

## **THE WAY OF GRACE: Embracing the Many Faces of Grace for All of Life**

Adapted by Les Welk from The Way of Grace by Glandion Carney with Marjean Brooks ©2014

*“Grace, you know, doesn’t have to do with forgiveness of sins alone. Grace is for all of life.”*

**Dallas Willard**

**14** And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth. **15** John testified about Him and cried out, saying, “This was He of whom I said, ‘He who comes after me has a higher rank than I, for He existed before me.’” **16** For of His fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. **17** For the Law was given through Moses; grace and truth were realized through Jesus Christ. **18** No one has seen God at any time; the only begotten God who is in the bosom of the Father, He has explained Him. **John 1:14-18**

**THE MANY FACES OF GRACE** - The Greek word **Charis** appears 156 times in the New Testament and is translated blessing 1, concession 1, credit 3, favor 11, gift 1, grace 122, gracious 2, gracious work 3, gratitude 1, thank 3, thankfulness 2, and thanks 6.

**8** Philip said, “Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.” **9** Jesus answered: “Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time? **Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.** How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? **10** Don’t you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work. **11** Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. **12** Very truly I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. **13** And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. **John 14:9-14**



### **1. FACING REALITY: The Grace of Acceptance**

This is the first step of many in letting go of the control we think we possess. We receive God’s invitation to willingly embrace His grace in the middle of whatever he has given or allowed, even when it comes alongside of events such as illness, weakness, loss, betrayal, abuse, and death. We honestly acknowledge our challenges for what they are as circumstances beyond our control.

*“He took Peter, James, and John along with him, and he began to be deeply troubled. My soul is overwhelmed with sorrow to the*

*point of death...” Mark 14:34*



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## 2. **EXPERIENCING THE PRESENCE: The Grace of Submission**

Grace that allows us to lay down our agendas, our own perspectives, and our own thoughts in order to make room to receive God's agenda, perspective, and thoughts. It is grace to view my circumstances from a heavenly point of view. It takes courage to submit, requiring God's grace. In submission we find strength to face specific challenges with specific expressions of grace.

<sup>36</sup> "Abba, Father," he said, "everything is possible for you. Take this cup from me. Yet not what I will, but what you will." **Mark 14:36**



## 3. **GIVING UP: The Grace of Relinquishment**

This is the grace that allows us to let go of what we hold onto protectively in our hands, whether it is a relationship, health, control, or cherished possession. It is a healthy "detachment", or hands off, of that we formerly grasped. It is the culmination of acceptance and submission.

*"Are you still sleeping and resting? Enough! The hour has come. Look, the Son of Man is delivered into the hands of sinners. <sup>42</sup> Rise! Let us go! Here comes my betrayer!"* **Mark 14: 41-42**

*"No one is ever united with Christ until he is willing to relinquish not sin only, but his whole way of looking at things."* **Oswald Chambers**



#### **4. STUCK IN AN AIRPORT: The Grace of Compassion**

The Grace of Compassion reflects the merciful graciousness of God that allows us to suffer with another person and bear their burden with them. It is awakened by prayer and fostered through an increased love for God. It calls upon us to observe and pay attention to those around us.

*<sup>35</sup> Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people. <sup>36</sup> But when He saw the multitudes, He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd.*  
**Matthew 9:35-36**



#### **5. GOD IS NOT MAD AT YOU: The Grace of Trust**

The Grace of Trust is a firm belief in the truth of God’s Word, his ability, and His character. Grace is a bridge to trust. In the midst of pain and suffering we can decide to place our confidence in God and His goodness rather than in our own resourcefulness. This “grace bridge,” and the trust to which it leads, are built and strengthened through time and experience. It may be necessary to lean into grace when seeking to build or rebuild broken trust between others and me.

*<sup>21</sup> For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:  
<sup>22</sup> “Who committed no sin, Nor was deceit found in His mouth”;  
<sup>23</sup> who, when He was reviled, did not revile in return; when He suffered, He did not threaten, but committed Himself to Him who judges righteously...”* **1 Peter 1:21-23**



## 6. **WOUNDED HEALERS: The Grace of Community**

Healing grace is fostered and delivered in community, not in isolation. It is a miracle of grace that the presence and work of the Lord are revealed in community in a fallen world, with fallen people who sin and are sinned against. God graces us in community by

surrounding us with other people who are wounded in different ways, even as we are wounded. As we relate to one another in healing ways, we show the world his love, mercy and grace. When we acknowledge and share our own woundedness, we can be healed and become a source of healing for others.

*May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had. **Romans 15:5***

*“The church should be a loving community where each person is able to be open and vulnerable and, at the same time, be fully accepted and loved. Many have found the opposite to be true, which is tremendously sad.”*

**Larry Crabb, The Safest Place on Earth**



## 7. **A CUP OF COOL WATER: The Grace of Comfort**

Receiving comfort in the grace of God is not always a feeling with an emotional high. It is a deep sense of knowing that God is faithful while learning to be alone and quiet with him. When we are in pain it is not always easy to recognize comfort, even when it comes from God. Pain often

changes the nature of relationships, because not everyone is able to endure suffering over a period of time. In such seasons the Grace of Comfort and sweet fellowship with God become even more critical to our spiritual health and growth, and to sensitize us to opportunities to provide comfort to others who are in need.

*The Spirit of the LORD is upon me, for he has anointed me to bring Good News to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim that captives will be released, that the blind will see, that the oppressed will be set free, and that the time of the LORD's favor has come. **Luke 4:18-19***



## 8. **LIFE IN THE SLOW LANE: The Grace of Simplicity**

This is the grace of finding God's beauty and love in the midst of weakness. Profundity is found in the simple. Through the grace of simplicity the mundane is transformed into a sacrament of worship. When life is complex, and we find ourselves increasingly incapable of dealing with its offerings, simplicity becomes a blessing. We never go wrong confessing our weakness in the face of challenge, for this makes way for the power of God to be perfected in me.

*But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to those who are like these children. **Matthew 19:14***



## 9. **POSSIBILITIES: The Grace of Hope**

*I am hopeful because of my friendship with Jesus, and because of my confidence in Him. Hope is not merely belief for a desired outcome. That may be nothing more than a wish. My hope is found in the name of the Lord and in His presence. The grace of hope flows through my confidence in that which is certain, and the only certainty to be found in this world is found in the One*

*who created it. The grace of hope turns my eyes away from circumstances and turns them toward Jesus.*

*Why are you in despair, O my soul? And why have you become disturbed within me? Hope in God, for I shall again praise Him For the help of His presence. **Psalms 42:5 (NASB)***



### ***STREAMS OF GRACE: The Grace of Living a New Way***

The power of undeserved grace melts and transforms the heart. The book of Hebrews talks about a “great shaking” that God causes in both the heavens and the earth. This shaking denotes the removal of things that *can* be shaken so that the things that *cannot* be shaken will remain. Grace finds us, and transforms the way we view our relationship to God, the world, and to other individuals. Grace doesn’t run from truth

about yourself, your circumstances, or your condition. It gives you courage to face them all.

*And after you have suffered a little while, the God of all grace, who has called you to his eternal glory in Christ, will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you. 1 Peter 5:10*

*“Genesis 6:8 says, ‘Noah found favor [grace] in the sight of the Lord.’ I grew up singing the Negro spiritual that put this same thought to music. But theologian J.A. Motyer says the best way to translate the meaning from the Hebrew is ‘**Grace found Noah.**’ Noah didn’t discover or find grace; instead grace found Noah. The difference is significant, because the action begins and ends with God being the initiator and extender of grace.” **Glandion Carney**, *The Way of Grace*, pp. 148-149*