

Grace is a gift that costs everything for the giver and nothing from the recipient.

Grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us more, and grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us less. Phillip Yancey

FORGIVENESS

"Forgiveness, we discover, is always harder than sermons make it out to be."

Elizabeth O'Conner

2 Peter 1:3-4 (NIV) ³ His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and goodness. ⁴Through these He has given us His very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

Ephesians 4:17 (TLB) Let me say this, then, speaking for the Lord: Live no longer as the unsaved do, for they are blinded and confused.

Ephesians 4:31-32 (NLT) ³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of evil behavior. ³² Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

Consider that the very word forgive contains the word "give," just as the word pardon contains donum, or gift.

Matthew 5:43-45 (NKJV) ⁴³ "You have heard that it was said, '*You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.*' ⁴⁴ But I say to you, love your enemies, bless those who curse you, do good to those who hate you, and pray for those who spitefully use you and persecute you, ⁴⁵ that you may be sons of your Father in heaven; for He makes His sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust.

1 John 4:19 (NIV) We love because he first loved us.

Being the first to say, "I'm sorry," being the first to say "I forgive," is God like character

1 Corinthians 13:5 (NIV) It (Love) is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, **it keeps no record of wrongs.**

Romans 12:19-21 (NIV) ¹⁹ Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. ²⁰ On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." ²¹ Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Growing in grace means growing in forgiveness. Growing in grace means growing in the desire and ability to forgive. Growing in grace means growing in God, and growing in God means becoming more like Him, participating in His Divine Nature.