

Published based on [Seeing Through the Eyes of Grace](#)

Seeing Through the Eyes of Grace

For many years I have begun each day by reading God's Word. I have had a deep realization that I must live my life in dependence upon God because He is the only source of my strength. I have lived with the knowledge that without Him I can do nothing.

Last year I found myself, as a Christian leader, sitting in a counselor's office examining my deepest motivations. I shared with the counselor my pain and how I felt unable to read my Bible and pray because I felt betrayed by God Himself. I shared how I had been completely devoted to God for so many years. How I never began a day without reading the Word. How I knew I could not stray from His side or else I would surely fall into sin. My counselor responded in a way that has troubled me ever since. He said, "And you could be walking with God and fall." Like a dagger, his words pierced my heart. The Holy Spirit confirmed the truth of it. The ripples of my personal earthquake continued. I looked deeply into my own heart. It was true. Somehow, in the effort to lean on God, what I had really done was lean on my ability to lean on God.

Now that might sound like a matter of semantics, but there is a difference. For me it was a moment of revelation. And I found myself exposed in the eyes of God. This passage explains it best:

Hebrews 4:12-13 (Amplified Bible)

12For the Word that God speaks is alive and full of power [making it active, operative, energizing, and effective]; it is sharper than any two-edged sword, penetrating to the dividing line of the [a]breath of life (soul) and [the immortal] spirit, and of joints and marrow [of the deepest parts of our nature], exposing and sifting and analyzing and judging the very thoughts and purposes of the heart.

13And not a creature exists that is concealed from His sight, but all things are open and exposed, naked and defenseless to the eyes of Him with Whom we have to do.

God had come and divided between the thoughts and purposes of my heart. I was open and exposed, naked and defenseless before my God.

Truly it takes the Spirit of God to judge our hearts. We cannot trust our own motivations and thoughts. And I thought I understood that. That was the very reason I was so devoted. Because I had no trust in myself. Hmmm.

Subtle. A subtle difference. The difference between works and grace. The difference between me controlling my works and motivations and thoughts and God controlling them.

Although I realize this may be confusing, I pray you will ponder what I am saying. Our tendency as humans is to depend upon ourselves. We really hate having to deny ourselves.

Grace. God giving us the ability to live as humans full of the Spirit of God, leaning and depending on Him. Realizing that we are His glorious creation and that when we live as Christ did – a human filled with the Spirit of God – that is what it means to be fully alive.

Sometime later my counselor asked me to pray about something because “I was a prayer warrior”. I wanted to scream – “No, I am not a prayer warrior! I don’t pray the same way I used to!” Again, he challenged me. “A prayer warrior is someone who prays from their heart – a little or a lot – but from the heart. Maybe you are praying from the heart more than ever.”

Another friend suggested that my journals were in fact prayer. Ah, religiousness is such a subtle enemy. Choking the life out of our spiritual being by giving us formulas or laws. My thoughts were again exposed. Yes, I had set some sort of arbitrary standard for being a prayer warrior.

So as I look at living a new way, perhaps I have a better grip on grace – or grace has a better grip on me.

Amazing grace, how sweet the sound, that saved a wretch like me. I once was lost but now I’m found. Was blind but now I see.

Seeing through the eyes of grace. Seeing others. Seeing myself. Seeing Christ.

I understand that the Chinese have an interesting way of forming the word “crisis.” It is composed of two symbols, one for danger and one for opportunity. And if crisis is the juncture between danger and opportunity, then perhaps my crisis can be an opportunity to grow and change and see more clearly through the eyes of grace.

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