

*Expressions  
of Good  
Pt. 4*

*A Tov  
People Are  
Dispensers of  
Grace.*



# A People Of Tov Dispense Grace, Which Brings Life To Others.

The opposite of that happens when the church, the body of Christ, the family of God allows herself to morph into an organization instead of what she was intended to be, an organism, a family, the living, breathing, bride of Christ.

## We Begin With An Important Definition

“Grace-filled Goodness Begins In Forgiveness,  
Forms Into Freedom, And Resists Fear,  
All Because It Knows That God’s Design For  
The Church Is Love.”



# John Speaks To This Kind Of Definition.

## 1 John 4:11-19 (NLT2)

*Dear friends, since God loved us that much, we surely ought to love each other. No one has ever seen God. But if we love each other, God lives in us, and his love is brought to full expression in us. And God has given us his Spirit as proof that we live in him and he in us.*

*Furthermore, we have seen with our own eyes and now testify that the Father sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. All who confess that Jesus is the Son of God have God living in them, and they live in God. We know how much God loves us, and we have put our trust in his love. God is love, and all who live in love live in God, and God lives in them. And as we live in God, our love grows more perfect.*



*So we will not be afraid on the day of judgment, but we can face him with confidence because we live like Jesus here in this world.*

*Such love has no fear, because perfect love expels all fear. If we are afraid, it is for fear of punishment, and this shows that we have not fully experienced his perfect love. We love each other because he loved us first.*

# How Does Such A Grace-filled, Love-Based Culture Work?

Scot McKnight Suggest The Following  
Seven Part Process For Becoming  
Such A Culture.



## First, *Someone Has Something To Give.*

- In the church, the initial giver is God.
- The gift is redemption, by means of grace.
- Grace is, by its very nature, undeserved; it cannot be earned.
- A church that has a grace-based culture embraces the habit of giving and the culture of, “*It is more blessed to give than to receive.*” Acts 20:35
- “Freely you have received, freely give.” Matthew 10:8

## Second, *The God Of Tov Decides To Give Us This Redemption.*

- The heart of redemption is forgiveness and there are two prominent images of forgiveness.
  1. Sin is BURDEN we bear or a LOAD we carry. Forgiveness enables us to unload that burden and to actually throw it away.
  2. Sin is a DEBT that God cancelled. God abolished it at the cross. *“He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.”* Col. 2:14 (NLT2) tetelestai-paid in full



## Third, *The Giving And Receiving Of The Gift Of Grace Creates A Bond.*

- There is a personal relationship between giver (God) and receiver (Us).
- Giving and receiving by their very nature will create relationships.
- Relationships of reciprocal grace can impact others and create a culture that keeps reproducing itself.

## Philippians 4:14-19 (NIV)

*Yet it was good of you to share in my troubles. Moreover, as you Philippians know, in the early days of your acquaintance with the gospel, when I set out from Macedonia, not one church shared with me in the matter of giving and receiving, except you only; for even when I was in Thessalonica, you sent me aid again and again when I was in need.*



*Not that I am looking for a gift, but I am looking for what may be credited to your account. I have received full payment and even more; I am amply supplied, now that I have received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent. They are a fragrant offering, an acceptable sacrifice, pleasing to God.*

*And my God will meet all your needs according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.*

## Fourth, *The Receiver Responds With Action*

- What was your heart-felt response to God's gift of grace, as experienced in Jesus Christ?
- What about.... thanksgiving, gratitude, praise and worship, love, desire to please, serve or give back , and a willingness to trust?
- The whole Christian life is a response to the gift of grace that we have received from our Good, Tov, God



## *Fifth, Our Gift-giving God Becomes The Father Of Many Brothers And Sisters.*

- The Gift of Grace does not establish an organization that is held together by power and fear.
- It births a gift-based family of givers and receivers.
- We are all siblings of each other, brothers and sisters.
- We are all equally loved and valued as members of the family of God.
  - Jesus is our elder brother and friend.

## John 15:12-15 (NIV)

*My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command. I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.*



## John 20:17-18 (NLT2)

*“Don’t cling to me,” Jesus said, “for I haven’t yet ascended to the Father. But go find my brothers and tell them that I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God.” Mary Magdalene found the disciples and told them, “I have seen the Lord!” Then she gave them his message.*

*Sixth, Grace Is A Reverse Kind Of Power  
That Turns Being Siblings Into A  
Flourishing Family Reality.*

- The gift of grace transforms believers from being enemies of God and strangers of one another into one big grace-filled family.
- It forms us into a people who love one another just as Jesus has loved us.



## Colossians 1:21-23 (NIV)

*Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation...*

# Seventh, *The Holy Spirit Is The Active Agent Who Turns Us From Enemies And Strangers Into Friends And Family.*

- How can over-the-top extroverts and contemplative introverts, who annoy each other, multiple ethnicities, who don't trust each other, and men and women, who don't understand and appreciate one another, learn to treat one another with grace and love?
  - James D. G. Dunn wrote that the Holy Spirit *“transcends human ability and transforms human inability.”*



# It You Have Read The Book Of Acts And Paul's Letters, You Know That What I Just Described Is Anything But Natural.

- There were Jewish Christians opposing the inclusion of Gentile Christians.
- There were missionaries arguing with one another.
  - There were church members suing each other.
- There were mature Christians being impatient with Christians just converted from pagan idolatry.

C.S. Lewis Wrote:

*“Everyone says forgiveness is a lovely idea until he has something to forgive.”*

Likewise:

*Everybody thinks bringing all these different kinds of people into one family is a lovely idea, until, they are trying to do it.*



# So, How Is Such A Family Begun And Sustained?

- TRUST! Trust is what binds people together in marriages, families, and spiritual relationships.
- Why do businesses have contracts with all the whereases, wherefores and other such language? FEAR! They're afraid the other entity might be dishonest. They DON'T TRUST each other.
- Fear and power undermine trust, grace creates trust!  
A church cannot be healthy without trust.

**Trusting Relationships Involve Reciprocity.**

**Peace Prayer of Francis of Assisi Captures This.**

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:

where there is hatred, let me sow love;

where there is injury, pardon;

where there is doubt, faith;

where there is despair, hope;

where there is darkness, light;

where there is sadness, joy.



O divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled, as to console,  
to be understood, as to understand,  
to be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.  
Amen.

# A Culture Of Tov Requires Grace.

Grace gives others room to grow, discover, make mistakes, receive forgiveness and find their way without fear.



# This Week's Assignment:

Pray!

Ask God To Reveal To You, By His Spirit,  
Some Way That You Can Help Build  
A Culture Of Grace And Trust  
In The Family Of God  
Of Which You Are A Part.