

Eight Weeks of Conversation Cafe Week Six: Lifestyle Topic- Grace

Have you ever wondered why good things happened to you? Many times, we focus on our negative experiences and we forget to consider the good things such as the opportunities we have, gifts, friends and family, education, health.

Nowadays we talk about “random acts of kindness,” that is kind things people do for others they do not know. For example, when you are in the grocery store with a few items, standing behind someone with a large cart filled to overflowing with groceries, they may suggest that you go in front of them.

*What are some of the kind things people you don't know have done for you?
Is it easier to give kindnesses or receive them?*

Scott Peck, in his book, *The Road Less Traveled*, tells the story of Theodore, a young man. Theodore grew up in a home where he frequently was picked on by his two brothers and ignored by his parents. He suffered the death of a close friend while in college and by the time he was thirty, he lived alone in a wooded area. He had few close friends and blamed God and everyone around him for his depression. In a session with Dr. Peck, he told the story of how he was standing at the end of a pier in Florida when a great wave knocked him down and took him out to sea. A minute later he felt a wave moving him in the opposite direction. He landed up against a concrete pier and was able to pull himself to the land. Although in the beginning, he denied anything unusual about this event, he grew to realize what saved him was grace, God's kindness.

Perhaps you received grace (kindness) from family members, friends, or other people. Would you tell a story about this?

Are there incidents in your life where you were saved from disaster: harm from people, cars, planes, or accidents?

Tell about that event and what you concluded about how it came about; was it from God, fate, or something else.

On the following page is a painting by Henrietta Rae called, *Lady with her Lamp*. The “Lady,” is Florence Nightingale, the English nurse that worked in the hospitals during the Crimean War. Throughout her lifetime, she transformed nurses training and hospitals.

As you look at the painting ask these questions.

1. Describe what you see in the painting.
2. What is the story the artist is trying to tell the viewer?
3. What questions would you like to ask the artist?
4. How does the subject of the painting relate to the topic of grace?



Florence Nightingale, the "Lady with the Lamp," at the Barrack Hospital at Scutari ...
Cassell & Company/Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (LC-DIG-pga-00466)