

## **Amazing Grace, Week 2**

### **01-10-16**

#### **John 3:16-17**

*“For God so loved the world that He gave His only Son. Whoever puts his trust in God’s Son will not be lost but will have life that lasts forever. For God did not send His Son into the world to say it is guilty. He sent His Son so the world might be saved from the punishment of sin by Him.”*

**Grace** Definition: the unearned favor of God towards people

#### **I Keep Pondering these facts about Grace:**

##### **1. In life I know that Injustice deserves Punishment**

- We want bad people to get what they deserve
- When we get hurt we want vengeance
- When someone slacks off at work or school they don’t deserve a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance: they should own their behavior, suck it up, move on with life!
- Yet when it comes to “ME” I don’t want to be punished, I desire a 2<sup>nd</sup> chance, I don’t want God or others to write me off... **How about you?**

##### **2. And I have pondered how God is diff than us: He is Grace-full, offering something diff than the world:**

- **Grace gives us what we don’t deserve:**
  - Mercy instead of Punishment
  - Forgiveness /Eternity instead of Hell
  - A 2<sup>nd</sup> chance (sometimes, a 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>!)

#### **Grace demands a proper response from us**

- How we live before God
- How we treat others around us
- Listen to this thought on Grace:

*"We cannot make God love us more, and there is nothing we can do to make Him love us less...He already loves us as much as He can"*  
-Phillip Yancey

**Saying these things, consider Jesus' story in Matthew 20:**

- A. Landowner hires men in the morning. Pay will be a day's wages
- B. Hires men all day long, promises to pay them 'what is right'
- C. Pays last to arrive a full day's wages, same as all day worker's earnings
- D. Men complain: You're not fair to us!
- E. Landowner says,

*"He answered one of them, 'Friend, I haven't been unfair! Didn't you agree to work all day for the usual wage? Take your money and go. I wanted to pay this last worker the same as you. Is it against the law for me to do what I want with my money? Should you be jealous because I am kind to others?'"*  
vss. 13-15

**Here's the point of Grace:**

- God deals with us according to who *He* is, not according to who we are
  - Status in life doesn't matter to God
  - Lowly are treated fair, young are treated fair, terrible people we might write off are treated fair, seemingly 'good people' are treated fair
- God is always fair, you can count on this (at times we may not think so, but we don't know the heart and mind of God. After all, it is HIS Kingdom, He can do what He wants with his generosity)

**We are Called to Celebrate Grace!**

*“Those hired first protested / complained to the owner...”*

How do we learn to celebrate God's blessings in the lives of others?

- Can you really give a “YAY!” to a co-worker who gets promoted ahead of you?
- You know, when God appears to bless a friend, family member or neighbor....but not you?
- **Me Personally:** When I am afraid, I don't celebrate as much with others. Selfishness crowds out celebration, too.
- When I'm content, I find it easier to celebrate God blessing you....instead of me!
- Maybe as we pray for others, give thanks for the times when we rec'd Grace, then we will be learn to celebrate when Grace is given to others

## **Some Steps to Celebrating Grace**

***(It starts with)***

### **1. Confessing my complaints to God**

We all have them! Don't try to hide this fact from God!

- “God, it's not fair that you did so and so for Mike but not me!”
- Confession makes room for health in our souls

Do you ever expect that God should treat you different than other people?

- In this story, the all-day-workers wanted entitlement, more than the others
- When we think we are ‘something’ we need to go to God and search our hearts...

*(to celebrate Grace in others I should)*

### **2. Reflect on God's mercy in my life**

- Have you ever 'blown it' / 'messed up' and God forgave you? You expected to be 'found out' but you weren't? This is Grace. Be thankful!
- When did your punishment seem to be much lighter than deserved:
  - Maybe you got a lighter sentence at court?
  - Your employer let something slide and you continued to have a job
  - Your landlord let you pay your rent late instead of taking you to court
- Be thankful!

*(so, to celebrate Grace I should confess my complaints, reflect on God's mercy in my life and then I will)*

### 3. Celebrate **'over the top'** someone else's Grace

- The Prodigal Son's Dad threw a party!
- On Facebook, A note in the mail, text message, a small gift...something that puts your heart into it
- Be thankful in your prayers every day for how God is 'blessing' others

***(A 4<sup>th</sup> step in celebrating Grace is I will remember that )***

### 4. Grace is generous because of **God** not **me**

- Our performance will not change God's attitude towards us
- Stop trying to prove yourself to God, to work harder for His love, to show that you are sincere, to win His love.....simply receive it and enjoy life with Him!