

What is common grace for the common good?

1. What is common grace?

Common grace is God's unmerited favor extended to all people regardless of their eternal destiny.

Saving grace only comes through Jesus and it is the only way to have a restored relationship with God.

1. Common grace is God's kindness to all he made.

The Lord is good to all, and his mercy is over all that he has made. Psalm 145:9 (ESV)

The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food in due season. You open your hand; you satisfy the desire of every living thing. Psalm 145:15–16 (ESV)

2. Common grace is the universal recognition of God.

For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. Acts 17:23 (ESV)

3. Common grace is universal consciousness of sin.

For when Gentiles, who do not have the law, by nature do what the law requires, they are a law to themselves.... They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them. Romans 2:14–15 (ESV)

4. Common grace is universal blessing of God's creation.

But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven. For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. Matthew 5:44–45 (ESV)

5. Common grace is scientific discoveries.

Give ear, and hear my voice; give attention, and hear my speech. Does he who plows for sowing plow continually? Does he continually open and harrow his ground? When he has leveled its surface, does he not scatter dill, sow cumin, and put in wheat in rows and barley in its proper place, and emmer as the border? For he is rightly instructed; his God teaches him. Dill is not threshed with a threshing sledge, nor is a cart wheel rolled over cumin, but dill is beaten out with a stick, and cumin with a rod. Does one crush grain for bread? No, he does not thresh it forever; when he drives his cart wheel over it with his horses, he does not crush it. This also comes from the Lord of hosts; he is wonderful in counsel and excellent in wisdom. Isaiah 28:23–29 (ESV)

6. Common grace is beauty and artistic gifts.

The Lord said to Moses, "See, I have called by name Bezalel the son of Uri, son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God, with ability and intelligence, with knowledge and all craftsmanship, to devise artistic designs, to work in gold, silver, and bronze, Exodus 31:1–4 (ESV)

7. Common grace is every good gift given by God to his creation.

Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change. James 1:17 (ESV)

2. How does common grace change the way I think?

1. Understanding common grace moves me out of my little Christian enclave.

And on her forehead was written a name of mystery: "Babylon the great, mother of prostitutes and of earth's abominations." Revelation 17:5 (ESV)

And he called out with a mighty voice, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great! She has become a dwelling place for demons, a haunt for every unclean spirit, a haunt for every unclean bird, a haunt for every unclean and detestable beast. Revelation 18:2 (ESV)

"Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel, to all the exiles whom I have sent into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon: Build houses and live in them; plant gardens and eat their produce. Take wives and have sons and daughters; take wives for your sons, and give your daughters in marriage, that they may bear sons and daughters; multiply there, and do not decrease. But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare. Jeremiah 29:4–7 (ESV)

2. Understanding common grace helps me value work that is not overtly done in Jesus' name.
3. Understanding common grace helps me value God's gifts to other cultures.
4. Understanding common grace explains why non-Christians can exceed Christians in morality and wisdom.
3. We are to be a people that image God and extend common grace to those that don't deserve it.

The roots of saving grace grow best in the fertile soil of common grace.

1. Move beyond tolerance to care.

See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone. 1 Thessalonians 5:15 (ESV)

2. Show compassion to the weak and outcasts.

3. Affirm good work done by people far from God.

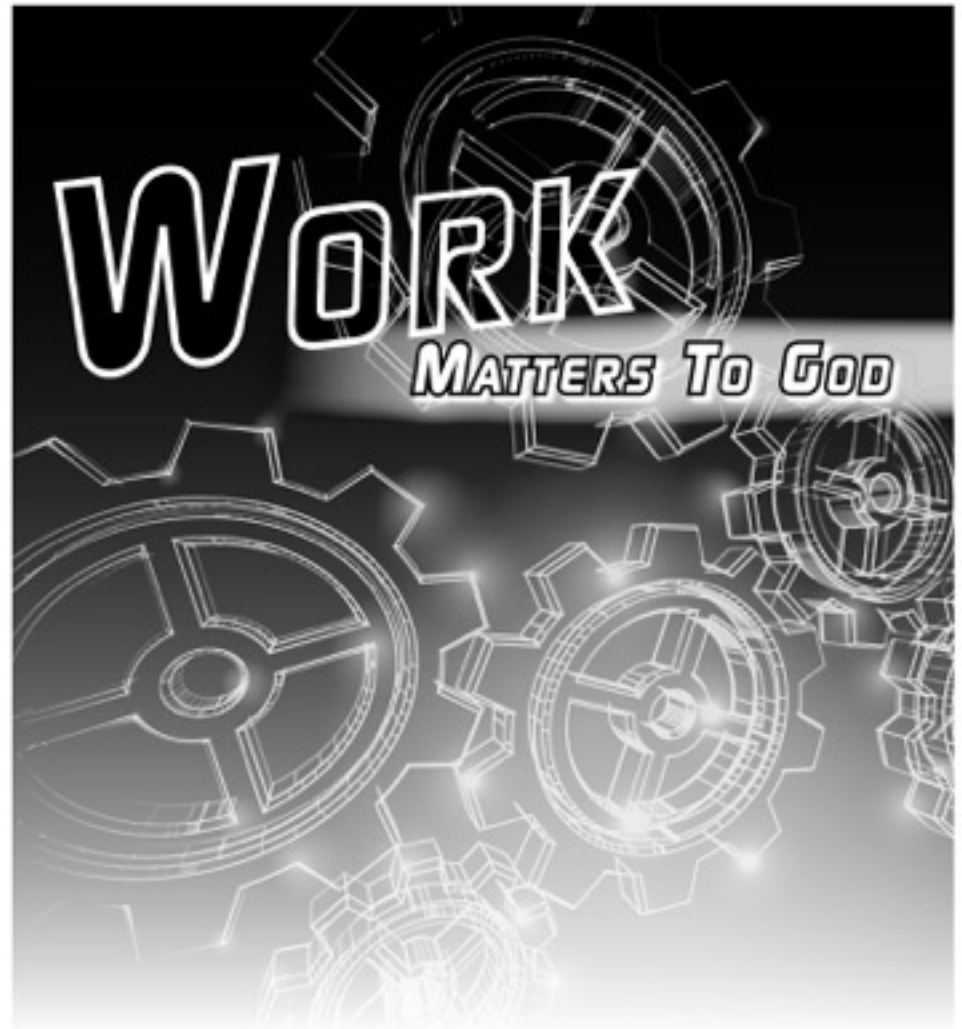
4. Be kind and merciful to my enemies.

But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, for he is kind to the ungrateful and the evil. Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful. Luke 6:35–36 (ESV)

5. Pray for my boss.

First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 1 Timothy 2:1–2 (ESV)

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