

Becoming Amazing

There's an old hymn called Amazing Grace. We start out as a lost, sinful, ignorant wretch, and God spends the rest of our lives making us amazing.

Amazing grace how sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost but now I'm found.
Was blind but now I see.
'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

The reason God's grace is amazing is that it goes farther than any other force on earth. God reaches out of eternity and saves us. He sends his only son to die so that we might live forever. Now that's pretty amazing!

We must always remember that we were lost and that we could not find our way without God. We must never forget that we were once blind, and God makes us able to see.

The Godly kind of amazing is different than that of the world. It takes someone who was worth nothing on their own and makes them the most precious treasure in the world. Not because of their own gifts or looks or possessions, but because Jesus has made us of worth through his making us a part of God's family.

When we realize this, we will become invulnerable to people who try to put us down or hurt us with words or actions. Mark Twain said to "Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great."

When God puts his hand upon us, that is when we have value. It takes a special person to be able to look past their own self-importance or prejudice and simply love their neighbor. Loving and encouraging despite weakness or failure. Forgiving even though condemnation seems the obvious choice. Lifting up always,

as the love described in I Corinthians 13. God's love always protects, always hopes, is always patient and kind.

People have described me as an encourager over the years. Like Barnabas, the disciple, who is called the son of encouragement. Part of that comes from my own weakness and insecurities which God with his amazing grace makes into something which he can use to make others amazing.

You see the amazing thing about amazing in God's world is that it takes away the pressure on us. We don't have to be amazing because God is amazing. Part of the amazement is that he does it in ways the world does not expect.

The world wanted a conquering king. He came as a suffering servant. The world wanted freedom from worldly captivity. He came to free us from sin. Other faiths urge us to attain faith. He gives it as a gift.

Maybe the key to God's brand of amazing is humility. People in the world are always blowing their own horn. Celebrities try to look good and be super intelligent. Politicians seem to have all the answers. Reporters seem to take more time showing us what they know than asking questions.

Think of it. If we are not trying to look better than others all the time, we will actually look better. "It's amazing what you can accomplish if you do not care who gets the credit," writes former President Harry S Truman.

The main thing is to make things better. The main thing is to tell others about a God who is so amazing that they will want to know him.

And when we learn that all we have to do is to step out of the way so that he can show his amazing nature, we will become the kind of amazing that God wants us to be.

Perhaps one of the biggest risks in the world is to strike out into uncharted waters. Waters of risk, of possibly appearing foolish or simple. Waters of selflessness, waters of commitment to a God who is so amazing we will wonder why we did not totally commit to him before. "Man cannot discover new oceans," Andre Gide urges, "unless he has the courage to lose sight of the shore."

Jesus takes us to the other side which none can find without him. He calms

the storm in the middle of the sea. He heals the sick when we are trying to figure out the logistics.

He saves the sinner when we are worrying about semantics. When will we stop depending on our own minds, and the values of the world, and surrender to the God who shows us an amazing and higher way?

You've sung that phrase of Amazing Grace "twas grace that taught my heart to fear" many times if you have been in church. A simple shift of God's amazing grace show us that this word fear is belief. Belief in an amazing God. Belief that God can amaze anyone anytime anywhere.

Are you ready to discover that kind of amazing? Find a place where it is happening now. It's closer than you think.