

## David: Forgiven - Pete Greig

The world needs forgiveness - from the Middle East to the playground. Godfather of Goth Rock, Nick Cave, writes of his teenage son's death, "There is not a song or a word or a stitch of thread that is not asking for forgiveness, that is not saying 'we are just so sorry.'" David understood forgiveness more than most.

### 2 Sam 22v1-4, 54

David was about to die and reflected on his life: shepherd boy, Goliath slayer, worshipper, Psalm writer, soldier, king, architect of Israel, part of Messianic line. Jesus known as "Son of David."

### Deeply favoured by God even though deeply flawed.

From height of holiness to depth of depravity (Bathsheba incident: sex abuse, power abuse, liar, murderer). But David's legacy not erased, psalms not redacted, covenant not cancelled, messianic line not rerouted. At the end of his life David could claim God's faithfulness, goodness and favour despite David's brokenness. This is radical, offensive and counter culture. We want to catch people out, lock them up and throw away the key. But, David's sin is not ignored or minimised. He's called out by Holy Spirit and confronted by Nathan.

Holy Spirit is exposing corruption and sin. Leaders in the world who lie, abuse, are narcissists or sexually immoral are being exposed for the sake of justice, righteousness, integrity and holiness. We take these things more seriously than the world because we believe in holiness - we hate sin. We expect leaders to have personal integrity and lead by personal example. Public life must reflect private life. Personal integrity is key

Controversially we differ from our culture because we believe in forgiveness, redemption, restoration, 2nd and 3rd chances. This is Amazing Grace.

John Newton, 1725-1807, was most lewd and debauched, a slave trafficker (heinous crime). In a storm he began to drown. Afterwards he read Thomas à Kempis' Imitation of Christ and gradually believed in Jesus. In 1772 he was preaching and was moved by the text so wrote Amazing Grace - his own testimony.

In 1 Chron 17 Nathan addressed David saying God promised favour on his future generations. David's response was "Who am I?" (v18). David knew he didn't deserve this but thanked God for His faithfulness.

GK Chesterton wrote of Francis of Assisi "*He walked this world like the pardon of God.*" Let us not point the finger, bringing scowling and judgment but grace and forgiveness, acceptance and unconditional love.

26 June 96 UEFA cup England Manager Terry Venables comforted Gareth Southgate who missed a penalty, letting down the nation. 11 July 21 Southgate, now England Manager, comforted Saka who also missed a penalty. Grace changes cycles - it breaks shame and changes the flow of life.

Stand up to the bullies who want to "lock up and throw away the key." If it is as bad as you say it is, there is greater hope than you think - the answer is Jesus. His cross is the key. Our sin pinned him there. The cross is a picture of redemption. That's amazing grace - all have sinned and fallen short. (Rom 3v23). Our sin is worse than we imagine (we minimise it - "I've not murdered" but Jesus asks "have you been hateful?"). God's grace is greater than we ever dreamed. We're deeply flawed but deeply favoured: Amazing Grace!

Pete's first son Huddy interrupted his sleep, screamed at him, was sick over him, and worse! But Pete loved him compulsively. When dirty, Pete had to clean him up - it's not Huddy's problem. It was unconditional love. Fatherhood made the difference. God's love is more than theology, it is his being: He is Love. In the dirt of our sin, Father God cleans us up. No one is too sinful for God, only too proud to accept his forgiveness. There is always more grace in God than sin in us.

*"It is only as we drink down the kindness of the heart of Christ that we will leave in our wake everywhere we go the aroma of heaven and die one day having startled the world with glimpses of the divine kindness too great to be boxed in by what we deserve."* Dane Ortlund (Gentle and Lowly).

### Reflect and Respond

- *Why might folk be offended by God's amazing grace?*
- *How can we encourage one another that our past doesn't forever damage our future?*
- *How are we affected by cancel culture, which is about critiquing and not restoring and redeeming? (Remember Jesus' prayer "Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us" (Luke 11v4))*
- *Reflect on the words of "Amazing Grace"*

11 February 2024. Emmaus Rd., Yvonne Arnaud, Guildford (1st service)

*Amazing grace, How sweet the sound  
That saved a wretch like me.  
I once was lost, but now am found,  
Was blind, but now I see.*

*'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,  
And grace my fears relieved.  
How precious did that grace appear  
The hour I first believed.*

*Through many dangers, toils and snares  
I have already come,  
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far  
And grace will lead me home.*

*John Newton 1725-1807*  
[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John\\_Newton](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Newton)