



# Links Players

## LOSSES AND GAINS 3: GRACE

*Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. (Colossians 4:6, NIV)*

**D**OES GRACE STRIKE YOU AS ONE OF THOSE theological terms that describe what God has done for us while lacking practical application? In this way, it might seem like all those Strokes Gained statistics that help us understand how a PGA Tour player excels but which aren't readily available to the rest of us. Cool, but only as far as it goes.

When it comes to grace, though, Scripture does speak of applications that should fit our lives. In brief, grace is akin to kindness, and we certainly have no reason to be surprised that kindness is something we too can show to others.

So let's consider a definition, then do the work we have been doing in this series: set grace in the midst of trouble.

In the Greek, the word for grace is *charis*. It's a simple enough word that apart from specific theological application can mean "that which affords joy, pleasure, delight, sweetness, charm, loveliness: grace of speech" (Blue Letter Bible). You can see the connection in that last phrase to our passage from Colossians today, where Paul urged his readers to fill their conversations with grace. You might also recognize a similarity with Paul's words in his letter to the Philippians: "Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (Philippians 4:8). In our thoughts and in our words, we are to pass on what is excellent in God's eyes, and grace is always excellent.

But now you might guess that we are heading to the golf course, where trouble comes upon us with frequency, just as it does in life. And when trouble comes, we might either lose grace and turn to curt words or express grace beyond all reason, empowered by the Holy Spirit to say uplifting things.

"Freely you have received," Jesus said, "freely give." How can we not apply this to grace, which is among the greatest of all God's gifts to us and which carries all his other gifts as well? Yes, this will be hardest when we are criticized or weary or discouraged. These are only a few of our troubles. But if we can respond with grace rather than lose it, we have gained ground in Jesus' name.

Written by Jeff Hopper ©2021 Links Players International. An accompanying introductory video for this study is available here: [https://youtu.be/d\\_dRTJff54Y](https://youtu.be/d_dRTJff54Y)

**Opening questions** How does your conversation change when you are not playing well? Do you become more testy, clam up, get analytical, or pretty much stay the same? Can this change day to day?

**READING** Job 10:12; Ephesians 4:32; 1 Peter 4:10-11

### The kindness of grace (Job 10)

God's kindness is what is called a communicable attribute—that is, one we can also display. How has God shown kindness to you? How can you show kindness to others?

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### Grace on display (Ephesians 4)

What individual aspects of grace are listed here? What is our motivation for treating others with grace? What obstacles get in the way of delivering grace as we should?

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### Stewards of grace (1 Peter 4)

How are our words and our service to others functions of stewarding God's grace? How good are you at letting God do his work in your heart so you can minister well to others?

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