite a guest from a refugee background to speak.
- Ask your members to bring a special item that has a story attached to it, from an overseas country. You can display these items and have some very interesting discussion.
- Invite someone who has worked/served overseas to speak or to bring interesting artefacts to display.
- Invite someone who works with asylum seekers/refugees to speak and to add that human interest component to the meeting.
- Cook and share some interesting international flavours.

(Major Karen Elkington is the Manager of The Salvation Army Asylum Seeker Support Services in Melbourne).



# Roses and Thorns

Major Rowena Smith

## Décor (See CD)

Two suggestions are outlined.

1. Decorator table with white cloth is the focal point. On the table a free-standing cross is displayed with a wilted red rose attached using string or wire. Use a real rose. The head of the rose must be drooped. This image symbolises the crucified Christ. Make sure the rose is in proportion to the cross. I suggest you purchase the rose a couple of days beforehand and do not put it in water. A crown of thorns is displayed beside the cross. Scatter red rose petals around the base of the cross to represent the spilt blood of Christ. If you wish you could also have a trail of petals on the floor leading to the cross, symbolic of the road Christ travelled bearing his own cross to Calvary. Morning tea tables could also be decorated with a single red rose in a slender vase. Rose petals scattered around the base of the vases.

2. Teacups overflowing with roses.

The two photos on the CD may give you some ideas. The main display was for a large stage but it could be scaled down to be more suitable for a smaller gathering. The other photo shows an idea for the morning tea tables. These table runners, rose fabric backdrop, artificial roses and large teacups are available for loan to those in the Sydney East & Illawarra Division (contact the Women's Ministries Department).

Serve cupcakes that have been iced to look like roses.

## Wisdom Quote (See CD for MS PowerPoint)

*'We can complain because rose bushes have thorns, or rejoice because thorn bushes have roses.'*  
Abraham Lincoln

This quote presents for the leader an opportunity to help the group reflect on "Attitudes".

Throughout the meeting, the following aspects could possibly be considered:

- Focussing on the positive not the negative
- Nurturing a gracious spirit, not a critical spirit
- Living life with joy – even in the midst of pain
- Having a spirit of gratitude and thankfulness

When faced with trials, disappointments and challenges in our faith journey, there are different responses we can choose. Responses that can be likened to the rose or the thorn. Do we respond with sweetness? Does the fragrance of Christ permeate our lives so that our responses and attitudes reflect his likeness?

Perhaps our responses are at times like the sharpness of the thorn. Is our character the prickly sort – critical, easily offended and touchy?

Continue developing these ideas throughout the meeting using some of the following options.

## Program Suggestions

### Songs (See CD for MS PowerPoint)

SASB 552	Thankyou Lord for all your goodness (esp v3)
SASB 544	Life is great (esp v2 & 4)
HLSB 129	Count your blessings
	Chorus Stop and smell the roses (tune "Soldiers in the Army")
YouTube	Thankyou Lord (Don Moen)
<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VekXjd9SAe0">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VekXjd9SAe0</a>	

Consider using other songs that emphasise 'joy' or using songs that emphasise living like Christ – displaying his likeness (e.g. To be like Jesus).

### Prayer (See CD for MS PowerPoint)

Use the prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

### Scripture Reading (See CD for responsive reading on MS PowerPoint)

Philippians 2:1-11

This reading could be followed by a reflective worship time which focuses on the wilted rose tied to the cross featured in the décor (option 1)

### Worship

Following the Scripture reading, play the song "Above All" on DVD iWorship

### Solo

Ask a soloist to sing Song 324 (SASB) to the tune The Rose. This song speaks about how by God's grace we can be Christlike. Emphasise verse two. Alternatively use it as one of your group songs.

### Inspirational Story

Share the story of Nick Vujicic – author of Life without Limits. Nick, an Australian Christian, was born without arms and legs yet he has an amazing joy for life and has overcome incredible obstacles in his lifetime.

Through his program 'Attitude is Altitude', Nick presents motivational talks to educators, students, employers and employees, helping them to discover that a positive outlook can lead to a meaningful life. His story has been featured on 60 Minutes. There are numerous clips including segments of his motivational talks to audiences, which can be viewed on YouTube. One of the clips is called 'No arms, no legs, no worries'. Nick is a wonderful example of a life that focuses on the roses not the thorns.



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You may like to prepare a MS PowerPoint featuring inspiring quotes by Nick with photos.  
<http://www.mr-quotations.com/nick-vujicic-quotes.html>

View this site for photos but check copyright conditions before you use the images in a MS PowerPoint.  
<http://photobucket.com/images/Nick+Vujicic/>

### Poems (2 suggestions)

*'I'm Drinking From My Saucer.'*

This is a song written by Jimmy Dean but could be read as a poem. Its message focuses on having a positive spirit and being thankful. It would link well if you are using the décor with teacups overflowing with roses. Do a Google search. There are many websites.

*"A Rose" by Elizabeth*

<http://www.netpoets.com/poems/life/1565003.htm>



### Reading

Read 'Fragile' - a short devotional reading from Private Atmosphere by Colonel Margaret Martin (p57) followed by the prayer on p58. Margaret recalls a fierce storm and her concern for her rose garden. The roses were undamaged. Their endurance of the storm reminded her of people in her life who have remained positive during their personal storms. (Private Atmosphere is available at Salvationist Supplies).

### Competition (See CD for MS PowerPoint and instructions)

Use "Roses" chocolates as prizes.

### Video Clips

Do a Google search for clips that explain how to grow roses  
<http://www.videojug.com/film/how-to-grow-roses-2>

Alternatively play a clip that explains how to arrange roses. There are numerous clips to choose from ranging from two minutes to nine minutes. Check out a few and decide what one will be most suitable for your group.  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=\\_wK4G4pBpWo](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_wK4G4pBpWo)

There are also clips that demonstrate how to decorate a cupcake to look like a rose, and other clips that demonstrate how to make roses out of a range of materials including paper, socks, facecloths, icing fondant.

### Live Demonstration

Invite a guest skilled at arranging roses to share her tips. The display could be delivered to a member not present due to illness.

Invite a guest to demonstrate the technique of decorating cupcakes to look like roses. Some of the ladies might be willing to have a try.

### Book

A devotional book entitled His Rose and Thorns, written by Wanda Scott Bledsoe, may be of interest to you. This book of devotions is available in Australia through Booktopia.  
<http://www.booktopia.com.au/search.ep?productType=917504&keywords=his+roses+and+thorns>

### Devotion

Devotional material has been prepared by author Janet Rose Campbell of Teakwood Ministries in Virginia, USA. Janet has kindly given her permission to include this material on the CD. The devotional message is entitled 'The Blessing in the Thorn'. It is followed by three additional brief devotionals. 'Deadly Daffodils' may also be appropriate to use as it considers the struggle with a negative, critical spirit.





*Dear children,  
let's not merely say  
that we love each other;  
let us show the truth by  
our actions.*

(1 John 3:18 NLT)

# *Grace* **IN THE WORD**



# Grace-full living

## BIBLE STUDY

Captain Judy Bennett

Taken from the Amazing Grace Resource Manual

## Bible Study Discussion

### Luke 1:5-7

What do these verses tell us about Elizabeth and Zachariah?

### Luke 1:22

Why do you think Zachariah didn't believe the angel?

Imagine an angel coming to you and giving you this news. What would be your reaction?

### Luke 1:23-25

Why would Elizabeth say that she was disgraced among her people?

How do you think women who cannot have children feel today? If you know someone that is struggling with infertility, how can you be a friend and support them.

### Luke 1:26-35

How did the angel address Mary and why do you think this troubled her?

If an angel visited you today, what kind of greeting would he give you?

What would the greeting reveal about your relationship with the Lord?

### Luke 1:36-37

What does the angel tell Mary in these verses?

What did he tell her about Elizabeth?

Why would we view this as a God-ordained relationship?

If nothing is impossible with God. What area of your life do you need to turn over to him?

### Luke 1:38

What does Mary's response tell us about her? Do you think she realised what the future held for her and her child?

### Luke 1:39-41

Do you think that the reaction of Elizabeth's baby to Mary's arrival was just coincidence?

### Luke 1:42-45

How do you think Elizabeth encouraged Mary during the three months they were together?

In what ways do you see Elizabeth and Mary being God's grace to each other?

### 2 Corinthians 1:4

How does God draw hurting women to us? Share how God has drawn someone to you as a result of your story of His grace being shared. (Remind them not to use names)

Grace  
IN THE WORD



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## How many F's

Prepare cards with the statement below and the following instructions. As you read through the two sentences, count how many times the letter 'F' appears. Read through only once. When done, write the number on the paper and turn it face down.

**'The fan of the politician paid for half of the festivities. The unpaid balance of the bill he left for his newly elected senator as an unpaid campaign gift'.**

There are ten 'F's'. Discuss how our perspective narrows in difficult or stressful times and the 'F exercise' shows how we may need others to help us see the full picture. How does this relate to helping those facing difficult situations to see God's grace in their lives?



## He Gives More Grace

Have you ever been in the midst of a very difficult situation and knew you needed more of God's grace to enable you to survive? The story of Mary and Elizabeth is a perfect example of God's grace being sufficient for them in their time of need.

For years Elizabeth and Zachariah had prayed for a child but to no avail. Over the years Elizabeth had learned to handle the whispers about her barrenness. When finally she became pregnant in her old age, she was unable to discuss with her husband all of her thoughts and emotions as Zachariah had been struck mute because he didn't believe an angel's message that Elizabeth would bear a child.

But God's grace was sufficient as he sent her cousin Mary. Both women experienced God's grace as they enjoyed each other's company. Elizabeth shared with Mary what she was going through and Mary received Elizabeth's love and wisdom to help her face what lay ahead.

We too are called to share with others how God's grace helped us get through difficult situations. Others need to hear about what God has done for us and what he can do for them. Remember how many 'F's' we found in our exercise? Once someone points them out, it was easier to see them. In the midst of challenging times, our perspective begins to narrow and it is harder to see God at work in our situation. In times like these we need women who have experienced God's grace to encourage us and help us see Him at work in our lives.

I challenge you to find opportunities to share with others how God's grace has been sufficient for you in times of trouble. He has blessed you so that you may be a blessing to others.

## Sharing the Grace

Visit women who are ill or shut in and leave a blessing at each home.

This could be in the form of a small gift, words of encouragement, appropriate scripture verses or baked goods with a cup of tea.



# Gracious hospitality – a place with God

Colonel Janet Munn

At the 24-7 Prayer Conference held in Southampton, United Kingdom (UK) in September 2008, Pete Greig, one of the pioneers of 24-7 prayer, said that the strangest thing about the Bible is God's desire to be with humans.

Consider Isaiah 56:7: *'...My house will be called a house of prayer for all peoples'* (Amplified Bible).

As we consider the Bible's overarching story, we see that it is a story of God's longing to make himself at home with humanity, from the creation account in Genesis to John's declaration in Revelation 21:3, *'...God's dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them.'*

## Gracious Preparation – Eden

Even as God prepared the earth as a perfect dwelling place for humanity, he also anticipated enjoying communion with Adam and Eve on the earth. Genesis tells of the Lord 'walking in the garden in the cool of the day', implying that he was looking for Adam and Eve, hoping to fellowship with them. There was no need for a tabernacle or temple, a particular location for God, because the whole earth was his dwelling place, along with humankind.

1. **At creation, in the beginning, what is God's relationship to the earth?**
2. **Why didn't God build a Temple or Tabernacle in the first place? Give references.**

God created a home for humans on the earth and invited them to make themselves at home there, where he, too, would be at home with them.

In Eden, God made his dwelling with Adam and Eve. Later, God made his dwelling with the Patriarchs, with the Hebrew people (in the Tabernacle, in the wilderness and in the Temple in Jerusalem), in Jesus Christ and, from the day of Pentecost, in the people of God, the Church – the temple of the living God.

## The Ministry of Hospitality

3. **When have you experienced the ministry of hospitality from someone?**
4. **How did it affect you and why?**
5. **When people visit your home, what preparations do you make?**

When people visit your home, what preparations do you make? You probably clean the house and prepare a special meal. Especially dedicated hosts will even cater to their guests' unique tastes. Either way, preparing for guests takes work.

If we look through the opening chapters of Genesis, we find God in a stir of activity. Throughout chapter one, we see that God 'created', 'said', 'saw', 'separated' and

'made'. In fact, action language is used in 26 of its 31 verses.

These verbs are all indicators of God acting as host, busily making arrangements for the arrival of humans, his special guests, his companions, the objects of his unique, devoted love. God was getting ready because company was coming!

6. **Why did God create humans?**
7. **What hopes are expressed, implicitly and explicitly, for humanity on the earth?**

In Revelation 4:11 we read: *'Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created'* (our italics, KJV). Other translations render *'for thy pleasure'* as *'by your will'* or *'because you wanted it'*. In other words, God created us not out of obligation, but out of joy.

Similarly, Isaiah 43:7 has God addressing *'everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made'* (our italics). The word for 'glory' used here is translated elsewhere as 'weight, honour, esteem, majesty, abundance, wealth'. Jesus says in Matthew 6:21, *'Where your treasure is there will your heart be also'* (KJV). So if we are God's treasure, then his heart is with us. Imagine that! He treasures you! He created you; he planned for you; he thinks and thinks and thinks about you (Psalm 139); he went to ultimate ends to reconcile you to himself; he gives you every good and perfect gift.

In summary, we were created from and for God's pleasure and glory and are of great worth to him. God's heart is in the same place as his treasure – with us. We were made a little lower than God himself, in his image and likeness, and are intended to commune with him.

We're programmed to:

- Have an open line of communication with him
- Hear the whisper of his voice
- Sense the prompting of his Spirit
- Enjoy the expressions of his love
- Bask in the warmth and security of his shadow
- Thrive in his blessing
- Hide in his shelter and refuge
- Embrace his ways
- Imitate his works
- Live his life
- Have his mind
- See what he's doing and do what we're seeing.

## 8. What happened after the fall – to Adam and Eve, and to God?

However, despite the intimate relationship between God and humans, Adam and Eve disobeyed and were banished from the garden (Genesis 3:23-24).

God drove Adam and Eve out of the Garden of Eden. Not only were Adam and Eve expelled from the home God had carefully prepared for them – God himself lost the 'home' he had shared with them. Through their rebellion, Adam and Eve had rejected God's hospitality, his offer to share a home with them on planet earth. Both God and humans lost a home on that day.

Consider the contrast in the conditions in which Adam and Eve 'walked with God' with those of Noah (Genesis 6:1-9). In Eden we find God walking with humans in ideal conditions – paradise, literally. Yet Adam and Eve end up hiding from God, not walking with him: 'Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden' (Genesis 3:8).

From heaven on earth to hell on earth – wickedness and perversion everywhere, with Noah the sole exception. Yet even in those circumstances Noah walked with God and led a blameless life.



During a trip to Greece I visited the island of Patmos – the place where, it is traditionally held, the exiled Apostle John wrote the book of Revelation. Pagan temples were plainly visible from the cave described in Revelation chapter one. On the hilltops various sacrifices and other rituals would have been taking place in view of the place where John received his vision. I had previously imagined John on an isolated desert island, making it easier for him to receive a vision from God than for me or anyone else subject to the distractions of contemporary Western culture. My visit to Patmos ruined that excuse.

9. How much do our circumstances affect our ability to walk with God?  
Read Genesis 12:1-4.
10. In Genesis 12, what is the two-way offer God makes to Abram?
11. What do you think God is after?

God's dwelling on the earth has moved from the whole earth (Psalm 24:1) to Abraham and his family, which would become a nation.

In Genesis 12, God calls Abram to leave his home and family and country but promises to bless every home and family and country through his obedience. What is God after? Our relentless God, our jealous God, unwilling to be deterred from being in relationship with humankind, despite having been rejected by Adam and Eve, chose a people, a family, who became a nation, and the first family contact was Abram. God was again looking to establish a dwelling with humans.

The Lord asks Abram to leave his home in order to start a special family with whom God would dwell. Eventually, God would reaffirm his desire to dwell not only with Abram's family, but also with all families and all nations. Now that's gracious hospitality!

12. What are the ways you recognize his loving pursuit of and preparation for you?
13. What do you think about the idea that the uncreated God of the universe wants to make himself at home with you?
14. What are you going to do about this reality?
15. How can you participate in the Lord's 'welcome home' to others?
16. How can you be a dwelling place for God?



# Holiness and Grace

## BIBLE STUDY

Commissioner Lyn Pearce

### Introduction

How do you like to be greeted? Do you like a hug, a kiss, a handshake or just a 'hello'?

When in France at a seminar some years ago, everyone greeted each other every morning with a handshake.

The way we are greeted and the words said to us do tell us something about what the other person thinks of us.

Consider how Paul greeted the Christians at Colossae even though he had not met them – he had only heard about them.

Read: Colossians 1:1-2 NLT

*'This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus, and from our brother Timothy. We are writing to God's holy people in the city of Colossae, who are faithful brothers and sisters in Christ. May God our Father give you grace and peace.'*

Paul refers to the Christians at Colossae as:

#### I) Holy people

1. What picture or words come into your mind when you hear the word 'holy'?
2. Some translations refer to 'saints' rather than 'holy' people. Who do you think of when you hear the word 'saint'?
3. Would Paul refer to us as holy and faithful if writing to our Corps/Church today?
4. How would it make you feel to be referred to in this way?

**Notes:** Often the word 'saints' is used instead of 'holy' (they come from the same Greek root). 'Saints' is often misunderstood as modern usage and usually refers to 'super-Christians'.

Paul used 'saints' because the word referred to their status rather than their condition. God saw them as holy because of what Christ has done.

As saved people, they were set apart for God. So regardless of how good or bad a Christian is, the status is 'saint'.

Christians in the first century were told they were saints in order that they might live like saints.

**Discuss:** How can we best fulfil the challenge of living like saints? Or living as holy people?

#### II) Faithful brothers and sisters in Christ

In other words their position as Christians needs to be understood in terms of their relationship with God and their relationship with their brothers and sisters.

5. In what ways can we affirm each other in the family of God?
6. Can you share an affirmation that you have had personally? What affect did it have on you?

#### III) 'May God our Father give you grace and peace'.

This was a common greeting but it reminds us that God is the great giver to us always – of grace and peace (and in Timothy, Paul adds 'mercy' as well).

Grace speaks of love (undeserved) and favour.

Even in the book of Jonah it says of God, 'I knew that you are a gracious and compassionate God, slow to anger and abounding in love...' Jonah 4:2b NIV.

7. As we receive grace, peace and mercy from God, in what ways can we show these same qualities to others?
8. How do we do this when someone lets us down?
9. What is our response when someone hurts us?
10. What do we do when someone in the Corps/Church commits a sin?

Read Colossians 1:3-8

- What were the qualities that Paul had heard about the Colossian Christians?
- What qualities have people heard about us and about our Corps/Church?

**For personal reflection:** If we are going to live out the life of holiness and show grace, mercy and peace, what would we hope people would see?

**Note:** Before reading the next passage from Colossians, pause to think about ourselves as holy people, full of grace, mercy and peace.

We never stop growing as Christians and as we grow more and more in holiness and grace, our aim is to grow more like Christ.

Read Colossians 1:9-14

**For personal reflection:**

- Pray this prayer for yourself each day for the next week
- Pray it for your brothers and sisters in your Corps/Church



# Shaped by the Gift of Grace

## BIBLE STUDY

Captain Jenni Sutton

Titus 2:1-15

### Introduction

Several years ago on the news there was story about the heavy rains that deluged the Philippines, creating a nightmare for one family. While they slept, a mudslide slammed into their home, ripped away part of the house, and flung their sleeping baby into the darkness. I think we can all imagine the frantic search that ensued. All night, they dug through the mud, crying out desperately for their child. Without results.

But morning brought a rescuer carrying a mud-caked bundle in his arms – their baby, filthy, but alive! Of course the parents did not care that their child was covered with sludge; from near certain death their baby lives! You can be sure they squeezed him close, with no concern for how muddy he was. But later, they bathed him, and determined to keep out of future mudslides. Why wash the child? Is it not enough that he was saved, so that their joy was complete, without needing cleaning?

After the rescue they were content to embrace a filthy child; why insist on cleaning him? Of course the answer is that their delight in having him back continued to overflow in care for his well-being. Covered with mud is neither natural nor the best for their son.

Now any story which parallels and illustrates the work of Jesus will, of course, miss in some details. But the true account of that child and family does well – picture Titus 2: how the gift of God in bringing salvation continues to work out in the cleansing of salvation – which the Bible calls, sanctification. That is God's message to the Cretans (and to us) in Titus 2.

The island of Crete was well known for its immoral culture. But that did not cool the evangelistic zeal of Paul and Titus, who proclaimed God's gospel of grace. And people put their faith in Jesus and his work! Soon churches appeared in every town, gatherings of brand-new Christians who needed discipline in the faith. Their lives were a mess, but Paul tells Titus: *'This is why I left you in Crete, so that you might put what remained into order'* (Titus 1:5).

To do that, Titus first ordains elders, godly men to share in the work. They help first, by disciplining others: modelling the faith and sharing their lives. In addition to discipline, these elders also must hold to biblical convictions, practice biblical counselling, and engage in biblical confrontation.

Grace Provides the Foundation for Transformation (Titus 2:11)

### Exercise

In Titus 2:2-10

Grace frees us from both the punishment of sin (salvation) and the power of sin (sanctification). Grace rescued the baby from the death grip of the mudslide, and grace cleansed the mud from his body and clothes.

With those principles guiding us, let's look at the teaching of Titus 2:2-5.

#### 1. Older men must be shaped by Grace (Titus 2:2)

Many a man works hard all his life to provide for his family, and when older age comes, he wants to live for himself.

But godly and mature men have much to give the church. If they remain clear-headed, honourable, and self-controlled (rather than self-serving), they will disciple and bless others. They should lead and model ministry, not retire from it.

*What are the characteristics that Titus lists for Older men, discuss in your group are these still relevant?*

#### 2. Older women must be shaped by Grace (Titus 2:3)

Like the older men, mature ladies must see their lives as models of faith, hope, and love. Old-age is not the time for selfishness; it is when we demonstrate the power of God's grace in our lives. The younger women are watching: they want to know if the love of Christ controls you after your children leave home. Did the years of serving husband and child make you bitter and ready to live for yourself, or does the humility of Christ still motivate you now that you are older?

Especially beware of gossip. Many older women speak much about others and little about faith and doctrine. Such behaviour is especially unbecoming because it teaches the lie that slander is more interesting than Scripture.

*What are the characteristics that Titus lists for Older Women, discuss in your group are these still relevant for your life?*

#### 3. Younger Women must be shaped by Grace (Titus 2:4-5)

Older women must train the younger women how to labour with joy, grace, delight and faith. Discipleship flows from the older women to the younger.

*What are the characteristics that Titus lists for younger women?*

*What are some practical ways that you help shape and influence Grace into the lives of younger women?*

**Finish with listening to the song Amazing Grace (my chains are gone).**

# Pearls from heaven

## BIBLE STUDY

Commissioner Jan Condon

Let us consider six pearls from Heaven found in names given to Jesus:

- Peace
- Presence
- Power
- Pardon
- Provision
- Protection

### Prince of Peace – Peace

Jesus is the one who makes peace between God and man

Isaiah 53:4-6

Romans 5:1

Ephesians 2:13

- *Read each of the above verses and share your thoughts about reconciliation*
- *Share about a time when you experienced God's peace in your life*

### Emmanuel – Presence

Emmanuel means God with us.

John 1:14 *'The Word became a human being and lived here with us. We saw his true glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father. From him all the kindness and all the truth of God have come down to us.'* (CEV)

*'The Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son.'* (NIV)

*'How amazing! He became a human being, and made His home with us – What a gift!'* (NLT)

He laid aside the glory he had with the Father to come and dwell among us

The reason he was God with us - was to identify with us, and live a sinless life so that he could die for us and become God with us – Our redeemer.

- How do you experience God's presence in your life?
- Share about a time when God seemed distant.

### Adonai – Master – Power

Adonai is used over 300 times in the Old Testament and approximately 747 times in the New Testament.

Adonai means – God is the Lord of all. He is the master, ruler and owner of everything. He knows all, sees all, and controls all.

Lordship is about submitting to God's authority.

Grace  
IN THE WORD

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As Lord and Master – Adonai promises never to leave or forsake you. He promises to be a friend who sticks closer than a brother. Adonai longs to care for each of us in an intimate relationship. He longs to support our pursuit of him.

It's amazing what Adonai can and will do when we are totally surrendered to his Lordship

- What does it mean for you to allow Jesus to be Lord and Master of your life?
- What difference does it make when you live in God's power and not your own?

## Redeemer – Pardon

A redeemer is someone who buys back something that was once theirs. A redeemer is someone who comes to save, rescue or deliver someone out of trouble by paying a great price for their freedom.

Jesus Christ is our living redeemer because he came to save and deliver us out of sin by paying a great price for it. The price that Jesus Christ paid was his life. He died upon the cross for our sins so that he may redeem us, deliver us, and save us from our sins.

Mark 10:45, *'For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life as a ransom for many.'* (KJV)

Chorus

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow,  
Because He lives, all fear is gone;  
Because I know who holds the future,  
And life is worth the living,  
Just because He lives.*

- How can we know we are forgiven?
- Do you find it difficult to forgive others? and yourself?



## Living water – Provision

Water is essential for life. A human being can survive almost two months without food, but he cannot survive a week without water. Plants, fish and all living things need water to survive. Water is essential for life.

The spiritual body needs spiritual food and living water, a personal communion with the Lord. Failing to spend time with the Lord and doing things in our own strength will not only weaken us but eventually also result in our death.

Without the Living Water, without personal fellowship with the Lord, our soul can get no nourishment. It is only as we fellowship with him that we can be changed into his likeness by the Holy Spirit. Jesus Christ offers us what we need – we need the Living Water.

John 4:14

- How can you improve your personal devotions / time with the Lord to fully enjoy His provision for your needs?
- How can you improve your thirst for God?

## Shield – Protection

*'The Lord is my strength and my shield; My heart trusts in Him, and I am helped...'* (Psalm 28:7 NIV)

No matter what we face in this life the Lord tells us he is our comforting shield. When the slings and arrows of Satan come at us, we raise up that shield of the Lord our God to protect us and encourage us and comfort us.

Jeremiah 29:11 *'For I know the plans I have for you,' declares the LORD, 'plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future'*

- What makes it difficult for you to raise your shield and trust God in difficult times?
- Share briefly how God has shielded you or helped you overcome temptation

A pearl is the response of an oyster to something which causes it injury.

A pearl grows out of hurt. A small particle of sand or some other irritating substance gets inside the shell of the oyster and constantly irritates it. The oyster has no hands with which it can brush the irritant out, no means of defence except to transform that thing that is injuring it.

Healing human hurt is God's business. He is our Pearl from Heaven who wants to transform our lives into something very beautiful

A Pearl is the only gem that can't be improved by man. You can cut and polish a diamond, ruby and other stones. BUT ... if you begin to mess with a pearl, you ruin it. It's perfect when it's formed. May Christ be perfectly formed in us.





# Speak, precious stones!

Gwen King

The men of olden times who wrote under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit would never have given the precious stones, or jewels, the prominence they have in both the Old Testament and the New Testament had it not been that those stones did speak of Jesus.

*'Some may be sceptical about stones speaking. The root trouble with such is not that the stones do not speak, but that the sceptics do not hear.'* Robert Barr

## Scripture

Let everything praise the Lord – Psalm 148

## In creation

The first precious stone mentioned in the Bible is onyx in a land near Eden. '

*The gold of that land is exceptionally pure; aromatic resin and onyx stone are also found there.'* (Genesis 2:12)

## In Eden - The Anointed Cherub of Eden

Ezekiel 28:12-14

*'You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty. You were in Eden, the garden of God; every precious stone adorned you: carnelian, chrysolite and emerald, topaz, onyx and jasper, lapis lazuli, turquoise and beryl. Your settings and mountings were made of gold; on the day you were created they were prepared. You were anointed as a guardian cherub, for so I ordained you. You were on the holy mount of God; you walked among the fiery stones.'*

After his fall, we know this anointed cherub as 'Satan'. Before his fall he displayed many of the varied glories of God. It is to be noted that he did not have the full complement of '12' stones – *'But in JESUS is ALL the fullness of the Godhead bodily!'* (Colossians 2:9)

**Hymn** – *Lord, you are more precious than silver*

## In God's chosen people – Israel

The Lord directed Moses to use precious stones to represent the tribes of Israel. These were to be worn by the high priest.

*'And you shall make the breastplate of judgment, the work of an artist; after the manner of the ephod shall you make it: of gold, sky-blue, dark-red, and crimson dyed wool, and of twisted linen shall you make it.'* (Exodus 28:6, 15)

According to the Biblical instructions the breastplate is a patterned brocade like the ephod. The threads of its fabric are gold, sky-blue, dark red and crimson wool, and twisted white linen.

Grace  
IN THE WORD



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We see GOD:

- Gold – Royalty and perfection;
- Blue – Holiness of the Father;
- Red – Blood of the Son;
- White – Purity of the Holy Spirit.

The garment itself is set with four rows of small square stones, in settings of knitted or braided gold. Each row contained three precious stones, totalling twelve stones. One stone representing each of the twelve tribes of Israel. The name of the corresponding tribe was engraved on each stone. This is a beautiful picture of how the Lord Jesus carries each of us continually on his heart!

### The two sardonyx stones

Two sardonyx stones were fixed in settings of gold on the high priest's shoulders; one on the right, and one on the left.

*'The names of the tribes of Israel were engraved also upon these two stones in the order of their birth.'* (Exodus 28:9-10)



### The stones on the breastplate of the high priest

#### Ruby

*'...the first row: a ruby, an emerald, and a topaz'* (Exodus 28:17)

Ruby – with Reuben's name on it. The Hebrew word for ruby is Odem, meaning red. It reminds us of the blood of Jesus. Reuben's name invites us to see the son – Jesus! A ruby can be highly polished and it retains its polish longer than other gems. God gave Jesus brilliancy above all other and he can make his born-again children to *'shine as stars'*. (Daniel 12:3)

The Ruby has a wonderful transparency, reminding us of the character of Jesus in which nothing was 'shady'. He can make us clean also: *'If we confess our sin he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness'*. (1 John 1:9)

**Song** – *It's your blood that cleanses me*

#### Emerald

*'...the first row: a ruby, an emerald, and a topaz'* (Exodus 28:17)

This stone was likely what we call Jade. It was the stone for the Tribe of Simeon. Tell anyone who has not heard

(Simeon) the Good News of Jesus! The beautiful green of the Emerald is the colour of life. It is said that in the earlier Church this stone spoke of the resurrection of Jesus and of our new life when we are born again.

*'Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold, all things become new.'* (2 Corinthians 5:17)

**Song** – *Blessing, honour, glory to the Lamb*

#### Topaz

*'...the first row: a ruby, an emerald, and a topaz'* (Exodus 28:17)

Topaz, being the third stone, had the name Levi inscribed on it. This topaz was white with perhaps black and/or red in it. When a Topaz is rubbed, it exhibits electrical powers, attracting little scraps of paper etc. to it. Usually, we become unattractive if we are 'rubbed' or irritated, but the presence of Christ in our lives can allow us to attract people to Jesus even when conditions are hard. Paul said *'Love is never irritated'* (1 Corinthians 13:5) and Jesus said, *'And if I be lifted up from the earth I will draw all men unto me'*. (John 12:32)

Make sure you are attached (Levi) to Jesus!

**Song** – *I am thine, O Lord* – SASB 585 (chorus)

#### Carbuncle

*'...The second row: a carbuncle, a sapphire, and a quartz crystal.'* (Exodus 28:18)

Carbuncle means 'a small coal' and so is generally red, but here was bluish-green in colour – which can also be seen in flames! It was for the tribe of Judah. Jesus was of the tribe of Judah. The Bible says our God is a consuming fire so we clearly see Jesus represented here and his Holy Spirit can burn brightly in us if we allow him to fill us and refill us. An old Jewish legend says that a carbuncle stone was hung in the ark and gave light to all on board. Christ is our light.

We praise (Judah) Jesus that he is Light! Jesus said, *'I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'* (John 8:12)

**Song** – *Burning, burning, brightly burning* – SASB 206 (chorus)

#### Sapphire

*'...The second row: a carbuncle, a sapphire, and a quartz crystal.'* (Exodus 28:18)

Dan was inscribed on the blue sapphire stone. Dan means judge and the JUDGE (Judah) of the world is Jesus. Blue is the colour we use for the Holiness of God. Jesus is the Holy Son of God. The inner form of many sapphires

causes them to display a six-rayed star. Jesus is called the Morning Star and all of his beauty has its secret within – in his divine nature! May he give us an inner beauty which will glorify him.

Through the ages, sapphires have been used for engraving things on as the stone is strong. Speaking of his Holy City and her people, God said, *'I have engraved you on the palm of my hand.'* (Isaiah 49: 16). Jesus has grafted us to Israel spiritually, so his born-again children have their names always before him also!

**Chorus** – To be like Jesus, this hope possesses me – SASB Chorus 107

#### Quartz

*'...The second row: a carbuncle, a sapphire, and a quartz crystal.'* (Exodus 28:18)

Quartz crystal or diamond is clear and beautiful, precious and enduring. Naphtali's was pale pink. A diamond is immensely valuable. And so is Jesus! In him is all the fullness of the Godhead (Colossians 2:9). He is transparently sinless; beautiful beyond description. To we *'who believe he is precious'* (1 Peter 2:7) and he is from everlasting to everlasting, the eternal, the *'Great I am'*. 1 John 3:2 says *'...now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.'* Till then, we are being refined to his beauty and are called to endure as he endured: *'You therefore must endure hardship as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.'* (2 Timothy 2:3). We wrestle (Naphtali) daily with our fleshly natures and the evil which opposes us.

**Song** – *I stand in awe*

#### Jacinth and opal

*'...The third row: a jacinth, an opal, an agate, and an amethyst.'* (Exodus 28:19)

Gad was inscribed on the jacinth or maybe what we call an opal. The Jacinth is a brilliant stone with excellent optical qualities second only to the diamond. It spreads light into its various primary colours.

Jesus spreads his light to all of creation; to all parts of the earth and to people of all nations. Numbers of silica gel spheres in the opal cause its unique colour changes. The spheres create refracted light that appears on the stones as rainbows – God's sign of hope. The body of Christ is made up of millions of Christians, like many grains of sand (silica) and we need to refract the wonderful light of Jesus and the hope of his salvation. We are his troop (Gad) to show his love to the world. Many opals give forth more beauty when held in the warmth of the hand for a little time. We think how hurting people need the warmth of Jesus' touch – and of ours as his people. *'...when he saw the multitudes, he was moved with compassion.'* (Matthew 9:36)

**Song** – *The saviour of men came to seek and to save* – SASB 527 (chorus)

#### Agate

*'...The third row: a jacinth, an opal, an agate, and an amethyst.'* (Exodus 28:19)

Asher was engraved on to agate of a flaming, olive oil colour. The earthen colour and commonness of the stone speak to us of the incarnation of Jesus. Jesus humbled himself to take the form of man.

He took common humanity and became one of those whom he had originally fashioned from the dust of the earth. Paul described our bodies as *'jars of clay'*. (2 Corinthians 4:7) He calls us to humble ourselves and be about his work on earth in our everyday, common lives.

God has blessed (Asher) us with *'every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ'*. (Ephesians 1:3)

**Song** – *Emptied of His glory, God became a man*

#### Amethyst

*'...The third row: a jacinth, an opal, an agate, and an amethyst.'* (Exodus 28:19)

Issachar was inscribed on this stone. Genesis 49:15 says that Issachar *'would become a servant unto tribute.'* Jesus came as the suffering servant, humbly submitting himself so he could pay our *'tribute'* due to God. For the wages (Issachar) of sin is death.

*'Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.'* (Matthew 11:29). We too, are called to be holy servants of the Lord and to serve each other gladly.

*'Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.'* (Ephesians 4:2)

**Song** – *Brother let me be your servant*

#### Beryl

*'The fourth row, a beryl, an onyx and a jasper.'* (Exodus 28:20)



Zebulon was inscribed on this stone. The stone was white which speaks to us of the purity of the Lord Jesus. *'We have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are – yet He did not sin.'* (Hebrews 4:15).

We too, should live pure lives.

*'And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.'* (Philippians 1:9-11)

*'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.'*  
(Matthew 5:8)

And may we all say, Lord, you have been our dwelling  
(Zebulon) place throughout all generations.

**Song** – *Search me, O God, and know my heart today*

### Onyx

*'The fourth row, a beryl, an onyx and a jasper.'*  
(Exodus 28:20)

The black onyx had the name of Joseph inscribed in it. The Hebrew word for Onyx is 'Shoham'. Its meaning is obscure, but some scholars believe it means 'striped' referring to the strata of colour in the stone. As this was Joseph's stone, that fits nicely with his coat of many colours! But it can speak to us not only of Joseph, who was used to save both his kinsmen and the Egyptians, but supremely of Jesus, whose salvation was first to his kinsmen, the Jews and then to the Gentiles. We have been added (Joseph) to God's People!

The black of the onyx reminds us of the dark world into which Jesus came, and of our hearts, black with sin, and of our minds, darkened by our rebellion. But 'God is light and in Him is no darkness at all.' (1 John 1:5)

*'You are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.'* (1 Peter 2:9)

**Song** – *Long in darkness and doubt did I wander from God*

### Jasper

*'The fourth row, a beryl, an onyx and a jasper.'*  
(Exodus 28:20)

Benjamin's tribe was inscribed on multicoloured jasper. All of the colours of the other tribes came together here. In Jesus Christ, our glorious Lord, all the beauties of Heaven and earth come together. He is 'all in all' he is the Alpha and Omega – the beginning and the end! It is all about him!

Benjamin means 'Son of the right hand'. Surely this speaks of Jesus, the risen Son of God, who is now at the right hand of the Father, seated in the glory and splendour of all of his wonderful attributes. Perfect, eternal God, perfect sinless man! He will return to judge the earth and to reign from the right hand of the Father for evermore. We bow down and worship him who is ever worthy to be praised, for the very stones cry out and are telling forth the glories of God which shine in our Lord Jesus Christ!

**Chorus** – Come beautiful Christ – SASB Chorus 61

## In prophetic visions

Prophets saw visions of God's throne adorned with precious stones and the appearance of the Lord as jewels.

- Ezekiel 1:22, 26-28
- Revelation 4:2-3, 6
- Revelation 21:10-14; 18-21
- Proverbs 3:13-26
- Job 28

## Living stones

*'As you come to him, the living stone – rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him – you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.'* (1 Peter 2:4, 5)

Our Lord uses this amazing analogy for us – his Church. Together we make a building of 'living stones' – in unity!

There is better ahead...

*'And the LORD their God shall save them in that day as the flock of His people: for they shall be as the jewels of a crown, lifted up as a banner over His land.'* (Zechariah 9:16)

Isn't it wonderful that his people can become as jewels in his crown?

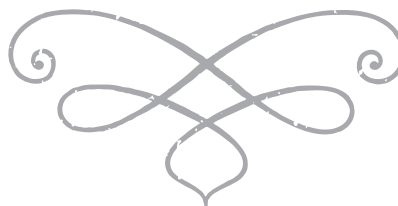
## Song

SASB Chorus 77	Let the beauty of Jesus be seen in me
SASB 852	When he cometh, when he cometh to make up his jewels

*'I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.'* (Matthew 18:3)

Luke records that as Jesus entered Jerusalem, crowds shouted 'Hosanna' (save).

*'When Pharisees objected Jesus replied, 'I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out.'*  
(Luke 19:39-40).



# Surprised by grace – Woman Caught in Adultery

Cadet Nicola Poore

## Scripture

John 8: 1-11

## Understanding the text

The scenario recorded in John 8:1-11 essentially involves three parties; Jesus, a woman caught in adultery and a group of Pharisees and teachers of the law.

The social and historical context of this scriptural account is of great significance in understanding these interactions and the true weight of Jesus' response and expression of grace.

At this time it was commonplace to objectify women as they were not only considered to be 'possessions' but were actually owned as property. The Law of Moses forbade adultery and demanded the stoning of the guilty parties. The Pharisees were considered to be the religious elite in their capacity as the keepers and transmitters of the Mosaic Law.

Having established some of the cultural benchmarks of Jesus' time, let's begin the study.

## Getting inside the text

1) Read John 8:1-11 in silence and without comment. Place yourself in the story as the unnamed woman who was caught in adultery.

- Pay attention to the emotions that are raised within you as you read. Use single words or short sentences to describe what you are feeling or how this woman may have felt. Record your thoughts.

2) Have someone read the passage aloud and shift your focus to the Pharisees as you listen.

- What motivated the actions of the Pharisees? What was their agenda? Was this woman the real focus of their attention?
- Discuss your responses to these questions.

## Personal reflection

In what ways can you relate to the Pharisees in terms of how they responded to the shortcomings or perceived moral failings of others?

Alternatively, in what ways have you been on the receiving end of this form of judgment or public humiliation?

Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any experiences that require his attention. Repent of any impurity and seek God's divine restoration personally, as well as in the circumstances and relationships that have been brought to your attention.

3) Read the passage a third time in silence. In this instance, focus on Jesus' interactions with the two different parties.

- Discuss any points of interest that you observe.
- How did Jesus show grace in his dealings with both the woman and the group of Pharisees and teachers of the Law?



## Applying the text

4) The woman who is the central figure of this account was guilty. Yet where was the man? According to Mosaic Law, they both deserved to die (see Leviticus 20:10). We could describe this woman as being 'surprised by grace' because the grace extended to her by Jesus was both unexpected and unprecedented.

- How has grace been extended to you (either by God or others) when you were expecting condemnation?

5) 2 Corinthians 5:21 declares that, *'God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.'* Jesus is clearly distinguished here as one who never sinned and yet, he asks the question of the crowd, 'If any one of you is without sin, let him be the first to throw a stone at her.' Jesus, as a sinless man, would have been the only one gathered there to rightfully condemn this woman and yet he chose to show grace and mercy.

- How does Jesus' response inform your view of the grace of God? How will you live differently because of this example shown by Jesus?

6) The underlying premise of Jesus' disarming response (v.7) is that all sin is equal (Romans 3:23). Jesus does not subscribe to any hierarchy of sin.

- How accurately is Jesus' view of sin represented in your life?

7) There are two instances in this passage in which Jesus is said to have written on the ground. It is not known what He wrote or to whom He was writing.

- What do you imagine Jesus wrote? Reflect on this question and then share your thoughts with the group.



# Grace IN THE WORD

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8) Jesus explicitly conveys that He does not condemn this woman, *'then neither do I condemn you''* (v.11).

- Without showing condemnation, how does Jesus qualify this statement to show that He is not condoning her behaviour?
- Why do you think Jesus waited until they were alone to speak directly to her and to share these words of affirmation?

9) The conclusion of this passage records that everyone left the scene, *'until only Jesus was left, with the woman still standing there'* (v. 9).

- Despite everyone leaving and choosing not to condemn this woman to death, do you imagine that this was the end of her criticism within this community?

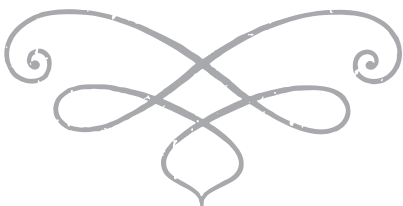
10) Paul writes of himself in Galatians, *'If I were still trying to please people, I would not be a servant of Christ'* (Galatians 1:10b). If Jesus does not condemn us – and he is the only rightful judge – then neither should we live with self-condemnation.

- In what ways do you need to show yourself grace irrespective of what others may think?

11) There are times when we pay more attention to the voices of the crowd than the words penned by the finger of Jesus. Consider the following and reflect on the enormity of God's grace at work in your life.

*'Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.'* Romans 8:1-2

'And can it be' – Verse 4, SASB 283  
*No condemnation now I dread;  
Jesus, and all in Him, is mine.  
Alive in Him, my living head,  
And clothed in righteousness divine,  
Bold I approach the eternal throne  
And claim the crown through Christ, my own.*



# Walk Worthy

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This series of twelve Bible studies has been prepared by International Headquarters and circulated around the world in 2013.

Leviticus 26:12 says, *'I will walk among you and be your God, and you will be my people'*. God created us so that he could walk with us, walk among us. This is a promise that we can know for sure, that God walks our path with us.

During 2013, the shared theme of Women's Ministries throughout the world is Walk Worthy.

This series of 12 Bible studies helps us to explore our walk with God through titles such as 'The walk of faith', 'Get up and walk', 'A pilgrim's walk', and others which enable us to explore God's Word.

The studies follow a simple pattern that you can use in any setting. They are designed to be flexible, so that you can add material that is relevant to where you are.

Each study includes four sections which can be explored with your group, as follows:

**What the Bible says** – where you explore 'What does the text actually say?'

It is important that you read the Bible carefully and allow it to speak to you and guide the content of your study.

**Our lives today** – considers such questions as:  
What does the Bible reading tell you about your lives?  
Does it highlight any problems in society?  
What challenges are there for the way you live your life?

**Discussion questions** – depending upon where you are using the studies, you may choose to select one or two that seem most suitable for you, or ask different groups to discuss other aspects and possibly, if you have time, share what they have been speaking about.

**A step further** – this is designed to give you something to take away and do before you next meet. If appropriate, you could share how members of the group worked through their 'step further' the next time you meet.

As you 'walk worthy', we pray that God will be very evident as you study his Word and share together.



*Place these words on  
your hearts. Get them  
deep inside you.*

(Deuteronomy 11:18 TM)

# *Grace* IN ACTION



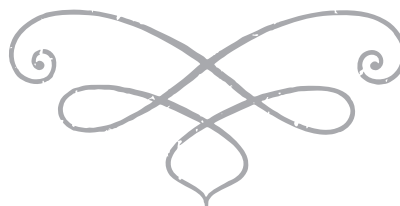
# Amazing grace

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The 2012 / 2013 resource manual of The Salvation Army United State of America has been included on the CD as extra resource ideas for you to use. The titles are:

- Fall festival
- Thanksgiving for you and me
- Amazing free gift party
- Graceful snow
- Graceful colours
- God's amazing provision
- All 4 me?
- The fragrance of grace
- Amazing waves of grace
- I stand amazed
- Receive your gift
- New every morning
- Grace builders
- Amazing inventions
- Gifts of grace
- Grace of time
- Grace notes
- Amazing creations – knit one, pearl two
- Amazing space
- You are not under law, but under grace
- Friendship – it amazes me
- Amazing flavours
- An amazing journey
- Pictures of grace
- Celebrate life!
- For grace to conquer in the fight
- Grace cards
- Amazing super bowl
- God's amazing love
- An amazing taste of home
- Gracious goodness
- Fiesta ole
- Camp kits for kids
- Saluting freedom
- Teachers need more than apples
- They are amazing
- Grace-full living
- Grace living
- Grace is spelled J-E-S-U-S
- Songs of grace
- Grace – once and for all
- His grace fashions me
- Grace experienced, received and shared
- Embracing grace
- Growing in grace
- Celebrate his grace
- Grace in four colours
- God's amazing gift!
- Amazing grace
- Amazing leaders
- Ten-month character trait development plan
- Healthy eating
- How to plan and organise a bible study
- Grace books

Please note that there are a couple of the outlines included in our manual.





# Empowering Women

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## Welcome to the Empowering Women to Change the World resource.

This year the Territorial Women's Ministries Team set a goal to raise awareness of current international issues affecting women and collate reference material for use in the Divisions. Three areas to be highlighted in 2012 are:

- Domestic Violence
- Human Trafficking
- The plight of missing girls

The following pages are a sample of the plight of women around the world. Some are stories, others are thoughts, some are data, while others are information about websites that will provide more information.

Recently a group of women gathered together at THQ for a breakfast bible study. In one of the early lessons we were challenged and encouraged by the words of Matthew Arnold, an eighteenth century poet and cultural critic, who worked as an inspector in the British school system.

*"If ever there comes a time when the women of the world come together purely and simply for the benefit of mankind, it will be a force such as the world has never known."*

We believe we are in those days, oppression of women is real and the consequences are profound. Where women are rising up, communities and economies are growing.

In a recent interview with Lyn Goldsmith, Editor in Chief at Christian Women Australia, Amanda Well, Principal of Coaching Business at Passion 2 Product, was asked the following question, *"How do you see the importance of women in business and ministry?"*

"I think they are imperative. If you look at history – women have taken the world out of nearly every crisis that it has ever been in. You go back and look at Deborah, look at Esther, Ruth – right through the Bible. Then we go back and look at World War 1 and when the men came home broken emotionally and physically, it was the women who really got the world back and financially got the family back together. It was the same with the women in World War II and just recently we have seen in England, David Cameron, the Prime Minister, actually put a call out for women to rise up and be entrepreneurs and he is giving them 15,000 pounds to start business. He even recognizes that women have such an effect on the economy that we can actually change the world. I think women need to understand this. We are born to be nation changers."

Quote taken from *Christian Women* Autumn 2012, p12

We trust as you look through this resource you will be challenged to view some of the DVD's, read up, and speak out on behalf of the oppressed women and children of our world. In doing so you are part of the empowering process.

Blessings  
Sally-Anne Allchin (Major)  
Family and Resource Secretary  
Australia Southern Territory

**See CD for the Empowering Women to Change the World book.**



# First steps 2

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## **10 Interactive sessions divided in to five sections:**

- Wonder in our world – nature
- Wonder beyond our world – space
- Wonder beyond our world – things
- Wonder about animals – all God's creatures
- Wonder in relationships – families, friends and God

The curriculum material has been produced with multi functional purpose in mind and can be used either in a

playgroup of preschoolers or a kids church program. It provides thematic and interactive activities that promote learning and offers support and ideas to families to continue conversations and faith exploration at home.

The books are available from The Salvation Army Supplies in Melbourne for the price of \$10.95 each. If you require further information about this resource, please contact the Women's Ministries Department (Australia Southern Territory) On (03) 8878 4538.

# Grace prayer box instructions

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Major Julia Metcher

The prayer box is an individual box of eight prayer activities designed to be done over an hour. It is essential that each lady has a prayer box, a pen, and a quiet place to go. There must be no talking during the hour or it disturbs others.

*We used a noodle box container (brand was DETPAK ser no: D9628 – from a wholesaler).*

*Decorate outside as you wish.*

*Attach to wire handle DEAR DAUGHTER gift label.*

*Each of the prayer activities below are placed inside the box.*

1. Picture of throne: on the back of throne 2 labels
  - a. we have a great high priest.
  - b. Hebrews 4:16
2. Grace gift box: small gift box tied with ribbon with 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 reading enclosed inside.
3. Silver box: (must be a silver box- we found packets of these at Spotlight.) Attached to the outside of the box Colossians 4:6 gift tag and tied with a silver ribbon. Inside the gift box could be the 'Silver Boxes' poem – written by Michael Bright used in Florence Littauer's book 'Silver Boxes: The Gift of Encouragement'. (Due to copyright the poem is not included in the CD).
4. Artificial rose bud: attached with 2 Corinthians 4:16 gift tag.
5. Refresher towel: (I used 4711 sachets from a Chemist Warehouse as the perfume is strong) attach with 2 Corinthians 2:15 gift tag with double sided tape.
6. Suitcase: attached with
  - a. blank larger tag for journaling.
  - b. small tag with THEY TRAVEL LIGHTLY label (available in bulk from Officeworks).
7. Radical grace poem: scrolled and tied with a piece of string and attached with a label: Read the poem etc.
8. Grace song: lyrics by Michael W Smith and Martin Smith scrolled with a heart sticker: for meditation- attached to the top of the box.





# Girls night in (Fundraiser event)

Kristen Cairns

Every year in October, as one of our social nights, we hold a 'Girls Night In' to support the Cancer Council. The purpose of this night is to raise funds for the Cancer Council and to enjoy a fun social evening together that is also appealing to invite family and friends along to. We see this as an intentional way of our group reaching out to share God's grace with others in a practical way.

It is an opportunity for us to generously support a worthy charity (which has often supported members of our own groups who have been diagnosed with cancer).

## Purpose

To enjoy a fun evening together and to raise funds for The Cancer Council's *Girls Night In* promotion.

## Format

The evening may be as formal or informal as you like - be creative! A variety of activities is recommended, to allow everyone in your group to participate and contribute to the evening. This is a great opportunity to ask those who normally only attend to be involved in running one part/station for the evening!

Ask everyone to wear PINK on the night and give away a prize for the most creative outfit.

Ideas of activities and fundraising stations can include:

- **Movie** – to watch together on the night
- **Pamper Stations** – foot spa, hand or foot massage, manicure/pedicure, head massage
- Invite a local massage therapist to support your event by volunteering for the evening and donating payments received to the *Girls Night In*
- **Swap Shop** – bring along item/s of clothing or jewellery that is no longer needed (to donate) and make a gold coin donation to swap for something new
- **Market Stall** – collect donations of quality new or used items for the market stall to sell (preferably these should be done at least a week in advance to allow for pricing and set up)
- **Silent auction** – collect donations from local businesses or individuals and auction 'silently' by placing written bids into a box for each item - highest bid at the end of the night wins!
- **Sweet Treats** – sell muffins/cakes or other sweet treats in take home packs
- **Personal Vouchers** – ask group members to volunteer themselves for a voucher (eg. 2 hours of babysitting, a basket of ironing done, a home cooked meal, a custom made scrapbook, 2 hours of house cleaning - anything at all!) - these are then auctioned or sold on the night

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## Fundraising

To run your evening as a *Girls Night In* fundraiser, you will need to register with the Cancer Council. This can be done from July onwards through The Cancer Council website or over the phone. By doing this, you will also be able to provide receipts for donations made by people unable to attend the evening. [Please note that payments made towards any covercharge for the event, or for which an item is received (eg market stall, pamper station, auction etc) are not tax-deductible.]

Two options for running the fundraising aspect of the night, depending on your group are:

- a covercharge (eg \$25) for the evening that includes everything for the night - a movie, pamper stations, swap shop and supper. This may even include a special 'pink' small gift for each lady (a special cookie, cupcake, facewasher, flower - be creative!!)
- a small covercharge (eg \$5-\$10) for the evening that includes a movie and supper, with other activities like pamper stations, massage, market stall, silent auction, sweet treats, vouchers as optional extras with nominal payments



## Required resources

- To allow for a maximum number of people to attend, it is helpful to provide printed invitations for group members to use to invite family and friends. Include on this the details of any costs and the activities you will be offering on the night. Let people know it is a fundraising event, to allow them to come prepared with some money.
- Tables for your market stall, sweet treats, silent auction and other stalls, a clothes rack for the swap shop and comfy chairs for the pamper stations - along with someone to oversee each of these and explain to guests how they work will help your night run smoothly.
- PINK decorations to carry the theme through the night – balloons, streamers, flowers, tablecloths, cushions – be creative!!
- TV and DVD player along with seating for the movie
- Collect donations for the personal vouchers during the weeks before your event and print these as an actual voucher for the night.
- Cancer Council *Girls Night In* paperwork to collate details of anyone who makes an additional tax-deductible donation on the night
- You may like to organise something special for supper on this night.

## After the event

It is great to let people know what you have achieved on your night - an announcement in the newsletter and a letter to any business or individual who has supported your event with a donation – a certificate of appreciation is a nice touch!

This type of evening could be held for a variety of purposes – this one was for The Cancer Council's *Girls Night In*, but you may have a local or other favourite charity to support and share with in this way.

Enjoy your Night In!



# Shine!

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Captain Nicole Viles

## Introduction

This is designed as a formal dinner. An outreach event for mums and daughters in the community.

## Invitations

Create nicely presented invitations to be handed out personally for the evening. Ask people to dress up, but perhaps think of different language than 'formal' as it implies money needs to be spent.

## Décor

The room is to be set for a formal dinner. Choose whatever colour scheme you like, complete with lit hurricane lanterns for centrepieces.

Have a bagged cosmetic gift at each place – a nail polish or lip gloss. (Cellophane bags can be purchased at a bulk packaging company cheaply. Approach chemists or other companies for donations)

Make a colourful feature at the front of the room – perhaps with helium balloons, mirrors, lights, a disco ball – to reflect the theme – shine.

Have a red carpet for mums and daughters to walk down as they enter and organise someone to take photos of each mum & daughter as they come in. (These can be printed and put in a frame for them to collect as they leave with a note of thanks and potentially an invite to something else at the church)

## Music

Use a talented teen from your church to be a DJ for the night to ensure that the background music will be current and inviting to the daughters.

## Arriving (See CD)

As people are arriving and getting to their seats, have the quirky quiz on the table for each mother/daughter pair to do together. Be sure also to have drinks and nibbles on the tables as well.

## Welcome

Briefly welcome everyone to the evening. Introduce yourself and invite them to relax and enjoy their time together. Say a blessing over the meal.

## Serve entrée

Try and get some men from the church to dress up as waiters.

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### After entrée

Tonight is all about letting you know how precious you are as girls in this world! From the oldest one of you to the youngest, you are unique and you bring to the world an enormous capacity to show love, to create, to contribute and to shine! We all do that in different ways but for \_\_\_\_\_ her way is through song. So for your enjoyment tonight, let's put our hands together and welcome her to the stage.

### Solo

Have someone sing 'Shine' by Vanessa Amarossi.

Go through the answers to the quirky quiz and present a gift to the mum/daughter who 'shine' the most.

Play a scavenger hunt game using items that the guests might be wearing or have brought in their handbag e.g. lip gloss, brush, blue sandal, tissue, bobby pin, hoop earring, iPod, mobile phone, \$5 note. Award points per table and have a prize for the winning table.

### Serve main course



### After main course

Have a local beautician come and give a demo on how to care for skin, and how to apply simple make up to a mother and daughter selected from the audience (Consider setting up a video camera linked to a big screen so that everyone can see).

### Segue

In a few sentences speak about how when you are self-conscious and lack confidence, it stops you from becoming all you can be. Encourage everyone to get up with their mum or daughter and have some fun!

### Dances

Be sure to have dances that have set moves to start with so that everyone can feel comfortable.

E.g. Macarena; cha-cha slide (see YouTube)

Finish with 'Firework' by Katy Perry

### Serve dessert

### After dessert

Have a Christian guest speaker to share their story about their journey to accepting themselves. It's important to keep this reasonably short, honest, and to choose someone who can relate well especially to the younger girls.

### Solo

Have someone sing 'Beautiful' by Christina Aguilera or play the song

### Close

While the DJ replays 'Beautiful' quietly, read Psalm 139 starting with 'God said'. Ask the mothers to turn to their daughters and tell them what is beautiful about them and vice versa.

Finish by telling them that your church is committed to helping people shine brightly, because that's God's plan. Explain the photo on the way out with the brochure of what your church has to offer.

Pray God's grace on them to finish.

### Leaving

Make sure the DJ continues to play music until the last person has left to maintain the atmosphere.



# Spirit Woman

Major Sue Cox

Spirit Woman is not another program! In fact, it has helped my women's ministry programs over the years. As well as that, it has helped with communication with all the ladies in the corps. It hasn't always looked the same! But it has always had the same purpose and effect.

Some years ago, I was at my wits end with the different programs (focus groups) that were operating in our corps for the women. They were all operating with a level of success, but there seemed to be lots of contention between the different groups of women. Lots of ladies complained that they didn't know what was going on, they felt left out of some activities, they voiced their distrust for new programs and some even felt that they were being made to work harder, just in case their ministry was closed.

During this time, we went on furlough. We often visit other denominations to check them out! We gather up their welcome kits, their giving envelopes and any other thing they are handing out for free! During one visit to another denomination, inside their welcome kit, was a postcard, beautifully and professionally printed, outlining the ministries of the church that were for women, including the regular activities for church members and any outreach they were planning to undertake during the year. I began to think this idea through, I prayed earnestly about it, asking God to give me a unique idea of how I could do this for the appointment I was in.

Spirit Woman was born. Spirit Woman has been the means by which I have brought unity to the women of the Corps, made each individual feel valued, helped them to see the importance of introducing other women to Christ, and also given them a greater perspective of Kingdom matters.

What is Spirit Woman? It is a collection of all the activities for a calendar year that I want to happen in the life of the women's ministries of the corps. I don't print it onto a leaflet as this is too easy to get mixed up with the take away menus on the fridge. Instead, I have endeavoured to make it an attractive package, that is not too big to carry in your handbag, but too big to put on the fridge. It is beautiful enough to attract the ladies attention, to make them want to keep it in a safe place, and even to give it away to a friend. Each Spirit Woman takes on the life of the ministries in the corps. For example, the first Spirit Woman, I challenged the women in the corps to stand up and be accountable for each other and to realise that they were setting an example for the younger women of our corps (as in teenagers). So I entitled the package with the words 'the tide has turned', indicating a real change was happening.

I found some Photo cards at Go-Lo (5 for \$1). They were seaside themed cards. Perfect! I inserted my little challenge in the front where the photo should go, and then on the inside of the card, I put 2 photo corner

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IN ACTION



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holders. These held five simple cards that contained the information for each of the programs that were happening. Home League, Becoming a Woman of Excellence (Bible study), Girls Night Out (Evening Fellowship), Special events (World day of prayer, missionary morning etc.) and play group. Each card explained what each activity was about, the date and time of the activity, and what the hope was for a Kingdom outcome. I printed one for every woman that came to the corps in some capacity and that many again as spares.

Each kit was personalisd with the names of the women. This was a great delight, as many felt that I had gone to a lot of trouble to recognize their place in the corps. I carried the spares with me wherever I went. If a new lady showed interest in Church, she got a spirit woman. We handed them out to interested welfare clients, to family members who did not attend church and so on.

I cannot describe adequately what this little collection of cards did for the morale of the women, and the subsequent efforts of evangelism that took place. Home League doubled in numbers. I had women coming to Girls Night Out who had said they would never come to church. Women were studying the Bible together and growing spiritually in leaps and bounds.

Each year saw another Spirit Woman produced – always different in presentation, but always with the same purpose.



One year, I presented it like an Expander File – one that fitted into a C3 Envelope. Another presentation was like a booklet. I have tried to keep it professional looking, and have tried to find unique ways of presentation. The \$2 shops are full of decorating ideas, and are affordable. It is amazing what you can do with a graphics program on the computer. If you can't do this sort of thing yourself, there is always someone who is good at paper craft.

My latest Spirit Woman is in another appointment. I have used the verse from the 2012 resource manual as my titled 'whatsoever is lovely'. For presentation, I used cards that are used for wedding Invitations.

We had 150 white ones and 150 brown ones come into our family store. I used the white ones for the overall program and the brown ones for my Home League syllabus folder for the year (see CD for pictures).

The overall program folder, I decorated with a light pink sticker with the name on it, and some pearl embellishments. Each one was individually named. The hardest part of Spirit Woman is coming up with something new and unique for the next year. The women expect something!







 **International  
development**



# Women's Empowerment

"There is no tool for development more effective than the empowerment of women. No other policy is as likely to raise economic productivity, or to reduce infant and maternal mortality. No other policy is as sure to improve nutrition and promote health—including the prevention of HIV/AIDS. No other policy is as powerful in increasing the chances of education for the next generation. Women have the right to live in dignity, in freedom from want and from fear." Kofi Annan

**Support a women's empowerment project. Visit [SalvosGifts.org.au](http://SalvosGifts.org.au)**

# Mission Priorities

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## Mission Priorities

We will do whatever it takes to see:

1. A territory marked by prayer and holiness
2. Our whole territory – in every place – involved in evangelism
3. Corps healthy and multiplying
4. Our people equipped and empowered to serve the world
5. The territory passionate about bringing children to Jesus
6. Youth trained and sent out to frontline mission
7. Significant increase of new soldiers and officers

And we will be a Salvation Army knowing who we are,  
showing who we are and being who we are.







**The Australia Eastern Territory  
THQ Salvos Women Team**

Commissioner Jan Condon - Territorial President of Women's Ministries  
Colonel Janet Munn - Territorial Secretary for Women's Ministries  
Lt Colonel Simone Robertson - Salvos Women / Salvos Caring Territorial Coordinator  
Major Karan Ross - Salvos Women / Salvos Caring Associate Coordinator