

How Does God See You?

What does God see when He looks at you? I propose He looks at you through spectacular lenses of grace. If so, what does that mean? In actuality, we really don't comprehend grace. It's a divine quality that eludes us most of the time. It is never failing, unending, without measure and beyond the scope of human understanding.

Today, though, I got a momentary glimpse into what God is up to with this thing called grace. And it required wearing a different pair of glasses.

Understands Our Struggles

Let me explain. I am a weight loss transformation coach, as well as an author and speaker. I am so proud of the women in Sweet Change Weight Loss Group. So far, with only 10 reporting, they have lost 65 pounds in January. There are more women to report in and I know the numbers will continue to increase. These are phenomenal results.

When we report our total weight loss as a group, we also post non-scale victories. The recurring theme was spending more devotional time with God, exercising and daily walking, giving up sugar or desserts with sugar, beginning to see food as fuel and accepting the fact that they are not on a diet but are incorporating lifestyle changes. These are victories that make me as a coach want to jump for joy!

See, I know their struggles. I know the setbacks. I know the emotional turmoil they have gone through to get to this point. And yet, I also was able to see clearly from the very beginning their breakthroughs if they would stay the course. To see that I have to put on glasses of compassion and understanding, two gifts God gave me as tools for this journey.

As each person comes into the group, I know they are facing an uphill battle. They've been facing it all their lives. The struggle seems to be against their own bodies. However, that is not the real source of the struggle.

Grace in the Struggle

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ."¹

This process involves working on the inside. When the work on the inside starts, the outside begins to be affected. As the coach, I know how the process worked in me, but to see it work in others is much more thrilling than even my own transformation journey.

When I was in the midst of the mess of my life, it did not seem thrilling or exciting. It felt ... overwhelming. Each step forward was a victory, but I constantly reflected on what I had done to my body. I partnered with guilt and shame.

It was when I was writing my memoir, *Sweet Grace*, God clearly showed me how His grace had been operating in my life for more than 30 years. And I understood the meaning of the passage, "But the law entered, so that sin might increase, but where sin increased, grace abounded much more."²

God's vision for every person is that we "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."³ How can we do that when we are constantly failing?

Grace Gets Rid of Failure

When we admit our sin and repent, God hurls all our failures

into the deepest ocean, tramples them under His feet,⁴ removes them as far as the sunrise is from the sunset,⁵ and covers them with this amazing, very nebulous, but very real commodity called grace.

Grace was God's idea. He knew we had to have a way to be forgiven. In the forgiveness, He removes our shame, picks us up, dusts us off, sets us on our feet and points us in the direction of our destiny.

Our failures may seem so great God could never forgive them, but as the passage says, more failure, more grace. From grace we take, and still grace remains!

Without grace, if we would fail one time, we would quit and no one would come to God because He would have no redeemed and sanctified work force. He gives us grace and forgives our sin out of love for all humanity. However, it does take us asking for forgiveness. For some reason that's a difficult response.

Grace Sees us Differently

The deal is we don't have to be afraid of what God thinks of us. When He looks at us, He does see our sin. He is not blind to our failures. Scripture tells us that in several places.⁶ However, He looks at us through His prophetic glasses of grace and love. He sees what we will become.

Paul says it so well in this verse. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, so that we should walk in them."⁷

It's awesome, but it does seem we do everything possible to thwart our destiny. We heap mounds and mounds of shame and guilt upon ourselves. We would rather live there than in the light of grace and forgiveness.

The lenses of grace see everything and yet, they focus on us

as we will be, rather than where we are wallowing in our lies, weaknesses, strongholds and addictions.

The enemy has plans for us as well. “The thief does not come, except to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and that they may have it more abundantly.”⁸

He sees our lives and knows how to make something beautiful out of the jungle of our entanglements and issues.

“He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.”⁹

Grace Knows Our Destiny

This never-failing grace and vision of God has been working on those in Sweet Change Group and today, for just a few minutes, I was able to sit in the heavens, put on the lenses of grace, look down and see what God sees—a sea of potential, a sea of amazing people with destinies they can’t even imagine exist.

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or imagine, according to the power that works in us, to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”¹⁰

For many months, I was reluctant to begin Sweet Change Weight Loss Group. I knew how many excuses I had on my journey and how patient my mentor was. I didn’t know if I had the tools to do the job.

I asked God, “How do You deal with all seven billion of us and all our excuses about why we can’t do what You are telling us to do?”

I felt He said back to me, “I do it just like I did with you—with grace, compassion and patience. I will give you what you need to lead. Trust Me.”

I didn’t understand that in its entirety except I knew He never gave up on me over the course of at least 30 years. He endured each of my failed attempts when I would lose weight and gain it back again. He never yelled, scolded or beat me up. He just gently led me when I would once again ask, “How in the world am I supposed to do this?”

God sees everything. He sees us when we fail, but His lenses of grace are so different from ours. He sees us and our lives as they will relate to the puzzle of eternity. He knows exactly where we fit and how to get us into the right shape if we will listen.

Seeing Through the Lenses of Grace

I got to put on a pair of those glasses today, for just a few minutes. Oh, to be able to wear the lenses of grace always. It brought heaven on earth for a breath-taking time.

I cannot close this without extending an invitation to you to join Sweet Change Weight Loss Coaching Group. I have no hype or special offers. I just ask you to take a deep breath, hike up your britches and take the plunge into a sea of God’s grace that can set you free from the bondages you are in.

Be ready to do the work. Be ready to post in the group and be transparent. Be ready to watch the videos and do the weekly action steps. Be ready to press in closer than you ever have to a God whose love you will experience in a deeper way.

And along the way, you just may begin to stop thwarting your destiny and flow in the direction of the good plans¹¹ of an awesome God who wears spectacular glasses with lenses of grace.

1 2 Corinthians 10:3-5

2 Romans 5:20

3 2 Peter 3:18

4 Micah 7:19

5 Psalm 103:12

6 Psalm 69:5, Proverbs 15:3

7 Ephesians 2:10

8 John 10:10

9 Romans 8:27-28

10 Ephesians 3:20-21

11 Jeremiah 29:11

✖ **Teresa Shields Parker** is an author, speaker and coach. Sweet Change Weight Loss Coaching and Accountability Group provides support, encouragement, weekly videos, action steps and an online group for those wanting to be intentional about their weight loss efforts. Click the title to take you to the information page for Sweet Change.

Her new book, Sweet Change: True Stories of Transformation, published Dec. 2014 is now the #1 Christian weight loss memoir on Amazon, shares the stories of 17 individuals on the weight loss journey and includes much information from Teresa. Download a free chapter [HERE](#).

In her first book, Sweet Grace: How I Lost 250 Pounds, she shares transparently and openly about the challenges of losing an extreme amount of weight. Sweet Grace Study Guide gives practical tips on weight loss.