

# The Link

## GRACE AIN'T CHEAP

### *Comprehending and embracing the cost and eternal value of GRACE is life changing*

I often wonder at what level does the average believer truly comprehend the breadth, length, height and depth of God's GRACE. Having pastored churches for over 25 years, I have observed many that sit in the pew Sunday-after-Sunday who have a shallow understanding of GRACE. They whine about the length of the service, complain that visitor's took their seat and frown at a youth who has a tattoo on his bicep. **Fact:** The level of understanding of God's GRACE is revealed in how a believer acts, judges, lives, thinks, talks, works and worships. In other words, a believer's day-to-day life reflects the depth of his or her understanding of GRACE. No doubt there are baptized members who have nothing more than "fire insurance." They have prayed "the sinner's prayer" yet there is little evidence that "the old things *have* passed away, behold, new things have come" (2 Corinthians 5:17). When sharing about GRACE with Africans, I have used the acrostic **G-R-A-C-E** to define God's gift to the world: **G**od's **R**iches **A**t **C**hrist's **E**xpense. Yet, even this simple phrase does not adequately define the magnitude and grandeur of this life-changing word. Once a person has a more robust grasp of God's GRACE (though our comprehension continues to grow/expand throughout life), it will progressively transform every facet of life. As a believer matures in their knowledge of the **BIGNESS** of God's GRACE, life takes on fresh meaning, purpose and power. Below are several facts about GRACE.

**GRACE FACT:** The One who spoke heaven and earth into existence, left the riches of Heaven to rescue a world headed for eternal destruction. God's eternal home (Heaven) is a place where there is NO sin, NO satan, NO sickness, NO sadness or NO sorrow. During Christ's visit on earth, He chose not to take advantage of being God (emptied Himself) but took on the form of a bond servant (a man) entering a world filled with sin, satan, sickness, sadness and sorrow. Why? It was His incredible love for you and me that moved Christ to save the world (John 3:16; Phil. 2:5-11) and to extend His GRACE to all who would repent (turn) and believe. Allow me to illustrate using a parable:

You suddenly awaken in the middle of the night surrounded by fire and gasping for air—literally suffocating from the billows of smoke. Your house is engulfed in flames with absolutely no chance of escape. The local fire department is outside battling the blaze trying desperately to find a way to save you. All those involved in fighting the fire have run out of possible solutions to rescue you. Their attempts to reach you in the master bedroom on the second floor is futile. The heat is overbearing, the smoke fills your lungs and the house begins to collapse around you. When all hope is exhausted, a chainsaw is heard cutting through the roof. Without warning, part of the ceiling crashes to the floor and a there is loud voice... "take two steps forward into the net and I'll pull you up." Coughing and gagging the you musters enough strength to collapse into the life saving net that hoist you to safety. The nightly news reports the impossible situation of how a brave fireman, scorched by the flames, risked his life to reach a trapped resident who had no hope of escape. (Caution: Some reading the above will try to analyze this parable theologically. Please do not!) All I am trying to convey is the fact that the person trapped and rescued in the burning house would forever have etched in his memory and heart tremendous gratitude for the heroic efforts of the first responder.

**GRACE FACT:** Satan did everything in his power to thwart God's plan. He tried to tempt the One who knew no sin to sin (Matt. 4, Luke 4). The devil moved the religious leaders to stone Him. Even on the cross, the devil spoke through scorners, "come down and we will believe!" Satan knew that the finished death on the blood stained timbers meant final/eternal death (Gehenna/Hell) for both him and the fallen angels. Even after Jesus conquered death, the adversary moved the religious community to lie and say that the disciples stole the Lord's body. Another false statement proclaimed by the religious community that Jesus was not really dead, but was resuscitated. **Absolute Truth:** Jesus lived, died and rose from the grave in order to rescue His creation. The fact is, God's GRACE is sufficient to reunite true believers with Him. "Amazing GRACE how sweet the sound..."

**GRACE FACT:** (Let the scriptures speak) "He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." I cannot fathom what this truly means. One day followers of the Messiah will be able to fully comprehend GRACE—what God went through to rescue the world. Theologians throughout history have attempted to interpret this passage, but they all fall short. It is absolutely clear that Jesus, the sinless lamb, took upon Himself ALL our sins and punishment for those who would turn and accept the free gift of everlasting life. "For by GRACE you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not as a result of works less no one should boast" (Ephesians 2:8,9).

**GRACE FACT:** God's love for the world caused Him to move heaven and earth for our redemption—that we may become His child. When one truly understands the price God paid to deliver the world (John 3:16), **the believer's response is love**. When a husband gives flowers, candy, jewelry or shares words of endearment with his wife, it is not that he is trying to win her affection/love, but it is simply the manifestation of genuine love for his bride; his words and actions are the "result" of his love and not done to "win" her love. Being loved creates a desire to love. Understanding that "GRACE Ain't Cheap" should cause the recipient of GRACE to render GRACE to others.

I do not believe a person purposely cheapens GRACE, put it definitely loses its value and punch when one has a low view of God's GRACE gift. This low view of GRACE is amplified by the way one relates to God and how he or she treats others. As a Christian grows in his/her understanding of God's GRACE, their love for the Savior and others will intensify—**GRACE in/GRACE out**. Deeds and works that follow are the evidence (validation) that demonstrates that GRACE has entered one's life. Grace is most certainly life changing, and it "ain't cheap."

**Rick**

## News Brief

**GENERAL FUND: Your gift to the general fund is a vital source and blessing.** We are grateful for the trust you extend to our office to place your gift where it is most needed. The requirements to operate MLI in both USA and Uganda is a challenge. The ministry's operational budget enables us to structure and staff MLI. Bottomline, we are empowered to carryout the various ministry functions as well as accommodate USA teams. I will not reiterate all the things that the general fund covers, but it keeps the mission ticking. ALSO, there are donors who request that their gift go to a specific project or person which is certainly appropriate. Yet, please do not forget that it is the MLI structural foundation that enables gifts to be delivered to a person or to fund a project with "oversight." The General Fund is key in supporting administration, staff and projects. FYI: We are now printing in B/W to reduce printing cost.

**GIFTS FLOWING TO SUPPORT PROJECTS AND ASSIST AFRICANS:** 😊 Additional land donated for the Itukulu project. We are now ready when funding is available to begin construction of a small building to house the milling machine. 😊 A generous donor contributed over five million shillings to help a young girl with a serious infection. She is now residing at home! 😊 Funds continue to flow to help Pastor Timothy to finish constructing a boy's dorm for his school in Basana (on the shore of Lake Victoria). 😊 PTL! There are consistent donor funds invested in keeping an important deaf school functioning in the village of Kamuli. In fact, MLI is the main funding source for that school. 😊 Over 300 bible and hundreds of Christian books



given by FBC of Charlottesville—PTL! 😊 Bible player/commentary given by a generous donor to the MLI staff—Amen! 😊 Andrea Ideker (The late Perry Jayne's daughter) and her two grandchildren are at the Perry Jayne Girls School (pictured above) for the dedication-celebration service on August 3rd. Pastor Euticals Wambua, a faithful pastor, is the inspiration and overseer of this great work. The school will touch many lives for our Savior. MLI has been the channel for all the funding needed to construct the school. On behalf of Pastor Euticals and MLI, a BIG THANK YOU to all the donors, churches and organizations (and especially the Perry Jayne family) who have made this vital school possible. Yet, all the glory and honor goes to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

**WIDOW PROJECTS: Our Itukulu widows project** is ready to proceed with constructing a simple building on our recently purchased land. It will house a small facility for the milling machine and grain storage. Footers followed by brick walls will be the first phase. **Your contribution of \$1150 (or part) will go along way for the first phase.** **Esther's House** is being constructed and making progress (**donors please continue to fund**). **"General" Support for Widows: You may not wish to adopt a widow**, but prayerfully consider **"General Widow Support for Itukulu."** MLI will divide these funds among those who do not have a sponsor. All who attend MLI widow meetings will receive a small financial gift until they receive their sponsor. Thank you.

**OTHER MLI PROJECTS: (Uway Church: Sides need to be placed on the church with either metal or brick. A sheet of metal cost is about \$9. Your contribution of any amount is appreciated. Sam Choli**, who has been a friend and medical work associate with MLI teams for many years, needs our help. Sam has help MLI on many occasions with the MLI medical campaigns. He is in desperate need of fencing in his small plot for the purpose of raising chickens (for income purposes) and to keep thieves out. Sam needs **\$1650** to make this a reality. **I know this is a lot of dollars, but any amount will help move this project forward.**

**REMODELING USA MISSION CENTER:** We are presently raising funds to remodel our new mission center in Pearisburg, Virginia. We continue to need both volunteers and monetary assistance. (Note: Additional info is below.) Giving your **skill(s)** to help finish the remodeling will help MLI move in 2020. **Also, thank you for the donations thus far!**

**OTHER IMPORTANT NEEDS: The Medical Fund** is constantly being drained. **Any amount is appreciated.** Also, please keep the **Street Kids Fund** coming. This fund is growing. MLI Church Plant—Kigera—really needs a permanent structure. Help this growing village church build a more permanent structure—**any amount appreciated.** **Monthly salaries for several staff members \$50** & two staff teachers **\$90** & and two pastors at **\$70** (Pastor Emma and Pastor Wasawa).

**ASSORTED NEEDS:** One staff **motorcycle** needs to be replaced as soon as possible. — **\$1500**—**OTHER NEEDS**— **Cement floor** for Kadomala Church **\$375**; **Shelia, MLI's receptionist**, goes to school on the weekends. Tuition per term is **\$125**. She is learning accounting. Thomas & Mary need a **blender** (used okay) that I can take to Uganda when traveling in September. Many other needs not listed continue to knock at our door. THANK YOU for strengthening MLI w/ your gift & encouragement!

### NOTICE: AUGUST



is a continuation of MLI's cell phone collection. Please ask your friends, Bible study class, church, and family to donate their old cell phone. Thank you for helping!

**Pearisburg Construction Team:** Two-Thirds of the plumbing has been completed! However, we still need a plumber, an electrician, carpenters, ceiling & floor tile, painters & laborers to remodel the MLI office/warehouse in Pearisburg during the Summer of 2019. Funds greatly needed for building materials as well as help with feeding volunteers. Two churches are slated to help in August/September. A "team of one" having spare time is welcome to assist with various projects.

**UGANDA:** Pr Todd Childers will be spending 2—weeks with Rick in Uganda leaving USA on September 24. Rick will return on October the 29th. A MLI pastor's school graduation is scheduled & Pr. Todd will host a leadership conference.

**February and June Trips for 2020 to Uganda:** It is time to sign up for our two African trips to Uganda —February 1–14 and June 13–26. Email Rick for additional information— [thelinkoffice@gmail.com](mailto:thelinkoffice@gmail.com)



**Thirty dollars (\$30) a month brings great happiness** to an African Widow! **Will you prayerfully consider adopting this dear widow?** She needs a loving family.

**Aidha Mutesi** was born in 1962 and is 57 years old having six (6) children. Her husband died of an heart attack 9 years ago. Aidha use to be a drunkard, but **God saved her through Mission Link widow's fellowship.** She praises God for the support from MLI of some basic needs. Aidha is taking care of orphaned children which has not been easy. Her house is in need of renovation and children needing school fees which are two critical needs.