

ENGLISH CORNER MENU

Learning English Through Discussion

Amazing Grace

Amazing Grace is the title of a movie. The movie tells the story of how slave trading was stopped in Britain. It is also the title of a very famous song, 'Amazing Grace'. (**Grace**: showing kindness to someone who does not deserve it.)

Hot topics

1. What do you know about slave trading? Does slave trading still exist today?
2. Do you know the song, 'Amazing Grace'? Can you hum the tune of Amazing Grace?

This song was written by John Newton, (1725-1807).

John Newton became a sailor at the age of 11. He joined the slave trade and sailed to Africa, forcibly capturing Africans and taking them to America and Britain to be sold as slaves. The slaves were treated very badly and many died on the ship.

During one trip, a terrible storm hit the ship and John Newton nearly died. He cried out to God to save him and God did. John Newton couldn't believe that God would save such a terrible person like himself. A person who had done unspeakable evil to other human beings. He said, "Only God's amazing grace could take such a rude, evil, slave-trading sailor and change him into a child of God."

John Newton wrote the lyrics to the song Amazing Grace from this experience of God's grace, where he said he was once blind but now could see. He became a Christian in 1748 and stopped being involved in the slave trade. He became a Christian priest and wrote many other songs.

3. Read the lyrics of the song below and discuss:

Amazing Grace

How sweet the sound

That saved a wretch like me.

I once was lost, but now am found,

Was blind but now I see...

- a. In this song, what words show a change that has happened to this man? *In threes*
- b. Have you ever been lost? What happened? How did you feel when you were found? *In pairs*
- b. When you read the words of this song, what feelings does John Newton express? *In threes*
 - relief - remorse
 - joy - amazement
 - happiness - gratefulness
 - regret - Other...

- c. Have you ever experienced this kind of grace in your life? *In threes.*

4. John Newton turned to God to save him. This is what God promises John Newton and us in the bible (Ephesians 2: 4-5)!

"God is merciful! We were dead because of our sins, (all the bad things we have thought, said and done), but God loved us so much that he made us alive with Jesus Christ, and God's wonderful kindness and grace is what saves us."

Vocabulary

Slave: a person who is owned by someone else.

Unspeakable: So bad, you cannot talk about it

Wretch: a terrible person

Relief: feeling happy that a burden has been taken away.

Regret: sadness over something that has happened. The person wishes it had never happened.

Remorse: a strong feeling of regret. Feeling very sorry for something bad that has been done.

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