

## Lesson 18

# GRACE

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**Principle 6:** Evaluate all my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm I've done to others, except when to do so would harm them or others.

*“Happy are the merciful (Matthew 5:7)  
“Happy are the peacemakers.” (Matthew 5:9)*

**Step 9:** We made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

*“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift.” (Matthew 5:23–24)*

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## Introduction

Tonight, we are going to finish discussing Principle 6. We have talked about how to evaluate all our relationships, offer forgiveness to those who have hurt us, and make amends for the harm that we have done to others, when possible without expecting anything back.

As we grow as Christians and as we grow in our recovery, we want to follow the guidance and directions of Jesus Christ. As we get to know Him better, we want to model His teachings and model His ways. We want to become more like Him. Honestly, if we are going to implement Principle 6 to the best of our ability, we need to learn to model God's grace. But how?

## Grace

The key verses of Celebrate Recovery are 2 Corinthians 12:9–10 (NCV): “But he said to me, ‘My grace is enough for you. When you are weak, my power is made perfect in you.’ So I am very happy to brag about my weaknesses. Then Christ's

power can live in me. For this reason I am happy when I have weaknesses, insults, hard times, sufferings, and all kinds of troubles for Christ. Because when I am weak, then I am truly strong.”

Let’s look at tonight’s acrostic: GRACE.

**G**od’s gift  
**R**eceived by our faith  
**A**ccepted by God’s love  
**C**hrist paid the price  
**E**verlasting gift

The *G* in grace is GOD’S gift

Grace is a gift. Grace cannot be bought. It is freely given by God to you and me. When we offer (give) our amends and expect nothing back, that’s a gift from us to those whom we have hurt.

Romans 3:24 (NCV) tells us, “All need to be made right with God by his grace, which is a free gift. They need to be made free from sin through Jesus Christ.”

First Peter 1:13 (NCV) says, “Prepare your minds for service and have self-control. All your hope should be for the gift of grace that will be yours when Jesus Christ is shown to you.”

If my relationship with God was dependent on my being perfect, I would have trouble relating to God most of the time. Thank God that my relationship with Him is built on His grace and love for me. He gives the strength to make the amends and offer the forgiveness that Principle 6 requires.

And how do we receive God’s gift of grace? That’s the *R* in grace:  
**RECEIVED** by our faith.

No matter how hard we may work, we cannot earn our way into heaven. Only by professing our faith in Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior can we experience His grace and have eternal life.

Ephesians 2:8–9 says, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.”

Let me share another verse with you. Philippians 3:9 (TLB) states, “No longer counting on being saved by being good enough or by obeying God’s laws, but by trusting Christ to save me; for God’s way of making us right with himself depends on faith—counting on Christ alone.”

You and I tend to be more interested in what we *do*. God is more interested in what we *are*.

Romans 5:2 says of Jesus, “Through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.”

Just a word of warning: Our walk needs to match our talk. Our beliefs and values are seen by others in our actions. And it is through our faith in Christ that we can find the strength and courage needed for us to take the action Principle 6 requires: making your amends and offering your forgiveness.

The next letter in grace is *A*. We are ACCEPTED by God’s love.

God loved you and me while we were still out there sinning. Romans 5:8 says, “God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”

We can, in turn, love others because God first loved us. We can also forgive others because God first forgave us. Colossians 3:13 (TLB) says, “Be gentle and ready to forgive; never hold grudges. Remember, the Lord forgave you, so you must forgive others.”

Ephesians 2:5 (NCV) reminds us that “Though we were spiritually dead because of the things we did against God, he gave us new life with Christ. You have been saved by God’s grace.”

I don’t know about you, but I know that I do not deserve God’s love. But the good news is He accepts me in spite of myself! He sees all my failures and loves me anyway. And the same goes for you.

Hebrews 4:16 (NCV) tells us, “Let us, then, feel very sure that we can come before God’s throne where there is grace. There we can receive mercy and grace to help us when we need it.”

Let’s move on to the *C* in grace: Christ paid the price.

Jesus died on the cross so that all our sins, all our wrongs, are forgiven. He paid the price, sacrificed Himself for you and me so that we may be with Him forever.

When we accept Christ’s work on the cross, we are made a new creation. We can then rely on God’s strength and power to enable us to forgive those who have hurt us. We can set aside our selfishness and speak the truth in love. We focus only on our part in making amends or offering our forgiveness.

Ephesians 1:7 (NCV) says, “In Christ we are set free by the blood of his death, and so we have forgiveness of sins. How rich is God’s grace.”

The last letter in grace is *E*: God’s grace is an EVERLASTING gift.

Once you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord, God’s gift of grace is forever.

Let me read a quote from the Big Book of AA, pages 83–84: “Once you have completed Step Nine, you will know a new freedom and a new happiness.... you will comprehend the word serenity and know peace.... You will suddenly realize that God is doing for you what you could not do for yourself.”

And here's a quote from the *real* Big Book—the Bible: “And I am sure that God who began the good work within you will keep right on helping you grow in his grace until his task within you is finally finished on that day when Jesus Christ returns” (Philippians 1:6 TLB).

Also, 2 Thessalonians 2:16 (NCV) states, “May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father encourage you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say. God loved us, and through his grace he gave us a good hope and encouragement that continues forever.”

My life verse is 1 Peter 2:9–10 (TLB), where God says, “For you have been chosen by God himself—you are priests of the King, you are holy and pure, you are God's very own—all this so that you may show to others how God called you out of the darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were less than nothing; now you [John Baker] are God's own. Once you knew very little of God's kindness; now your very lives have been changed by it.”

I stand before you as a product of God's grace. Everyone here this evening who has let Christ into his or her life is also a product of God's grace. As we model this grace, we will be able to do the work that Principle 6 requires.

Let's close tonight with Colossians 1:6: “All over the world this gospel is bearing fruit and growing, just as it has been doing among you since the day you heard it and understood God's grace in all its truth.”