

PEACEFUL THROUGH GRACE

(Peace continued...by Grace)

For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people.

Titus 2:11 (NLT)

Occasionally Sandy and I go shopping for clothes for me. She likes to keep me in style...difficult I know. Recently we were in line to pay at one of the major department stores. We witnessed a customer being very rude to the young woman who was helping him with his order. He was demanding and disrespectful. He said mean things to her, continually telling her to "hurry up" until she was almost in tears.

Then I saw something wonderful happen. The rude man left the store and the woman who was next in line talked to the young woman with words of comfort. She asked for her name and told her she had watched her and was moved by her "courtesy and smile." She told the worker she would write a letter of commendation to the store. They completed the transaction. Before she left, the customer said, "I'm a server at a well-known and expensive restaurant. She gave her an invitation card and told her the company rewards "Deserving people" with a dinner for 1 to 4 people. She said, "Ask for me, I want to serve you."

This is an example of grace as we think it – a gift freely given. Think of it as kindness. By God's grace we live in a world of remarkable beauty and each one of us is offered God's love. This love and kindness are God's choice – Gifts freely given. Grace. The theologians among us will hear that word and think, "AHA! Grace...the unmerited favor of God." Good definition, and we surely need that. We also need the grace, the unmerited favor, of friends and neighbors. Especially brothers and sisters in Christ sharing equally among each other.

Why grace? Because somehow, over the course of my life, I have seen what appears to be an inevitable shrinkage of the pool of grace available in our world. I am seeing changes in behavior that seem totally different from the kindness we all seek. It feels more difficult to find service organizations that freely offer a bit of "grace" when things get tight. Let's pray together that our actions of care and forgiveness will permeate the less forgiving people in society. We should see changes in bitter people, love them anyway. We can seek others who think and behave like the people who chose to follow the teaching of Jesus 2,000 years ago to today.

We ask the question, "Where is the grace?" According to the words to Titus, we readily agree to gather, "*For the grace of God has been revealed, bringing salvation to all people.*"

Peace Always

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