Love and Grace-The Judgement-Free Zone of God

Ephesians 2:4-5

The notion of grace and radical acceptance can present a challenge for individuals with a Western and transactional mindset. These individuals are comfortable believing they can earn forgiveness through their actions. In our society there is often an emphasis on proving or deserving forgiveness by what we do. However, the core of grace lies in receiving forgiveness without the need to earn it.

To fully embrace the acceptance and forgiveness that grace offers one must be open to letting go of the urge to prove oneself or earn forgiveness. This involves shifting from a mindset of performance to one centered on surrender and acceptance. Surrender and Acceptance are the pathways to grace. This shift can be demanding for those conditioned to believe that forgiveness and their value are connected to their actions and achievements.

The very first step in grappling with the idea of receiving forgiveness is to realize it cannot be earned. Forgiveness is free. It is a gift from God. Unless the individual lets go of these deeply embedded beliefs it will hinder their ability to receive forgiveness.

Once we understand why we resist the idea of forgiveness being free we must work toward receiving the grace of God. It is not an easy process overcoming years of thinking, even unconsciously, that we must earn forgiveness from God. This change will only come with prayer and the study of God's word.

Recognizing grace involves understanding that it's a gift given freely not something earned or deserved. Grace is a one-sided relationship. Grace shouts with all the authority of the cross "You are Free," and "No matter what you do, I will continue to love you." We are not loved because we change. We are loved so we will change. Through forgiveness, God says I love you regardless of your addictions, regardless of your habits, regardless, regardless, regardless of your behavior. Accepting this truth can bring us the emotional freedom we so desperately search for. Forgiveness frees us by allowing us to live in the judgment-free zone of God's love. In this judgment-free zone, we can let go of the feelings of shame and guilt and the pressure of being perfect. Which is impossible.

It is necessary that each of us live in the land of God's grace. Living in grace announces to yourself your dependence on God. This is crucial if you want to begin to forgive yourself. We must begin to accept the idea that God has forgiven us. What God forgives, we dare not hold that against ourselves or anyone else. Our judgments are not greater than God's judgments.

When we are able to live in the mercy of God. When we are able to accept the cross of Jesus as an invitation to reconciliation. Then we will run, not walk into the arms of Jesus' forgiveness, understanding and knowing there is nothing greater than His love known to humanity. God's mercy prompted grace. Grace prompted forgiveness. Love is the catalyst for it all.

Blessings,
Pastor Gool