

## Lesson 18

# GRACE

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**Principle 6:** Evaluate all my relationships. Offer forgiveness to those who have hurt me and make amends for harm I've done to others, except when to do so would harm them or others.

*"Happy are the merciful." (Matthew 5:7) "Happy are the peacemakers." (Matthew 5:9)*

**Step 9:** We made direct amends to such people whenever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.

*"Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift." (Matthew 5:23 – 24)*

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### Think About It

To complete Principle 6 we must make our amends, make restitution, offer our forgiveness, but most of all, we must receive and model Jesus Christ's freely given gift of GRACE.

*"My grace is enough for you. When you are weak, my power is made perfect in you.' So I am very happy to brag about my weaknesses. Then Christ's power can live in me. For this reason I am happy when I have weaknesses, insults, hard times, sufferings, and all kinds of troubles for Christ. Because when I am weak, then I am truly strong." (2 Corinthians 12:9 – 10, NCV)*

### God's gift

Grace cannot be bought. It is a freely given gift by God to you and me. When we complete Principle 6, we are to offer (give) our amends and forgiveness and expect nothing back.

*"All need to be made right with God by his grace, which is a free gift. They need to be made free from sin through Jesus Christ." (Romans 3:24, NCV)*

*"Prepare your minds for service and have self-control. All your hope should be for the gift of grace that will be yours when Jesus Christ is shown to you." (1 Peter 1:13, NCV)*

### Received by our faith

We cannot work our way into heaven. Only by professing our faith in Christ as our Savior can we experience His grace and have eternal life. It is only through our faith in Christ that we can find the strength and courage needed for us to make our amends and offer our forgiveness.

*"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith — and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God — not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8 – 9)*

*"Through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God." (Romans 5:2)*

### Accepted by God's love

God loved us while we were still sinning. Grace is the love that gives, that loves the unlovely and the unlovable. We can love others because God first loved us, and we can also forgive others because God first forgave us.

*"Let us, then, feel very sure that we can come before God's throne where there is grace. There we can receive mercy and grace to help us when we need it." (Hebrews 4:16, NCV)*

*"Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors." (Matthew 6:12)*

*"If you forgive other people when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (Matthew 6:14)*

## Christ paid the price

Jesus loves us so much that He died on the cross so that all our sins, all our wrongs, are forgiven. He paid the price and sacrificed Himself for us so that we may be with Him forever. We also need to sacrifice — our pride and our selfishness. We must speak the truth in love and focus on our part in making amends or offering forgiveness.

*“I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!” (Galatians 2:21)*

*“In Christ we are set free by the blood of his death, and so we have forgiveness of sins. How rich is God’s grace.” (Ephesians 1:7, NCV)*

## Everlasting gift

Once you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, God’s gift of grace is forever.

*“And I am sure that God who began the good work within you will keep right on helping you grow in his grace until his task within you is finally finished on that day when Jesus Christ returns.” (Philippians 1:6, TLB)*

*“May our Lord Jesus Christ himself and God our Father encourage you and strengthen you in every good thing you do and say. God loved us, and through his grace he gave us a good hope and encouragement that continues forever.” (2 Thessalonians 2:16, NCV)*

Now you are ready to start modeling God’s grace by working Principle 6.

1. Take the names of the individuals that you listed on your “Amends List” (page 43).
2. Highlight the ones you can take care of immediately.
3. Review them one more time with your sponsor or accountability partner to ensure that making an amends or offering your forgiveness to the individual would not injure them or another.
4. Pray, asking God to show you the right time to make the amends or offer your forgiveness. Read the Principle 6b verses on page 57.
5. Develop a plan for making amends to those on your list that you cannot make immediately. If someone on your list has died or you cannot locate him or her, you can write the person a letter and share it with your support team.

## **Principle 6b Prayer**

*Dear God, thank You for Your love, for Your freely given grace. Help me model Your ways when I make my amends to those I have hurt and offer my forgiveness to those who have injured me. Help me to set aside my selfishness and speak the truth in love. I pray that I would focus only on my part, my responsibility in the issue. I know that I can forgive others because You first forgave me. Thank You for loving me. In Jesus’ name I pray, Amen.*

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## **Write About It**

1. How has Jesus Christ used your weaknesses and turned them into strengths?

[Your Response Here]

2. How can you receive God’s gift of grace (Romans 5:2)?

[Your Response Here]

3. How can you model God’s gift of grace in making your amends?

[Your Response Here]

4. In what ways have you experienced God’s grace in your recovery?

[Your Response Here]

5. God loved and accepted us while we were still sinners (Ephesians 2:5). How can you model that acceptance to those to whom you need to offer forgiveness or make amends?

[Your Response Here]

6. In Principle 6 we are not trying to get even. Christ paid the price for all of our wrongs. What does “speaking the truth in love” mean to you?

[Your Response Here]

7. Why is it important that you focus *only* on your part in making an amends or offering forgiveness?

[Your Response Here]

8. List some of the things that God has shown you through working Principle 6.