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## 31: THE IMPORTANCE OF GRACE

Philip Yancey, in his book *“What’s So Amazing About Grace”*, says, “God’s grace is so great that we do not have to achieve righteousness. By striving to prove how much they deserve God’s love, legalists miss the whole point of the gospel, that **grace is a gift from God to people who don’t deserve it.** (p. 210) I know nothing that represents a greater threat to grace than legalism.” (p. 195) He goes on to say that, like any gift, grace needs to be received. The prerequisite for grace is the realization of our imperfection. What blocks grace are our pride, judgment and unforgiveness. “God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble” James 4:6 It is our human destiny on earth to be imperfect, incomplete, weak and mortal, and only by accepting that destiny can we escape the forces of the world and receive grace. God needs humble people to accomplish his work.

David Seamands in his book *“Perfectionism”* (p. 29) says, “Many years ago I was driven to the conclusion that the two major causes of most emotional problems among evangelical Christians are these:

- 1) The failure to understand, receive and live God’s unconditional grace and Forgiveness ...*
- 2) The failure to give out that unconditional love, forgiveness and grace to other people.”*

As a counselor, I am also driven to similar conclusions. I constantly see that the greatest need in every human being is to know deep in their core that they are accepted, loved and valued. When a person is not unconditionally loved, a wound is created that produces a variety of emotional and mental problems. As Christians, we are so fortunate that Christ is the source of “grace”. “For the law was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ.” John 1:17 He sacrificed himself on the cross for us. This unconditional gift of forgiveness and love for us goes to the core of what we all need. Not only does receiving his grace and love heal our souls, but it frees us and empowers us to be able to offer grace, mercy, forgiveness and love to others.

As Philip Yancey refers to Mother Teresa, “She understands that sacrificial love is one of the most powerful weapons in the Christian’s arsenal of grace. (p. 245)

*What is this arsenal of grace?* I see grace as part of the tree of life

(Comparison chart, NEXT) ...



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## THE IMPORTANCE OF GRACE

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### TREE OF LIFE

Grace  
Unexpected, Unearned and  
Undeserved Gift  
Sacrificial love  
Acceptance  
Apologize and Forgive  
Magnanimous, Free, Generous  
Merciful and Compassionate  
Respectful, Personal, Kind  
Humble

### TREE OF KNOWLEDGE OF GOOD AND EVIL

Un-Grace  
The Law and Legalism  
Selfish/Self-Centered  
Judgment, Criticism, Condemnation  
Remember, Hold Onto, Accuse  
Conditional, "By the Rules," Limited  
Punishing and Cold  
Disrespectful and Negative  
Proud

Prayer: Lord Jesus, it is my prayer that I lay down my pride, judgment, legalism and unforgiveness now and replace it with your grace, mercy, forgiveness and unconditional love.

*Amen.*

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