



Showing Grace to Others

Show grace with words

When speaking with people, use words that are kind and gentle. Obviously there are times we need to correct other people, but it never has to be done in a hateful or mean-spirited way.

Look for the needs of others

Can you help someone in some small way? Holding a door for someone whose arms are full can be a small action that helps in a great way. Seeking out little actions you can do for others will help you become a more graceful person. Don't just look for opportunities to fulfill monumental needs. Our ability to change other people's lives with large financial donations or heroic actions are seldom within our grasp, but we can affect people every day with simple kindness.

Respond with grace

Have you been criticized by someone? Even unjustly? You don't have to let others walk over you, but you can respond in a gracious way. Accept what they have to say and thank them for their input. The news that they bring you may upset and hurt you deeply. The way you respond can help the healing begin immediately. A quick response with anger will leave you seething. But the sooner you can respond with a smile and a calm spirit, the sooner you will be able to see the truth in their words and make the changes that need to be made.

Offer a graceful presence

Take opportunities to be with someone in a time of grief. They don't need you to deliver some special speech or do anything grand for them and the family. Your presence may be all that is needed to show that you love them. Funerals and hospital stays are times when you can make a quick visit that will leave an impact on someone's life. You don't have to spend hours with them, but they do want to know you care and think about them. Even if it is just a 10-minute visit, stopping to say hello can mean the world to someone in physical or emotional pain.

Forgive with grace

When someone asks forgiveness, accept their apology graciously. They are humbly asking for your pardon. That is not the time to explain why they should have done it sooner. Nor is it the right to correct them and tell them how they could have handled the situation better. If you are in a teaching or authoritative position over the person and must give them advice to help them in the future, separate your advice from your forgiveness. Let them see you have accepted their apology, then share the correction and direction they need later on.

Learn to say “I’m sorry”

When you make a mistake, swallow your pride and ask for forgiveness. Maybe they wronged you in some way, but you responded inappropriately. You can ask them to forgive you for your response. Remember -- grace is giving to the other person what they don't deserve. Even if, in your opinion, they don't deserve an apology, you can ask for their forgiveness for your wrong response.

Keep short accounts

When you need to apologize, do it quickly. Don't keep a running total of how many times they have done wrong towards you. Forgive, even if they don't ask for it. Grace can go a long way to repairing a relationship if you will respond in a loving way, even if they don't.

Clean up your language

Beyond using gentle words with those around you, be careful how you express yourself. Are there words in your vocabulary that shouldn't be there? There may be some words you say that aren't really bad words, but the way you say them express the same feelings as your co-worker's curse words. Be careful with substitute curse words. Even if you aren't saying the same thing, you mean exactly the same emotions as others who use the real words.

Say thank you

Take time to say “thank you.” It doesn't cost anything, but it can show other people gratitude and grace. Write a simple card expressing your appreciation for a kind act on your behalf. You can make a difference by putting a “thank you” on your lips and a card in someone's hand.

Take interest in others

I introduced a friend to a local pastor recently, and the pastor asked my friend a few questions about himself. He took the time and looked my friend in the eyes as he answered. The pastor responded with an attitude of genuine interest. The conversation lasted less than five minutes, but after the pastor left, my friend immediately said, “What a gracious man!” The pastor did nothing more than ask a few questions and show interest in my friend's answers. Certainly it is appropriate to respond when people ask you about yourself, but ask a few questions of your own to learn about others. Let people talk about themselves -- then be interested in their response.

Adapted from: <https://whatchristianswanttoknow.com/how-to-show-grace-to-others>