

WITHOUT GRACE

EPHESIANS 1:6b

How did you see God working in your life this week? (Romans 1:11, 12)

BACKGROUND: Before proceeding we need to realize that grace is God's power in our lives and it is costly. Our Lord uses His grace to make us more like Him. He calls us to take up our cross and follow Him. (**Matthew 16:24-25**) You cannot do that if you are resisting His grace.

YOU HAVE A VICTIM'S MINDSET that allows unforgiveness of past hurts, insults, disappointments, and unmet desires to control your life and the decisions you make. You become bitter and you believe that unforgiveness is justified. (**Ephesians 1:6-8, Hebrews 12:15, fn 12:15, II Corinthians 6:1-2, fn 6:1, I John 4:19-21, fn 4:20-21, I John 1:9-10, fn 1:9[2nd]**) *When does bitterness start and how could you keep it from destroying you?*

YOU ARE TROUBLE because you can even wear your unforgiveness as a badge of pride and self-justification. By your pride you can resist God's grace working in your life and interfere with His plan to make you like Himself so that others can see what He is like and be drawn to Him. By God's saving grace, He delivered you from Satan's kingdom and brought you into His own kingdom and family. Now by His grace, you can forgive others. (**Ephesian 1:6-8, fn 1:7-8, Galatians 5:14-15, fn 5:14-15, Hebrews 12:14-15, fn 12:14, Matthew 6:9-15, fn 6:14-15, Matthew 18:21-35, fn 18:35**) *What is missing when you do not have a good relationship with family and fellow believers?*

YOU CAUSE TROUBLE because your sin of victimhood hardens your heart, and its deceitfulness attacks and destroys. You do not need an audience to encourage your sin. You need humility so that Christ's power (His grace) may rest upon you. Then for His sake, you can delight in weakness, insults, difficulties, and even persecution; for when you are weak you are strong. (**Ephesians 1:6-8, Hebrews 12:15, Ephesians 4:30-5:2, fn 4:32, James 4:6-7, 10, fn 4:6-7,10, II Corinthians 12:6-10, fn 12:9, fn 12:10**) *How could you face and endure the harshness of life? How could this be beneficial in your relationship with Jesus?*

Are you taking time to experience the presence of the Holy Spirit with the Living Word teaching you and giving you His joy, His love, and His peace?

