

BEING SECURE IN YOUR IDENTITY: THE CYCLES OF GRIEF AND GRACE

"Ministering without this sense of identity, security and significance that comes from God's acceptance can be very dangerous. People's sense of inadequacy can drive them to compensate for the insecurity by working hard to be successful. We must replace the deep-seated insecurity with a deep-set trust in God and with joy over the fact that he has adopted them and called them to his service."

(Ajith Fernando - Jesus Driven Ministry)

WHETHER WE ARE CAUGHT UP IN THE CYCLE OF GRACE OR THE CYCLE OF GRIEF

MAKES ALL THE DIFFERENCE TO OUR SECURITY.

We can be living out of the cycle of grief due to driven urges we have picked up from various stories we have heard: Only the perfect is good enough; you could always do better. What others think of you is the most important thing; always try to please others. Don't ever admit to any weakness; always act as if everything was fine and as if you are well able to cope. Don't admit to any failure; only those who succeed matter to God and to others. Other people are better than you.

It seems to me that what I need to be free as a leader is to be loved. My problem is that I am insecure; I have unmet needs; needs for approval, status, affirmation, success. As long as I have these unmet needs, I will use people around me, including those I lead, to meet my needs. How can I be set free? The answer lies in being secured by a loving, unconditional, gracious and yet directional relationship in which my needs are met. (Simon Walker - Subversive Leadership)





THE RESULTS OF THIS IS THAT GOD,

AND OTHER PEOPLE, (AND WE OURSELVES) WILL ONLY APPROVE OF US IF WE DO A GOOD JOB.

We can become envious of others who appear (to us) to be doing a better job. Our identity is somehow tied up with our performance; criticism strikes at the root of our sense of self-worth. Our spiritual life is often crippled by life in this cycle.

It can have big impacts on our servant-leadership: we make decisions based on our own needs, we find it hard to let things go because our security is linked to our role, we serve grudgingly, we need constant approval, we can become resentful...

In the cycle of grief we are starting from a position of achievement. In the cycle of grace our starting point is that of resting in the acceptance of God, knowing that this acceptance depends not on our own achievements but on the saving love of God himself. It is this acceptance which God wants to communicate to us.

From this sense of acceptance comes our identity and our sense of significance. Fundamental to living in this way is a dynamic understanding of being called by God.

What significant influences, events or experiences can push you into the cycle of grief? What helps you to live in the cycle of grace?