

Maple Springs Baptist Church

Series: Unsettling Grace

Week 3: Unclear

When God sent Jesus to extend something to us, that we are responsible for extending to others ... Grace: Undeserved, Unearned, and Unearnable Favor.

The Amazing truth: Jesus didn't come into the world just to be right. Jesus came into the world to make things right ... **GRACE BECOMES AMAZING WHEN IT'S EXTENDED TO OTHERS.**

Grace is most amazing when it shows up in relationships, because it can only be experienced in relationships. And you are most amazing when you extend grace to other people. **GOD'S AMAZING GRACE TO YOU IS AN INVITATION TO BE AMAZING.**

To extend grace to other people, is our greatest opportunity to be amazing. The rub: extending grace to other people is not easy. And Jesus tells us why.

Jesus, in one of the more unsettling questions asked by any one at any time anywhere ... **Matthew 7:3.**

This is Jesus asking, "Why do you focus, why do you give all this attention about the speck—the little, itty-bitty thing they do wrong and you don't pay an attention to your issues, to your problems, to your habits, to your actions, to your attitudes, to the plank in your own eye?"

To which somebody says, "I'll tell you why!" Because ... **IT'S NOT A SPECK OF SAWDUST.**

Or maybe ... **I DON'T HAVE A PLANK IN MY EYE.** "I see the world as it really is."

You don't have a plank in your eye, do you? You're not in any way influenced by your ... **UPBRINGING ... ENVIRONMENT ... EXPERIENCE ... EDUCATION ... HEALTH ... SUCCESS ... FAILURE ... INSECURITIES ... OPPORTUNITIES ... IQ/EQ.** These things couldn't possibly taint the way you see the world around you, could they?

But Jesus isn't through. He goes on ... **Matthew 7:4a.**

How can you say, "Let me help you see the world the way it really is because I see it the way it really is."? **Matthew 7:4b.**

Then Jesus says: **Matthew 7:5a**

Do you know why God is able to extend Grace to you, in spite of you?

Because He could see you for exactly who you are and take all of that into consideration. He knows all about your ... **UPBRINGING ... ENVIRONMENT ... EXPERIENCE ... EDUCATION ... HEALTH ... SUCCESS ... FAILURE ... INSECURITIES ... OPPORTUNITIES ... IQ/EQ.**

The apostle Paul, looking back at the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus, considering Himself to be the biggest hypocrite, wrote ... **Romans 5:8.**

Paul understood grace in a way that I'm not sure we do. If Paul were to write this with you or me in mind, he would have written:

**BUT GOD DEMONSTRATED HIS OWN LOVE FOR US IN THIS ...
KNOWING AHEAD OF TIME THE SINS WE WOULD COMMIT ...
AND CONFESS ... AND REPEAT ... AND CONFESS AGAIN ...
CHRIST DIED FOR US ANYWAY.**

God was able to take your whole story into account and gave you what you deserve least but what you needed most. And then He says, "I just want you to do for others, what I have done for you."

This is not about being a nicer person or trying to be a better person. Jesus says, "This isn't about recommitting yourself to being sweeter and kinder." Jesus says, "First, before you try to figure out how to extend grace to someone else ... Matthew 7:5.

Because ... **PLANKS GET IN THE WAY OF GRACE.**

Jesus is teaching that when you begin to see that person the way He sees that person, you will not dread the encounter as much as you will see the encounter as an opportunity to do something unsettling, as a chance to do something amazing.

This is why Jesus says "first," you've got to examine your own heart. "First," you've got to examine what's in your own eye ... "then you will see clearly."

THE MORE AWARE I AM OF WHAT GOD HAS YET TO DO IN ME... The more time I . . .
THE LESS AWARE I AM OF WHAT HE HAS YET TO DO IN YOU. Not only the less aware, but the less bothered, the less put off, the less offended ...

Grace came to earth to dwell with us in spite of us. And now you have an opportunity to do the same.

Isn't it interesting that God was more broken-hearted over our sin than He was put off by it. **JESUS DIDN'T TAKE SIDES. JESUS CAME ALONGSIDE.** Isn't that amazing? But there was an exception. There was a group of people that Jesus did not come alongside of.

The truth: there's something very attractive about grace and the people who exhibit grace. John said that ... **JESUS WAS FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH.**

WHAT ARE YOU FULL OF? What comes out of you when you are shaken up? When you collide with people who get on your nerves?

The bigger question: **WHAT ARE WE FULL OF?** What is our church full of? When people think of MSBC... **BECAUSE: THE CHURCH IS MOST APPEALING WHEN GRACE IS MOST APPARENT.**

So, are you ready and willing to remove a plank so that you can see clearly in order to give grace to people around you?

Grace from you could be an introduction to the grace of God.

Acknowledging and taking that plank out of your eye is the best preparation for Grace coming to you.

Let's give to someone what they don't expect and what they don't necessarily deserve.