

Carl Lentz: 'I'm Not a Disgraced Pastor'

Carl and Laura Lentz's self-imposed isolation from the public eye is now officially over, as they have launched their new podcast, "Lights On" and are starting it off talking about their journey thus far.

A lot has been thrown at the couple over the last few years—some warranted, some not—but one thing that Carl Lentz addressed in their very first episode is this: he is not a disgraced pastor.

"Every headline, typically would say, 'disgraced, disgraced pastor,' or 'pastor falls from grace, falls from grace, disgraced pastor,'" Lentz recalls. "What's funny about that is, God bless those people, they don't understand grace. Because you can't fall from grace. You fall into grace.

"It didn't make any sense to me. And I'm not mad at the tabloids who write ... 'disgraced pastor.' Disgraced? You don't understand what grace is. The opposite of grace. Grace is mercy and favor and forgiveness that you do not deserve but God gives it to you anyway. So if anything, I fell into grace. And if people could stop writing headlines like that, I would appreciate it because it's inaccurate—disgraced pastor," he adds.

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Lentz continued, showing that this was a subject very important to him, as though he is holding onto the Lord's grace with both hands and refusing to let go. Because without the forgiveness of the Lord and His great grace, we would be hopelessly condemned to eternal death separate from Him.

"I'm not a disgraced former pastor. I am a human being that made huge mistakes. Mine were public, everybody got to see them," Lentz says.

"And now, I'm a human being that's trying to rectify my life and make wrongs right and to live completely differently. But disgraced, I am not. I'm more filled with grace than I've ever been. Did I fall from grace? Absolutely not. I fell into it. And I'm really grateful for that."

There are still those who hold quite strongly Lentz's past against him, believing he is completely disqualified from ministry and think he is playing semantics with his newest episode. And with as public of event that his leaving Hillsong was, there are still man eyes scrutinizing the podcast as well.

"You could say what I did was disgraceful. Maybe at times, sure. But I'm not disgraced because we're forgiven," Lentz argues. "I have been able to feel God's grace more than ever, I understand the thought, but I just wanted to get it out there. That doesn't fit me. I don't identify as the disgraced former pastor. No, sir. No, ma'am."

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The Bible, the inerrant Word of God, can summarize a person's journey of humility and reliance on God and His grace better than any other orator, and does so in 2 Corinthians 12:9:

But He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will boast in my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Paul knew firsthand the power of God's grace, leaning into it

during his own times of weakness, and in doing so, becoming one of the greatest voices for the Lord in all of history.

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James Lasher is Staff Writer for Charisma Media.