



The Myth: God is accusing us. *Truth: God treats us with mercy and grace.*

Beginning our new series: A struggling child looks at a matrix of faces.

Listen! “My child is constantly sick because the spirit of the tree is very angry with me.”

The Myth: God is judgmental and accusatory toward us.

- **Our big problem:** Is this really God’s stance toward us? If this is God’s stance toward us shouldn’t we just give up—what could we ever do?

The Truth: God is merciful and gracious toward us.

- Dispelling the myth: John 3:17
- Mercy defined—the elements of New Testament mercy:
- Grace defined—elements of New Testament grace:
- Jean Valjean in Les Miserables:
- **The Idea:** In His compassion for us God withholds from us the punishment we deserve and gives to us the spiritual bounty we do not deserve.

So What: What does this mean in our relationship with God?

So What: What does this mean in relationships with others?

- **Reaching**—how we relate to unbelievers: obviously we give mercy and grace.
 - People without Christ lack the spiritual resources they must receive as a gift. The difference between us and them is that we already have the gift.
- **Coaching**—how we relate to believers: obviously we give mercy and grace.
 - Stages of grace-based relationships by Pastor Steve Meeks: Excitement. Disillusionment. Reconciliation. Synergism.

“Walking Papers”

Practical helps for walking the Christian walk each day this week.

The Core Myth here: “God’s foundational and continual stance toward me is judgmental and accusatory.”

- **The Idea:** In His compassion for us God withholds from us the punishment we deserve and gives to us the spiritual bounty we do not deserve.
- **Sunday:** Please read these verses on mercy, reflect on them and pray about them:
 - **Romans 9:16:** “So then it does not depend on the man who wills or the man who runs, but on God Who has mercy.”
 - **Ephesians 2:4:** “But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ.”
 - **Titus 3:5:** “He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit.”
- **Monday:** Please read these verses on grace, reflect on them and pray about them:
 - **Ephesians 2:8, 9:** “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast.”
 - **Titus 2:11, 14:** “For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men.” “Who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.”
 - **Rom 3:24:** “We are justified by grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus.”
 - **2 Cor 12:9:** “But He said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness.’ Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”
- **Tuesday:** In your life have you believed and felt that God is accusatory toward you? If so, what do you think has contributed to this?
- **Wednesday:** Given God’s mercy should you respond to Him in some new ways?
- **Thursday:** Given God’s grace should you respond to Him in some new ways?
- **Friday:** Are there new ways you need to respond to unbelievers?
- **Saturday:** Are there new ways you need to respond to believers?

Note for Connection Groups: The full study guide for small group and personal study is available at: www.cypressbible.org and then click on “Get Connected” and the link is on that page.