



Accepting Grace From God

MAIN THING

We must extend the most grace to the hardest person to forgive- yourself

SCRIPTURE

Romans 3:23, Psalm 32:3-5, 1 Timothy 1:12-16, Psalm 103:12-13, Romans 3:24

ICEBREAKER

What's the dumbest thing you ever did as a kid?

OPENING THOUGHT

One of the frustrating things about the Christian life is that we see ourselves continuing to need forgiveness for the same thing over and over again. Some of us struggle with the same sins for long periods of time, and it causes many of us to give up. We think of God's grace like a debit card- every time we sin and need forgiveness, it takes a little bit off of the balance off of it, until soon, it's run out. We can see God up there in heaven saying, "Well, I forgave you ten times, but now, this eleventh time, I'm just not going to. You've used up all the grace in your account, and I'm sorry to tell you, you're in the red."

The reason we think this way is simple- that's the way WE are. There's that old saying, "Fool me once, shame on you. Fool me twice, shame on me." If someone keeps messing up, after a while we lose patience and refuse to forgive. How many time will we let a person lie to us before we stop believing them? How many times will we trust someone and have them betray us?

Fortunately, God is different than we are. When God forgives, He truly forgives. There is no limit on His grace.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What was one thing that stood out to you from this weekend's message?
2. Why is guilt such a paralyzing emotion? Has guilt ever stopped you from being who God wants you to be?
3. Interestingly enough, it isn't guilt that stops us from accepting the grace of God. It is PRIDE. Pride is the antithesis of grace. How does pride work to stop the acceptance of grace in your life?

LIFE APPLICATION

When we don't accept the grace of God for ourselves, it shows. We are not at peace with the world. We are not at peace with our friends or family, because we aren't at peace with God or ourselves. It is always easy to tell a person who has not accepted the grace of God for himself or herself- they extend no grace to others.

Accepting the grace of God for yourself is the quickest way to rid yourself of legalism and judgmentalism. Are you a harsh person? Are you a judgmental person? Are you slow to forgive and quick to bring up the past? If so, the problem may not be with others. The problem is more likely with you.

CHALLENGE

This week, work on accepting the grace of God for yourself. Fix no one but yourself. Don't focus on the shortcomings of others or the craziness in the lives of other people. Simply tend your own house; your own life. Are you a person who is at peace with

God due to your acceptance of His grace? That's the goal this week. When that is in place, the rest of your life will be easier to understand.