

~Other Speakers G-L: Hymn Stories:

Julia H. Johnston, 1849-1919

"But where sin increased, grace increased all the more, so that, just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness to bring eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 5:20,21)

God's grace is not merely a sufficient grace; it is an abounding grace--"that you will abound in every good work" (2 Corinthians 9:8). His grace provides our eternal salvation as well as the enablement to know life more abundantly. It is available for our every problem and need.

Sometimes the argument is advanced that since God's grace covers all our sins, then we are free to live as we please. God's grace does provide for our freedom, but it is meant to free us from a slavery to our selfish, sinful nature in order that we might pursue "every good work"--to become all that God intends us to be.

Julia Johnston was for many years involved in the work of Sunday schools at the First Presbyterian Church of Peoria, Illinois, and as a writer of lesson materials for primary age children for the David C. Cook Publishing Company. She also wrote approximately 500 hymn texts. The composer of this hymn, Daniel B. Towner, was for many years the director of the music department at Moody Bible Institute. "Grace Greater Than Our Sin" first appeared in Towner's compilation, Hymns Tried and True, 1911.

"Marvelous grace of our loving Lord, grace that exceeds our sin and our guilt! Yonder on Calvary's mount outpoured--there where the blood of the Lamb was spilt.

"Sin and despair, like the seawaves cold, threaten the soul with infinite loss; grace that is greater--yes, grace untold--points to the Refuge, the mighty Cross.

"Dark is the stain that we cannot hide; what can avail to wash it away? Look! there is flowing a crimson tide--whiter than snow you may be today.

"Marvelous, infinite, matchless grace, freely bestowed on all who believe! You that are longing to see His face, will you this moment His grace receive?

"Chorus: Grace, grace, God's grace, grace that will pardon and cleanse within; grace, grace, God's grace, grace that is greater than all our sin!"

For Today: Romans 3:24-26; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Ephesians 1:6-8; Titus 2:11

What does the term "grace" mean to your life? Try to define it in your own words. Discuss your insights with another.