

The Compelling Power of Grace

Jerry Bridges

I. Introduction.

- A. God's grace comes to us because of our union with Christ, not because of our performance.
(Ephesians 1:6; Romans 5:20-6:1ff; Galatians 5)
- B. If your concept of grace doesn't expose you to the possibility of abusing it, then you do not have the correct concept of grace. Limitless grace is dangerous, but effective.
- C. The solution is not to add legalism to grace, but to teach grace so well that we are gripped by its nature that we respond out of gratitude rather than duty.
- D. The deep realization of God's love for me through Christ will result in a desire to obey Him.
(Romans 4:8)
- E. Jesus earned God's grace for us.

II. Obedience and the spiritual disciplines are a response to God's mercy. (Romans 12:1)

- A. Acts of true obedience are prompted by love, not performance. (Galatians 5:6)
 - 1. These can only be produced by a deep experience with God's grace. Fear, duty, and guilt do not produce true obedience. (2 Corinthians 8:9ff)
 - 2. The gospel needs to be a part of our daily obedience, not just our salvation.
- B. An experience of Christ's love compels true obedience. (2 Corinthians 5:14-15; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:32; Colossians 3:12; 1 John 4:8-11)
 - 1. True holiness has at its heart God's glory, not his approval. We already have that through Christ.
 - 2. We need to understand God's love for us before we accept the challenge to holiness and to love others.

Application questions:

1. Do you find yourself afraid to believe that God's grace is limitless? How does your perspective on grace influence how you live out your Christian life?

2. Is your natural tendency to abuse grace or become legalistic? Do a little soul searching and try to understand why you have the tendency that you do. How does this teaching impact the issues that you wrestle with?

3. How does your understanding of grace play out in your relationships? In your expectations of your loved ones? In the training that you do? How can you ensure that your relationships/teaching reflect a true understanding of God's grace?
