



The Demands of Grace Part 2

Last Sunday, I began our series for the month of June entitled, “The Demands of Grace” and last Sunday I taught how Grace demands a higher level of Living. Today I am going to continue our series with an emphasis on the fact that Grace not only demands a higher level of living but also demands a higher level of love! Tina Turner is known for her number one hit “What’s love got to do with it?” and the entire theme of the song was questioning what love has to do with a relationship. Unlike Tina Turner, Jesus declared that Love has everything to do with it. Love is what drove Christ to come to the Earth, manifest Miracles in the lives of people, and ultimately find His place upon a Cross and it was love that caused Him to do all these things. Whether it was His decision to wash the feet of the disciples or

His decision to return to the Heavenly Father, the central thread of the tapestry of the Gospel is simply found in one word, “love”.

He demonstrated His love in washing the feet of men who would ultimately leave Him to die alone but His love caused Him to kneel down as God to wash the feet of fallible men. He demonstrated His love by sending the Holy Ghost so that those whom He loved would not feel alone and would have a comforter to be with them throughout life’s journeys.

“Well Pastor, God is love!” Is he really? If He is, then that means that the truest expression of a person who loves God is that they love others especially those who are a part of the Faith. The concept of Faith working through love is a deep, yet necessary application that builds and fortifies the inner most being of a Christian. Our ability to demonstrate love comes as a natural human response but we find ourselves, due to our fallen nature, classifying “love” as an emotion that is in need of a response. I would dare to argue that love is more than emotion because if love is strictly confined to an emotion then someone loving a car is as equally valuable as the love that is shared between a man and His wife. And this simply isn’t so...

The term “love” has become almost a superficial notion or a moniker if you will, but love is so much more than words or even actions. Love is a being that wrapped Himself in flesh, was born of a virgin womb, and placed Himself upon a cruel cross of execution not because His actions annotated His being; rather it was His being that

caused His actions. Love was found upon a tree, shamefully stretch out for the world to see. It is in our being to love because we are made in His image and His likeness; thus our identity isn't found in our actions, but rather in our being!

It has been said that Doxology determines Theology and Theology determines Doxology. Simply put, how one worships (One's Doxology) determines how one believes (One's Theology) and how one believes determines how one worships.

If we were to take the same train of thought and place love in the position of doxology, it could be easily ascertained that how we love determines how we believe and how we believe determines how we love. Our love should determine our thinking, our ethics, and our response to life; no matter if things are good or bad.

The power of Love and its connection to each step of development of one's Christian Faith is central to the unfolding of Salvation and the driving need of Christian Community. Love is the thread that holds the tapestry of the Church and the Gospel together. It is the instruction of Scripture that continues the foundational development of love unhindered.

Love is the agent by which the concrete of Scriptures seeks to set the very foundation of Theology. Theology, Faith, and Love are three equally paralleled entities that should each hold a place of power in the life of the Christian and these three are keys to the furthering of the Christian Pilgrimage. We must never forget that we are

sojourners in this world and this world is not our home! And if we are to finish the race set before us then we must walk in sound doctrine, a sure Faith, and with sincere love; and above all, love. So point #1...

1) Grace Demands a Higher Level of Love that leads to Honor –

- i. **The Gospel of Saint Matthew chapter 22 records a conversation between Christ and the Pharisees during which the Pharisees were seeking to challenge the Theology of Christ concerning the Word of God. The irony of this exchange is we have a group of people who claim to be Scholars of the Word testing the very manifestation of the Word of God (Jesus) concerning the Written Word of God. And it is through this challenge that we receive one of the greatest revelations concerning Love and Honor. Notice with me in the Gospel of Saint Matthew 22:34-40...**
- ii. **Matthew 22:34-40 - ³⁴ But when the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together. ³⁵ And one of them, a lawyer, asked Him a question to test Him. ³⁶ “Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?” ³⁷ And he said to Him, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. ³⁸ This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as**

yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets.”

- iii. Notice the equivalence that Jesus outlines by stating that Our Love for God and Our Love for Others is the very foundation stones upon which the entire Bible stands. Jesus said that on these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets. Simply put, the fulfillment of the Word of God in the life of the Believer is based upon our Love Factor towards God and Others and **BOTH ARE EQUALLY IMPORTANT!** Our Love should cultivate a sense of honor and appreciation for both God and our neighbor.
- iv. This gives us a deeper insight into the fact that We cannot say that we love God and not love others nor vice versa. Our love life with the Lord Jesus releases our capacity to love others as our self; it was the Love of God that was shed abroad in our hearts by the Power of the Holy Ghost that allows us to perform this task of loving others.
- v. **The Apostle Paul noted in Romans 5:5-11, “⁵ and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.⁶ For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. ⁷ For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for**

a good person one would dare even to die— ⁸ but God shows His love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. ⁹ Since, therefore, we have now been justified by His blood, much more shall we be saved by Him from the wrath of God. ¹⁰ For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by His life. ¹¹ More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation.”

- vi. In the Gospel of **Saint Matthew 10:32-33**, Jesus is addressing His disciples and He makes the following statement to them **“So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.”**
- vii. This statement is one of the most volatile statements in the entire New Testament, in my opinion, because Jesus draws a line in the sand and clearly defines what is expected of those who follow Him. He was making it abundantly clear that if His followers make the mistake of denouncing their relationship with Him due to social, cultural or governmental pressure then He would, in turn, deny His knowledge of us.

- viii. With that said, allow me to submit this question for your consideration. Could our denying to know Him hinge upon our unwillingness to love one another and sincerely be concerned with the welfare of others? Could our refusal to love others cause us to forfeit our claims of loving God?**
- ix. What a strong and explosive statement that wields the power to put so many Christians on their heels because so often we feel that we can claim Him as God when it is beneficial or acceptable but can disown our knowledge of Him when it is not beneficial nor acceptable.**
- x. The Grace of God that we have become partakers of, in Christ, places a higher demand upon the life of the believer to demonstrate the character of Christ in the Earth by the Power of the Holy Ghost! Love has everything to do with it because Grace demands a higher level of Love unto Honor! And we dishonor others when we claim to Love Christ but have no Love for our neighbors. And we dishonor our Christ when we claim to love others but have no Love for Christ!**
- xi. Grace demands a higher level of Love!**
- xii. Jesus Demands a Higher Level of Honor**
- xiii. We must observe the impact of our Love that leads to Honor**

Not only must we observe the impact of our Love that leads to Honor, we must also observe the impact of our Love that leads to Forgiveness! So Point #2...

2) Grace Demands a Higher Level of Love that leads to Forgiveness

a. The Gospel of Saint Matthew chapter 18 records a parable told by Christ regarding The Unforgiving Servant and it is this parable that gives us a much deeper insight into the impact of forgiveness and the necessity of forgiveness for the one that gives and the one who receives! Notice with me in our text found in **The Gospel of Saint Matthew 18:21-35!**

b. Matthew 18:21-35 - Then Peter came up and said to Him, “Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive Him? As many as seven times?”²² Jesus said to Him, “I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.²³ “Therefore the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with His servants.^[g]²⁴ When he began to settle, one was brought to Him who owed Him ten thousand talents.^[h]²⁵ And since he could not pay, His master ordered Him to be sold, with His wife and children and all that he had, and payment to be made.²⁶ So the servant^[i] fell on His knees, imploring Him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.’²⁷ And out of pity for Him, the master of that

servant released Him and forgave Him the debt. ²⁸ But when that same servant went out, he found one of His fellow servants who owed Him a hundred denarii,^[l] and seizing Him, he began to choke Him, saying, ‘Pay what you owe.’ ²⁹ So His fellow servant fell down and pleaded with Him, ‘Have patience with me, and I will pay you.’ ³⁰ He refused and went and put Him in prison until he should pay the debt. ³¹ When His fellow servants saw what had taken place, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their master all that had taken place. ³² Then His master summoned Him and said to Him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. ³³ And should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’ ³⁴ And in anger His master delivered Him to the jailers,^[k] until he should pay all His debt. ³⁵ So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.”

- c. **Forgive your Brother 77 times per day! Why did Jesus say this in this manner? Because Christ expects of His followers to perpetuate a posture of mercy and forgiveness!**
- d. **When we all truly come to a place of the revelation of just how indebted our sin had made us to be liable unto the Righteous Judgment of God, then and only then will we truly understand the miracle of the forgiveness that Christ has bestowed upon us! We owed a debt to the Courts of**

Heaven that we could NEVER repay and Jesus plead the case of humanity before the courts of Heaven and the Master of all Creation forgave us our debt! He forgave us our Sins! He forgave us what we owed!!!

- e. The Bible says that the wages of Sin is death; there is a wage to be paid for our rebellion and it only wields the power to bring death! But praise be unto God for His Eternal Gift of Forgiveness and His gift of Righteousness that He bestows upon every sinner who becomes a Saint by and through the precious blood of Christ!**
- f. But like the wicked servant, so many of us have been forgiven of our sins but we refuse to forgive others! As if their sins against you are greater than your sins against Heaven. We all are guilty of committing mortal treason against the God of Heaven. “But Pastor it’s going to take a miracle to forgive them for what they did to me!”**
- g. I understand and Thank God I believe in miracles today! If the miracle of forgiveness was manifest from God to Man through Christ then it is Christ Himself by the Power of the Holy Spirit that will work a miracle of forgiveness from one man to another. Here me well today, you will make it to heaven with unforgiveness in your heart.**
- h. Jesus Said in the Gospel of Saint Matthew 6:9-15, “Pray then like this: “Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your**

name. Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

- i. **There is only room enough in your life for one of two things: The Cross of Christ or Unforgiveness and Offense. Your shoulders are only big enough for one or the other so which are you going to carry? Jesus declared in the Gospel of Saint Luke 9:23-24, “And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it.”**
- j. **And if we intend on pursuing Christ then we must deny the very spirit of unforgiveness and the spirit of offense the right to manifest in our lives! The Spirit of Jezebel operates in an environment where the seeds of Unforgiveness and the seeds of Offense have been sown!**
- k. **But if we are going to pursue Christ, we must deny ourselves, deny our selfishness, deny our agendas, deny our offenses and our unforgiveness, deny our gossip, our fear, our sin, our self-centeredness to stand in the way of taking up our Cross DAILY to follow after Christ. So which are you**

going to carry? **The Cross of Christ or the Burden of Offense?**

l. Grace demands a Higher Level of Love!

m. Jesus Demands a Higher Level of Forgiveness

n. We must observe the impact of Love that leads to Forgiveness!

Not only must we observe the impact of Love that leads to Forgiveness we must also observe the impact of Love that leads to Restoration!

(Pastor Brad, if you will come) Point #3...

3) Grace Demands a Higher Level of Love that leads to Restoration

a. In the Gospel of Saint John chapter 8, it records the story of the woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. This text reveals to us several vitally important points regarding the Grace of Christ.

b. Notice with me the text found in the Gospel of Saint John 8:1-11. “but Jesus went to the Mount of Olives. Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to Him, and he sat down and taught them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery, and placing her in the midst they said to Him, “Teacher, this woman has been caught in the act of adultery. Now in the Law, Moses commanded us to stone such women. So what do you say?” This they said to test Him, that they

might have some charge to bring against Him. Jesus bent down and wrote with His finger on the ground. And as they continued to ask Him, he stood up and said to them, “Let Him who is without sin among you be the first to throw a stone at her.”⁸ And once more he bent down and wrote on the ground.⁹ But when they heard it, they went away one by one, beginning with the older ones, and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before Him.¹⁰ Jesus stood up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?”¹¹ She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.”

- c. In this text Jesus addresses two specific audiences, a religious one and a sinful one. This crowd sought to use perverted judgment to justify beating a woman to death in the street by the misuse of Scripture. But notice both parties received correction, the crowd and the woman. Notice that Grace does not leave out correction; Grace always corrects... Jesus said to the woman, “Neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more.” Just because Jesus saves does not mean that Jesus does not correct! It all points to a Principle called the Basin Principle; allow me to explain...
- d. One day a young, newly ordained priest, was having a conversation with a member of his congregation when the parishioner said, “You priests and preachers talk a lot

about ‘do unto others,’ but when you get right down to it, it comes down to the Basin Principle.” The young priest, now very curious, asked, “The Basin Principle? What’s that?” The insightful parishioner said, “Remember what Pilate did when he had the chance to acquit Jesus? He called for a Basin and washed His hands of the whole thing. But Jesus, the night before His death, called for a Basin and proceeded to wash the feet of the disciples. It all comes down to the Basin Principle.”

- e. And I wonder which Basin you and I use most often? Is it the Basin with which we wash our hands of others or is it the Basin with which we wash the feet of others? It is the responsibility of the Christian not only to engage his culture, but it is also his responsibility to engage himself. The sad reality that many Christians face is that they live a life of detachment and disengagement; they refuse to use the Basin Principle to help others because they only focus on themselves. It is easier to wash our hands of the responsibly to intervene, to act, to protect, to restore than it is to choose to do what Christ did for the woman caught in adultery or even the Disciples whom had their feet washed by the Master.
- f. Jesus was willing to disrobe Himself, put on a servants’ attire, and kneel before the very men who would betray Him to wash their feet. The very men who swore that they would

never leave Him, the ones that swore that they would go to prison for Him and die for Him, within a matter of hours would swear that they never knew Him and be running for their lives.

- g. In the story of the adulterous woman, Jesus was afforded the opportunity to apply the Basin Principle and not only did He effect change in the crowd but He also saved the life of a broken woman. How often do we find ourselves in the seat of the crowd? How often do we use the Basin of the crowd? They quoted Leviticus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 22:22 but they did not quote it in its entirety. It says that the woman and the man she was with should have been stoned to death, but they only brought her.
- h. Jesus engaged with the Basin of Deliverance and the crowd engaged with the Basin of Destruction. What Basin are you going to use? Jesus stood before a Basin that He had the choice to use for washing the impurity away or washing His hands of the situation all together.
- i. The Basin Principle is that defining moment when cowards become courageous or the courageous become cowards! It is that critical moment when you are afforded the opportunity to affect the world around you but which Basin are you going to use?
- j. Is it going to be the Basin of Restoration or the Basin of Destruction? Let's not live a life of disengagement; Let's

- make the decision to use the Basin Principle to help others.**
- a. If we are to walk according to the Biblical model set forth by Christ, then we must be willing to live a life of the Basin Principle. We must be willing to engage the dirty places of a fallen humanity. We must be willing to wash the feet of a culture of brokenness and sin or we are washing our hands of the Great Commission.**
 - a. Grace Demands a Higher Level of Love!**
 - b. Jesus Demands a Higher Level of Redemption**
 - c. We must observe the impact of Love that leads to Restoration!**

Let us honor Christ and Love others as ourselves

Let us forgive others because we too have been forgiven

Let us restore others who are broken because we too were once broken

Grace Demands a Higher Level of Love so let us all choose today to walk in that Grace everyday...

Let us pray...