

## Grace for Every Season

### ***Mother's Day***

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Have you ever had a job where you had no experience, no training, you weren't allowed to quit, and people's lives were at stake? *Welcome to motherhood!*

ALL MOMS STAND. LET'S HONOR THEM WITH APPLAUSE. THANK YOU, MOMS!!

- Becoming a mother makes you realize that you can do almost anything one handed.
- The quickest way for a parent to get a child's attention is to sit down and look comfortable (or go to the bathroom, take shower, or take a phone call)

***Ruth Bell Graham, "As a mother, my job is to take care of the possible and trust God with the impossible."***

Exciting milestone happening in our house this week: we are graduating our 2<sup>nd</sup> grader!! Perhaps this doesn't sound like a big deal, but this year we "schooled at home" – honestly, reaching this milestone feels like a marathon – any other moms identify?

This has been quite the year, right? Whether you have homeschooled, schooled at home, went to in-person instruction, worked virtually, worked from home, worked away from home, were a stay-at-home parent, etc., this has been an interesting year and it has caused us all to adjust the way we do life...requiring a lot of GRACE!!

In a few minutes, there will be some more ladies joining me on the stage and we're going to have a little Q&A about encountering God's grace in our different seasons of motherhood.

My hope in these next few moments is to "set the table" and share a few thoughts about grace.

Summarizing a commentary from **Andrew Murray**, he states, ***"Grace = gracious nature of God which moves Him to love us freely without merit (through we don't deserve it or cannot earn it) and to bestow (gift) all His blessings on us. Then it also means that power through which this grace does its work in us."***

Grace includes all He has done for us and still does (his redeeming work), all He has and gives, and all He is to us and in us.

My paraphrase, grace = the supply of the Father's perfect love and His empowering presence.

**2 Corinthians 12:9 (NLT):**

***"My grace is all you need. My power works best in weakness." So now I am glad to boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ can work through me.***

Word exchange for grace in above passage – the supply of the Father’s perfect love, His empowering presence

Graham Cooke: *“Grace is the empowering presence of God that enables you to become what He sees when He looks at you.”*

## 2 Peter 1: 3 (TPT)

**Everything we could ever need for life and godliness has already been deposited in us by his divine power. For all this was lavished upon us through the *rich experience of knowing him who has called us by name and invited us to come to him through a glorious manifestation of his goodness.***

**The grace giver is our greatest gift. He is our infinite supply.**

## Psalm 23:1 (NIV)

**The Lord is my shepherd, I lack nothing.**

Psalm 23:1 (NLT) The Lord is my shepherd, I have all that I need.

I realize for some of you today, Mother’s Day, is a difficult day for you:

For those struggling this morning, walking the painful path of infertility, *I pray that the Father’s sustaining grace would cover you, that you would know that He is near, He sees you – I pray He would pull you out of despair and place you on a rock, secure in his love and plans for you.*

For those that have lost a mother or child, *I pray for comfort, I ask that the tender-loving kindness of our Father would draw close to you and bring healing to your grieving heart. I pray his perfect love would be your shelter and resting place.*

*Father, I pray that each of us here today would have a fresh encounter with grace. I thank you that no matter what circumstances or season we find ourselves in today, that you are our infinite supply, that in You is all that we need. Give us each greater grace to press into the limitless supply of perfect love you have available to each of us.*

**Transition to Panel**

## **Mom Panel, intro kids/family (photos) and #momfails (5 minutes)**

*\*Each intro family and share mom fail in 1 minute.*

### **Kris (intro family)**

You know when your kids are horsing around, it's late at night, someone gets hurt, starts crying. You, of course, tend to the crying child, but it's late, they're so tired, they are being "dramatic" – you say: "you'll feel better once you have a good night's sleep." Only to have said child awake the next morning, still in pain, unable to move their leg (strained quads and hamstring) – weeks of recovery. #momfail

### **Crystal (intro family)**

My Mom fail story begins with a simple pacifier sanitizing session and ends with smoke throughout the house, a pan that will never be the same, and a range hood with permanent smoke damage.

### **Marci (intro family)**

Mom fail story: I forgot my daughter's passport on our trip to France. I did not realize it until we were at the airport and we missed our flight because of it. God in his grace provided in-laws who drove to the airport with the missing passport, and after several hours at the airport trying to get our flight rescheduled, an attendant who got us on another flight the next day with no extra expenses.

### **Sharon (intro family)**

Mom fail – We have a tradition that started during my months of getting chemo. Rodney and Julianne would find me at church on Sunday mornings and give me a hug – a couple times I would gladly receive the hug and talk to them and then lick my thumb and use it to try to wipe something off their faces - they would say – Mom, not in church! Ugh - #Momfail!

### **Lisa (intro family)**

I need to explain the context for this story. I am the mother of five daughters and one son. Our son was #5 in the lineup, so I had years of experience raising daughters ahead of raising a son. When he was ten years of age, he was playing midget football. Several times either before or after practice he would mention to me that he needed a 'cup'. Being distracted with other details of life in a big family I hadn't paid attention to his multiple requests. Finally, one day before practice he asked, a bit frustrated, "Mom, I *really* need a cup" and my response to him with a bit of impatience was, "Son, there is plenty of Tupperware in the cabinet!"

## Q&A – “Grace through the ages” panel questions (20 min)

*\*Average of 5 mins per each interaction (this includes questions being asked and responses, and any interaction if/as time allows)*

### Questions

**Kris (Crystal): What does God’s grace mean to you during this season of raising littles?**

**Crystal**

We’re going to hear different aspects of grace during our time today but I’m going to talk about receiving God’s grace and giving ourselves grace.

Wouldn’t you agree that this isn’t necessary our strong suit as women in general? We can be really hard on ourselves and have unrealistic expectations for ourselves in so many areas of life! But my message to us today is, “you have grace to face what you are going to face today, and you don’t need to worry about tomorrow!” Maybe you’re in a very demanding season like myself. Mom or not, maybe you feel pulled many different directions. Take a deep breath and receive the grace and strength for today and trust God with tomorrow.

I love how [Proverbs 31:25](#) (yes, I said Proverbs 31 on Mother’s Day. I know it’s a super high standard for women, don’t worry you’ll like this one. It’s ok, it’s not the verse about making all your own clothes.) Prov 31:25 says, “[she can laugh at the days to come.](#)” I love that picture! We can take life as it comes, ladies! We don’t have to worry about the teen years if we are a mom of littles. We don’t have to worry about our kids facing hard times as they grow up. As a homeschool mom I don’t need to worry about my kid not graduating. Give your best today. God has grace for us down the road to face whatever comes our way. Release the future into the hands of your very capable Father. Let’s be those who can laugh at the days to come, who focus on loving well today, serving well today, and trusting God with tomorrow.

**Kris to Crystal: What would I say to the future mom?**

It’s been said many times before, but mothering is truly one of the most demanding yet most rewarding things you can face. I’d say, like most things in life, it’s all about perspective. You can have the perspective that you won’t have what it takes and that it’s too hard, or you can have the mindset that you have what it takes. To the future mom I would say, “You are tough”. As women, we are tough. If you’re a soon to be mother, you’re going to find that out. Maybe it will be in an unwelcome way like helping one child with homework you don’t understand while dealing with their sister’s temper tantrum while holding the baby, and in the meantime while trying not to burn dinner... but you’ll find it out! You are empowered to take on huge challenges and rock at it! Just try and guard your mind against thoughts of self-doubt. God made you strong and able to overcome any obstacle in your way. You have exactly what it takes.

**Kris (to Marci): Marci, you are in a season of raising teenagers, how do you receive grace in this season of mothering?**

**Marci**

**2 Cor. 12:9 (NIV)**

**But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.” Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may rest on me.**

El Shaddai – God who is all sufficient. He provides everything I need and understands the path that He has called me to. This is not just competence drawn from his character and but also the flow of God’s power through me (Arthur Burk). I need to admit limitations and receive the power of his all-sufficient grace.

In this season with teens, this looks like acknowledging that what my children need from me is different from when they were young and changing my parenting skills. Trusting God to show me how and ways I need to continue to die to myself. Asking other moms who are further on the journey for their wisdom and encouragement.

**Kris (to Marci): We not only get to receive grace for ourselves, but we can also be grace givers. Would you also share how you show grace (pour out) in your mothering?**

**Prayer**

**Lamentations 2:19**

**“Pour out your heart like water before the face of the Lord. Lift up your hands toward him for the life of your young children. “**

Not being a perfect parent but a praying parent (Stormie Omartian). Accessing the power of God’s presence to work in our children’s lives and on their behalf. Our prayers have an eternal impact.

As women and life givers we can all be fruitful in prayer.

**Kris (to Sharon): Sharon, how do you feel that you show God's grace to your children in your current stage of mothering?**

**Sharon**

Good morning! Yes - I have two young adult children – Rodney, who is 25 and Julianne who is 23. I am truly enjoying this stage of mothering. I have learned that my role as a mother in this stage is to come alongside! Grace in this stage involves the parts of grace reflected in being tactful, courteous, allowing room for trial and error, generally being gracious! It reminds me of the way that Paul mentored Timothy. I come alongside and equip Rodney and Julianne to make decisions, to discover their God-given gifts, and to follow the call of God on their lives!

Incidentally, I believe also that love in this stage could be spelled T-I-M-E! Julianne still lives at home and we set aside time each week to have devotions together. Rodney lives in Ephrata now, so we set aside Wednesday supper as a time for us all to meet and talk. Also – often we are together Friday evenings too! Our discussions in years back were about choosing a career and so on, now our discussions can be about financial decisions, choosing a mate, buying a car, relationship or job scenarios playing out in real time, politics, COVID 19 and so on! I try very much to have grace to help them to find their answers in God's Word or in remembering things they already know AND when needed I give them my thoughts/convictions and advise them to add that to their thinking RATHER than telling them what to do or what to think!

Coming alongside also involves encouraging out loud privately or in front of others – expressing my full confidence in them.

Like Paul saw in Timothy, I see value in my kids.

Like Paul wanted to take Timothy along on the journey, I want to have my kids on the journey of following God with me!

Like Paul, said about Timothy in **Philippians 2:20 (NIV), I have no one else like him**, I say – Rodney, you are the man for this! You are amazing with middle-schoolers! Believe in yourself! Go for it! I say – Julianne, I always knew that you would be good at up-dos, at doing hair – you are creative! Your fingers fly! You are able to talk and work at the same time! You are amazing! You are the woman for the job!

It is truly an honor to come alongside my adult children! I love the opportunity to be gracious to them, to help to equip them to follow the call of God on their lives and to handle regular life situations, to encourage them to go for it- to be who God created them to be AND to spend time with them, to listen to them, to value my relationship with them! I say to them like Paul said to Timothy – **For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands. 2 Timothy 1:6 (NIV)**

**Kris (to Lisa): What would you say to the younger, new mom, Lisa?**

**Lisa**

- Engage with your children more playfully. Don't be so serious. Mothers tend to spend a lot of time forward thinking.
- Listen more attentively and be curious, ask questions such as, "tell me more about why you don't think Jessica likes you."
- Every child is an individual/ strive to see their God-given abilities and strengths and don't focus on what you see as their "problematic behavior".

**Kris (to Lisa): What would you say to the moms of teens and young adults?**

**Lisa**

- Grace is an exercise in love, sometimes that involves tough love. Be careful that you don't rescue when they are in the HARD. For years we had a note attached to a cabinet by the kitchen sink with attributes of a strong family. One of those attributes read 'every crisis is an opportunity.' We have a choice in those difficult times to 'choose to trust' Jesus. Not only is this the right thing to do but it becomes an exercise in faith and builds us. ***Trials and troubles are treadmills for the soul. (Red Sea Rules, Robert Morgan)***
- Don't hesitate to seek counsel for yourself and your children. Pastor Brian Coles reflected upon the benefits of counsel in last week's sermon. Sometimes we grow to tolerate behaviors and circumstances we shouldn't and then we come to accept them as 'normal.'
- PRAY. Prayer is a tremendous resource and we have been given access to it 24/7. Join a Moms in Touch group or start your own. Gather a group of praying mom friends and use the time intentionally. There is such power in corporate prayer. ***There is something about praying with another person that intensifies prayer and sends it to heaven with greater velocity. (Red Sea Rules, Robert Morgan)***

I recall a time when I was parenting our first two daughters when my father said something along the lines of "you will make mistakes as a parent" and I remember railing inside because I wanted so badly to be a perfect parent. Eventually of course, I recognized that perfection in this life is impossible. What I acknowledge now as a mother of forty-two years, is ultimately it's ALL GRACE. It is the GRACE of GOD that my children have become who they are, loving Jesus, committed in marriage, raising their children to know and trust Jesus.

## **KRIS (Closing, additional 5 minutes)**

Kris transitions us to prayers & declarations. Panel stand and move to front of stage.

Ask ladies in congregation to stand and posture to receive.

### **Prayers / Declaration** (Shown on Teleprompter)

#### **Crystal**

I release to you the grace to trust God with ALL your tomorrows. To step out of worry, fear or self-doubt and lean into Jesus with all your heart. The Father cares about you, He cares about your family, He cares about your kids and He is faithful to lead, protect, and nurture them even better than you can. So, in the name of Jesus, I speak the ability, no matter your circumstances, to trust in the Lord with all of your heart and laugh at the days to come.

#### **Marci**

I bless you with resting in his presence when you are weary and having your spirit renewed. I bless you with his comfort and encouragement in hard times. I bless you with experiencing his delight and love over you in new ways each day.

#### **Romans 15:13**

“And now, may the God of all hope fill you with joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.”

#### **Sharon**

God, we know that you are our source of hope and strength and that you have a plan for each of us before You created us – we declare that You will give strength to each of us as we work to give grace to our children, our friends, our community to follow the call that you have for each of their lives! We declare that You will give each of us the strength to follow your plan for our lives! God, of our strength – we wait on You! You are our sure defense! You are forever and always – from the beginning to the end – You do not change!

#### **Lisa**

Father God, I declare and decree that as we choose to trust You in our painful and difficult circumstances You will find our faith alive and strong, and your grace will overflow and fill us like a torrent.

#### **Kris**

The Lord bless you, and keep you, make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face toward you and give you peace. Amen

Kris – prayer ministers available, ladies 18+ pick up gift, dismissal.

The worship team plays *The Blessing*.