

# FAITH WORDS TALK SERIES

## Grace

*Then the father said to him, “Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours.”*

*Luke 15:31*

Okay, so I have chosen to write about a scripture that is likely a story you already know by heart. But I'm going to do it anyway. Each day, I see something new in media or TV that reminds me the importance of today's Faith Word...*Grace*. I think there are similarities to the family squabble related to a father's inheritance distribution and the distress among political parties, cultures, and countries. Maybe we should all be grace advocates and by our actions slowly change the way the world expresses grace.

The Gospel of Luke tells the story of a loving and successful father who divides his property among his two sons. One son asks for his share early in life with no thought of it being divided after his father dies. You know how it goes, he receives his share and moves away from his home and family in search of something special in life. After wasting his inheritance and experiencing extreme poverty, going to dinner with the hogs in the pig pen, he returns to his father's home humbled.

The young man declares his unworthiness to be called “son” and even suggested that he become a slave living off leftovers from family meals. He figured the food would be better at any entry into the home he remembered as a place of plenty for everyone within the walls. Admittedly, I struggle a little with the quick response, but we'll get to that analogy near the end of this TALK.

His father responded to his request to return by giving him gifts and throwing a big celebration for the youngster's homecoming. Can any of us doubt that the young man experienced grace in a big way? But grace from a father can be frighteningly removed by a brother who feels jilted in the transaction. I really can't create a good argument to keep the older son from taking the stand he did. I think perhaps my reaction here is because jealousy over good fortunes of others, brother or not, is a difficult feeling to overcome in the factions I mentioned in paragraph one.

Like the Prodigal Son, we may feel unworthy of the gifts in life we enjoy each day of our life. Feelings of unforgiveness like the older brother felt and displayed may block the flow of good in our lives. That's when the story shifts to remind us we should recognize and release negative thoughts and feelings. When we let go, we open up our entire being to God's grace. We acknowledge the grace extended to us by other human beings in our groups and individual acquaintances and consider it a gift we should never turn down.

Learning to recognize that the universe will forever continue to unfold just as it should reminds me and you this message of grace continues. I believe we should remember to pause, breathe, and center our heart and mind. We move mindfully through the activities of each day by including prayer and seeking divinely inspired ideas to enhance our lives.

When we recognize and let go of limiting thoughts that block our experience of God's divine order, we recognize God is the ultimate welcoming father. The Father is the pure stream of divine ideas to shape our thoughts, our words, and our actions. Accepting divine guidance will help us gain focus and perhaps learn to be forgiving to others.

Can we change the age-old rifts between cultures, political parties, and warring countries? Probably not, but we can pray for peace and understanding. We can seek God's guidance for organizations and people who are perpetually at odds. We can demonstrate to the world how changes can occur when we pray for strength to offer grace to those with whom we differ.

May God's grace to us become the guiding light that illuminates others with the power of forgiving and forgetting grace.

Peace Always

*Ted*