

Grace over Judgment Core 10: Week Three

I. Our Core Value

Grace over Judgment

We value extending God’s mercy to those around us, forgiving, restoring, and welcoming. While there is a place for discernment and critique, even this must be done in a spirit of gentleness and love.

II. Our Scriptural Mandate

We see a _____ in Scripture, in God, and in His expectations for us:

Holiness / Judgment

Exodus 34:7b
Deuteronomy 7:10
Luke 10:13-15
1 Corinthians 5:9-12

Forgiveness / Grace

Exodus 34:6-7a;
Deuteronomy 7:7-10
Luke 5:29-32; 7:34
2 Corinthians 2:5-9

It is in the _____ that this tension is perfectly resolved by God.
Romans 3:23-26, “he did it ... to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus.”

Yet _____ have struggled to live out this tension in a balanced way.
Examples: the controversies over forgiving lapsed Christians in the 3d-4th century persecutions (Novatian, Cyprian, Donatists, etc.); appropriate entertainment choices in 19th-20th centuries (alcohol, dancing, movies, etc.); LGBTQ+ issues in the 21st century, etc.

While Jesus certainly taught a moral rigorism, he _____ God’s love, grace, and forgiveness—and he reserved his harshest words for the prideful and the self-righteous.
Luke 4:16-21; 6:37-42; 15:1-2, 11-31; see also 18:9-14

_____ as a _____ desire to imitate how Jesus lived out this tension, with the same emphases and priorities that Jesus had.
If we are uncertain how to respond in a given situation, we wish to “err” on the side of forgiveness, mercy, second chances, and restoration.

Our name is “Grace” Bible Chapel, not “Judgment” Bible Chapel!

Yet we must also not neglect Jesus’ call to repentance—though even this is an offer of grace and should be presented as a gift and as something freeing.

The Bottom Line

_____ the _____ of Christ

- ...by internalizing the reality of God’s _____ to you.
- ...by being wary of _____ and of _____ others.
- ...by looking for deliberate ways to _____ God’s _____ to others.

Here is a suggestion I’m not 100% sure about. What do you think?

...by focusing on rigorous holiness for yourself and radical grace toward others.

Consider this similar quote, shared online by a friend:

“Love the sinner and hate your own sin. Hating my own sin is a full-time job.”

Grace Bible Chapel Core Values

Grace over Judgment

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Bible over Opinion

We value learning what God has revealed to us in the Bible, our highest authority in life. We seek to rightly understand and obey God’s message to us in this time, and to speak with great conviction where the Bible is clear and with caution where the Bible is less clear.

Worship over Self

We value elevating God to first place in our affections and living a life that honors him. We express our love for God together on Sunday mornings, but we also strive to fill each day with a focus on God instead of a preoccupation with ourselves.

Transformation over Stagnation

We value a continual process of discipleship, where we all strive together to be more like Christ and to not be satisfied with the same old us. We seek to grow together in personal spirituality, as well as in obedience to all Christ has commanded us.

We over Me

We value the community of life shared together with other believers. We strive to develop close relationships with other Christians to share in all the struggles and joys of a life lived in service to Christ.

Giving over Getting

We value sacrificial generosity in making use of the resources God has entrusted to us. We seek to leverage our time, finances, and skills to provide for others when they are in need and to make opportunities for the message of Christ.

Participating over Spectating

We value the active ministry involvement of all those who are part of our church. We aim for everyone to discover and employ their gifts to serve Christ both within our church in the community.

The Next Generation over My Generation

We value investing in those who will come behind. We seek to mobilize every generation to invest in children and youth to help raise them in the faith and give them a solid spiritual foundation.

Mission over Comfort

We value engaging in Christ’s mission to make disciples of all nations, a command which means our concern is not just Grand Rapids, but the world. We seek to continue our legacy of strong missionary service and support, joining in the work of God all around the world.

Outward over Inward

We value serving our community in areas of need, aligning our church as a whole with the posture of Christ who came not to be served but to serve. We desire to bless Grand Rapids by our presence and to take the message of Christ outside of our doors and into the community.