

TUF(R) Forgiveness Exams
Four: The Practice of Grace

Practicing Grace

This practice asks you to practice giving grace to others. It's focus is on watching for opportunities for grace and then inwardly (perhaps outwardly) expressing that grace. Each of the previous exams has brought us to this place – leaning into what is true, understanding and rehumanizing the other persons, and caring for the others with appropriate attachment and detachment. Is grace something you can practice? You bet. You might think of it this way, What if your first instinct toward being hurt was to experience grace (think grace-full thoughts) toward someone who has been offensive, rather than getting caught up in a habitual pattern of judgment and self protection?

Examen

- I. Am I a forgiving person? (again, not one who excuses hurtful behavior)
- II. Do I wait for others to “earn” their forgiveness?
- III. What keeps me from forgiving freely, as did the Father in the “prodigal” son story? Or, maybe from the previous examen where I am too attached to the person who hurt me or to my own need for revenge?
- IV. Where is God when I am hurt?

Praxis

- V. During your morning prayer, remind yourself that you hope to experience and offer grace this day. Is there something you know of now that invites your grace-full response?
- VI. Watch for opportunities throughout the day to respond grace-fully.
- VII. After responding grace-fully (forgiveness, acceptance, patience), take time to ask yourself:
 - a. When I first became aware of the situation, what was my initial response?
 - b. Given my initial response, how did I manage to act grace-fully?
 - c. How did the one receiving grace respond? What was I thinking and feeling in response to the other's actions?
 - d. How did this grace experience leave me feeling about grace?
 - e. Where was Jesus in this process?