

## WHAT'S SO AMAZING ABOUT GRACE—by Philip Yancey

### Discussion Questions

1. What was your understanding of grace before reading this book? Has it changed since reading the book? If so, what is your understanding of grace now?
2. Can you think of times in your life when you experienced God's grace? Would you be willing to share your experience(s)? Were these life-changing events?
3. What stories touched you the most in the book?
4. What emotions did you feel when you read the opening story about the prostitute who goes to a counselor for help. When the counselor asks her if she ever thought of going to a church for help, the woman responded with pure, naïve shock and she cried, "Church! Why would I ever go there? I was already feeling terrible about myself. They'd just make me feel worse!"
5. Why do you think many churches aren't places of grace? Have you experienced ungrace in your family, in your job, or in your church?
6. Some quotes from the book are listed below. Share your thoughts on any of them that move you.

*Grace, says C.S.Lewis, is Christianity's unique contribution among world religions. 'Grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us more... and grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us less,' pg. 70.*

*President Bill Clinton's equally sad comment (said before the Starr/Lewinsky episode : 'I've been in politics long enough to expect criticism and hostility... But I was unprepared for the \_hatred\_ (Yancey's emphasis) I get from Christians. Why do Christians hate so much?' (p.226)*

*"The great Christian revolutions come not by the discovery of something that was not known before. They happen when somebody takes radically something that was always there" (H. Richard Niebuhr) (p. 13-14)*

*"Mark Twain used to talk about people who were 'good in the worst sense of the word' (p.31)*

*"Theologian Karl Barth, after writing thousands of pages in his Church Dogmatics, arrived at this simple definition of God: 'the One who loves.'" (p.55)*

*"W.H.Auden's version of the old maxim 'Hurt people hurt people': 'I and the public know / What all school children learn, / Those to whom evil is done / Do evil in return'" (p.86)*

*Humorist Erma Bombeck's prayer: 'Lord, if you can't make me thin, then make my friends look fat' (p.87)*

*Henri Nouwen defines forgiveness as 'love practiced among people who love poorly' (p.92) ...As the Jewish philosopher Hannah Arendt said, the only remedy for the inevitability of history is forgiveness; otherwise, we remain trapped in "the predicament of irreversibility" (p.99)*

*Coziness between church and state is good for the state and bad for the church (G.K.Chesterton) (p.248)*