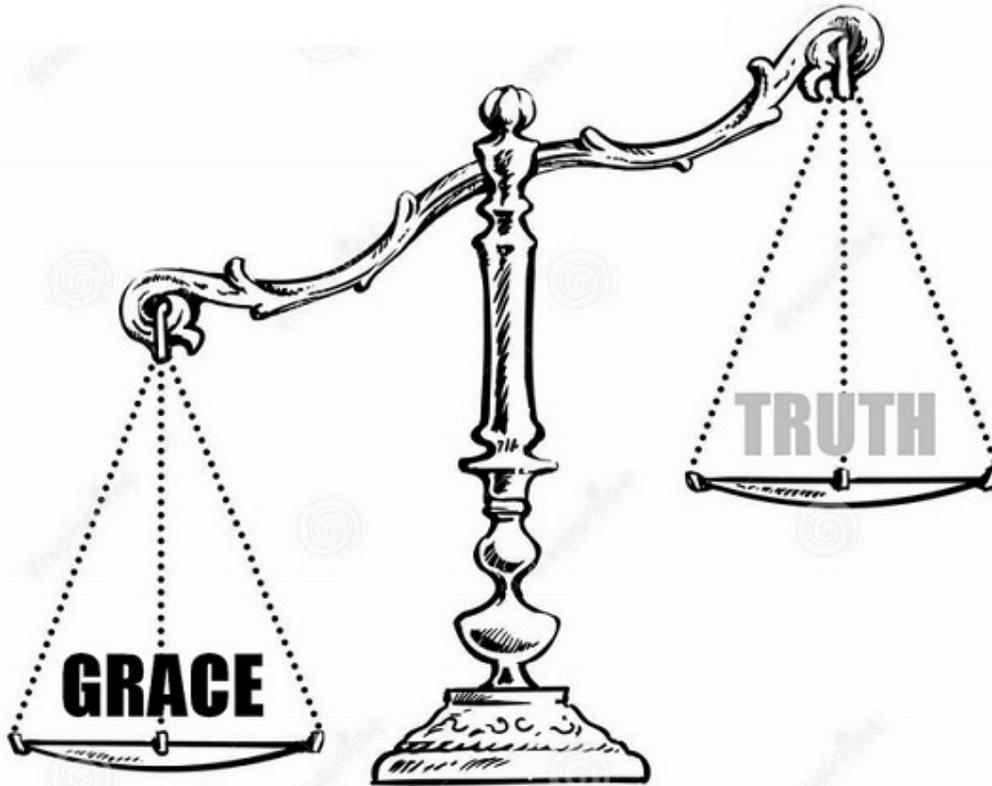


Grace and Truth

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by Gayle Jackson

I have been very troubled and concerned by a thinking I am finding in the Christian movement. It is now being displayed and revered in the institutional Churches. In a nutshell, what it is saying is that Grace trumps all aspects of the discipleship life (i.e. our response to Truth-Obedience).

They say because of the love from God, we can disregard the warnings and provisions of the bible on commands (especially the Old Testament) and observations. God's love checkmates His response of anger, our response of the fear of Him, etc. to our sin. We should focus on a true expression of love and have acceptance of all behavior. It is being said that no one or behavior should be criticized and especially from the pulpit.

Also, there is a sensitivity that we might be hurting people's feelings if we note their misbehavior and state they could be going to Hell.

As the new generation says to me about the sexual deviancy, they were "just born that way".

This thinking is embedded in this generation, so much so that a leader of a major church said to the congregation that we need to ignore commands or observations from the Old Testament. He was not challenged but applauded.

I have seen, over my life, this concept /thinking in the Church. So much so that today's church has been neutered.

Here is a sample of some of the compromises that I have witnessed over the last 70 years in the "family" church. The thinking and direction was compromises so the church could stay relevant with the culture.

- 1. Any reason is ample for divorce and remarriage**
- 2. Open to sexual behavior (fornication) throughout society and always is ok.**
- 3. Lying by our leaders**
- 4. Disregard for obeying the law.**
- 5. Acceptance of sexually deviancy as a norm**
- 6. Abortion**
- 7. Women's role in the Church**
- 8. The loss of influence of the Word in society**
- 9. And more**

The Israelites tried this immoral approach in their culture after Joshua's death and the country disintegrated into debauchery and God had to set up the Judges. We are beginning to experiment today with a pagan driven society. The cry for diversity has made us not a Christian country but a hybrid-heathen country.

As a scriptural review of this dilemma in the Church, the following is a verse for our analysis on this issue:

John 1:17 "For the Law came through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ"

Jesus is the personification of Grace and Truth. I think to illustrate this

truth let us look at the following verses, John 8:3-11:

v3 And the scribes and Pharisees brought to Him a woman taken in adultery. And standing her in the midst, v4 they said to Him, “Teacher, this woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. v5 Now Moses in the Law commanded us that such should be stoned. You, then, what do you say?” v6 They said this, tempting Him so that they might have reason to accuse Him. But bending down, Jesus wrote on the ground with His finger, not appearing to hear. v7 But as they continued to ask Him, He lifted Himself up and said to them, “He who is without sin among you, let him cast the first stone at her.” v8 And again bending down, He wrote on the ground. v9 And hearing, and being convicted by conscience, they went out one by one, beginning at the oldest, until the last. And Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. v10 And bending back up, and seeing no one but the woman, Jesus said to her, “Woman, where are the ones who accused you? Did not one give judgment against you?” v11 She said, “No one, Lord.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you; go. From now on sin no more.”

Jesus illustrates grace and truth in its complete form.

One of the major MISSIONS of Jesus is the forgiveness of our sins:

Luke 1:77: To give knowledge of salvation unto his people by the remission of their sins.

And yet today it is hard to find in our culture sensitivity to sin. The concept of sin is ignored and put down and chided.

If we have no sins and no confession of sins, no one needs repentance.

Note-The modern Grace movement by in large disregards repentance and the changed life performance at conversion.

The only sin I think is recognized today is the Hate Crime.

Hate crime: usually violent, motivated by prejudice or intolerance toward an individual's national origin, ethnicity, color, religion, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. The accuser gets to define who is who of these accusations. No standard, just the prevailing opinion or identity fad.

Jesus models the complete forgiveness plan of God and acceptance in the story above, John 8:3-11.

Jesus...

- 1. I forgive you.**
- 2. Go and sin no more**

You need both before the Lord.

Grace fellows may retell the story with another ending....

- 1. We forgive you.**
- 2. It wasn't or isn't your fault that you have gone this way.**
- 3. We will talk to God about changing the command or eliminating it or just ignoring it.**
- 4. Don't worry, Hell is just a myth.**

It appears to me when we fall into sin, we should start to correct the problems/sins in our lives. If we accept a new convert into the congregation of God, we should celebrate and they should be the recipient of Grace. Conversion should include repentance of our sins and changing our life to the Biblical walk.

We are not to condemn the non-believer for their behavior. But we shouldn't condone their behavior either.

Application:

- 1. Do not let sin be swept under the rug, Highlight the problem if possible to the fellow Christian. Use accountability to counsel and affirm you.**
- 2. If a brother is drifting or in sin challenge him out of love.**

3. Admit you are in sin and beg God for your forgiveness.

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