

Dependent Upon God

by *Linda*

I once had a pastor tell me to “pray as if it all depends on God, work as if it all depends on you.” It sounded easy, and made sense. So I lived that way... for years. But no longer: God has shown me his idea of living. Really living is knowing that it all depends on God.

God has been so gracious to me. Over my life, God has gently taken me step by step from one level of trusting him to the next. I say gracious, because he’s been so gentle. At every stage God has given me time to learn when to step out in action and when to wait on the Lord.

Preparing for full-time ministry in Maine has brought me to the next level in trusting God. Thankfully, I am more aware than ever of my need to depend on him for direction. I could muscle through this level on my own, working as if it all depends on me. And, of course, despite all God has taught me, I have tried that a few times, only to find God putting his hand heavily on my shoulder. He reminds me that he is Lord, not me.

What does that look like? It is realizing that I yearn to have control over my life. Often I’ll settle for control over even just one thing - my schedule, my dogs, my spouse. Most often it’s my future I want

control over. I struggle because someone or something won’t behave as I would have it. Then I hear the Holy Spirit say, “Why are you struggling?” If I answer truthfully, it is because I want it my way. I trust my way. The Holy Spirit asks, “Really? Are you sure? Were you there when God formed the earth?” and I remember God’s ways are far better than whatever I could come up with. I pray, “God, remind me that I have never had control of anything. Help my heart to find peace in remembering you are walking ahead of me, and I’m but to follow.”

At times my struggle comes in not being able to act. I pray, depending upon God to act, and seemingly nothing happens. Once again, God has taught my heart to ask, “Why are you struggling?” And I hear all my voices of fear pipe up... “I’m afraid I’ll make a mistake; afraid I’ll offend; afraid I’ll fail.” Thankfully, wonderfully, God says, “My grace is sufficient.” Then God reminds me that he will meet all of my needs “according to his glorious riches in Christ Jesus.”

So when I think of what is the next step, when to act and when to pray for God to act, instead of relying on me, I ask God to show me the path. I ask God to put me back on the path. I ask God to remind me he’s up in front on the path, even when I can’t see him. And I thank God when he carries me along the path.

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Ω PRAISES AND PRAYER REQUESTS

- ☞ Praise that Ken & Linda have reached 75% of their support. Pray that God would provide the rest quickly.
- ☞ Pray for God to remove all the obstacles in Ken & Linda’s path and for them to throw off the entanglements
- ☞ Pray for the Holy Spirit’s work within the people of Free Grace that we would be consumed by the vision of God’s glory and excited about the hard work and sacrifices of a new church.

- ☞ Pray that a new home group would be established as new families are invited by the people of Free Grace and drawn by God into the church.
- ☞ Praise that God continues to provide financially. Pray for us to trust him for our finances as we seek additional partners.
- ☞ Pray for those we have spoken to about Free Grace. Pray that God would work in their hearts to respond to the invitations to come.



Comparisons

by *per*

As one year ends and another begins., everyone looks back at the year now past. As I look back, I find it easy to fall into judging the past year by comparing us against other churches.

The morning of Christmas Eve, I received an e-mail from a friend who began the work of starting a new church this past year as we did. He spoke glowingly of how God brought their Christmas service together. How they enjoyed 75 people gathering (only 21 of whom were part of the church) at a space rented for the service. How God provided things at the last minute, etc.

That evening we had our Christmas Eve service in our home. It was a wonderful time with friends as we gathered to hear and proclaim the promise of the Savior who came and is coming back. Yet the people we invited and prayed for did not come. We did not have 75 people attend but instead only 15. You see how easy it is to fall into comparisons?

Yet, as you can see from the pictures to the right, we had an exciting year of seeing God work in central Maine. We saw many instances of God working out his grace and reminding us of his gospel. And we are reminded that he has called us here and not somewhere else, for his work and not ours, to find success in his glory and not in our glory.

As we look forward in 2009, we pray that we will look back at the end and see those reminders of God's grace in our lives, our church, and our community. Pray with us for God to continue to work here to glorify his name through Christ in us. And pray that we would see this in the response of people to the gospel as they are drawn into relationship with God through Christ and into Free Grace by his Spirit.

2008 in pictures



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Super Bowl Party
Sunday, Feb 3rd
prayer @ 4:00
game @ 5:00



Building Community



Open House
Sunday, Feb 10th
drop by anytime
between 3:00 - 5:00



GIVING

make checks out to:
Free Grace
PO Box 602
Lewiston, ME 04243-0602

FOR KEN & LINDA make checks out to:
MNA
1700 N. Brown Rd
Suite 101
Lawrenceville, GA 30043

Contact us for information on electronic or credit card gifts

Please make sure to include on the check that it is for Ken & Linda Morris

VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT WWW.FREEGRACE.US