

## Defining Moments: John Newton

Born July 24, 1725

"delight and habitual practice was wickedness" and he "neither feared God nor regarded men."

Defining Moment - March 21, 1748

"I began to pray ... I could not utter the prayer of faith; I could not draw near to a reconciled God, call him Father. . . the great question now was how to obtain faith."

"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him!" Luke 11:13

"It was as if a heavenly hand had restrained the wrath of nature just long enough for his crew to harbour safely."

"Thus far I was answered, that before we arrived in Ireland, I had a satisfactory evidence in my own mind of the truth of the Gospel, as considered in itself, and of its exact suitableness to answer all my needs. . . I stood in need of an Almighty Saviour; and such a one I found described in the New Testament. Thus far the Lord had wrought a marvellous thing: I was no longer an infidel: I heartily renounced my former profaneness, and had taken up some right notions; was seriously disposed, and sincerely touched with a sense of the undeserved mercy I had received, in being brought safe through so many dangers. I was sorry for my past misspent life, and purposed an immediate reformation. I was quite freed from the habit of swearing, which seemed to have been as deeply rooted in me as a second nature. Thus, to all appearance, I was a new man."

"I had no apprehension of . . . the hidden life of a Christian, as it consists in communion with God by Jesus Christ; a continual dependence upon him."

1788 - published confessional pamphlet, "Thoughts upon the African Slave Trade."

"I hope it will always be a subject of humiliating reflection to me that I was once an active instrument in a business at which my heart now shudders."

1754 – Pastor of Church in Olney for 16 years.

1770 - Pastor of Church in London for 28 years.

Then King David went in and sat before the LORD, and he said: "Who am I, LORD God, and what is my family, that you have brought me this far? And as if this were not enough in your sight, my God, you have spoken about the future of the house of your servant. You, LORD God, have looked on me as though I were the most exalted of men. "What more can David say to you for honouring your servant? For you know your servant, LORD. For the sake of your servant and according to your will, you have done this great thing and made known all these great promises."

New Year's Day 1773 - 1 Chron 17:16-19

William Walker - Amazing Grace to tune of "New Britain."

1850 - placed in Southern Harmony hymnal in South Carolina - sold 600,000 copies.

"Faith's Review and Expectation"

*The Lord has promised good to me, His word my hope secures,  
He will my shield and portion be, As long as life endures.*

*Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail, And mortal life shall cease,  
I shall possess, within the veil, A life of joy and peace.*

*The earth shall soon dissolve like snow, The sun forbear to shine;  
But God, who called me here below; Will he forever mine.*

*When we've been there ten thousand years, Bright shining as the sun,  
We've no less days to sing God's praise, Than when we first begun.*

Edwin Excell - 1909

Harriet Beecher Stowe's novel – 'Uncle Tom's Cabin'

Amazon.com - 3,832 separate recordings of Amazing Grace

What is so amazing about grace?

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God” (Ephesians 2:8).

### **Mercy versus Grace**

Mercy withholds the knife from the heart of Isaac. Grace provides a ram in the thicket.

Mercy runs to forgive the prodigal son. Grace throws a party with every extravagance.

Mercy bandages the wounds of the man beaten by the robbers. Grace covers the cost of his full recovery.

Mercy hears the cry of the thief on the cross. Grace promises paradise that very day.

Mercy pays the penalty for our sin at the cross. Grace substitutes the righteousness of Christ for our wickedness.

Mercy converts Paul on the road to Damascus. Grace calls him to be an apostle.

Mercy saves John Newton from a life of rebellion and sin. Grace makes him a pastor and author of a timeless hymn.

Mercy closes the door to hell. Grace opens the door to heaven.

Mercy withholds what we have earned. Grace provides blessings we have not earned.

David Jeremiah

Have you experienced this grace?