

The Grace Effect
From Abuse to Acceptance
Luke 15:11-24

10/15/17

1. Beware the consequences of grace abuse.

In the story: the father granted freedom. The son saw it as indulgence.

- The party always ends.
- Life always changes.

2. Acceptance begins with honesty.

In the story: the falling was fun, but the sudden stop at the bottom was painful.

- See our hunger as a sign that something is missing.
- Recognize that we may be trying to fill our emptiness with the wrong things.
- See our pain as an antidote for denial.

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3. Acceptance leads to change.

In the story: the son was willing to let the father reshape who he had become.

- Grace abuse distorts what grace is designed to create.
- Change requires repentance – a change of heart that leads to a change of actions and lifestyle.

Pain as God's megaphone is a terrible instrument;
it may lead to final and unrepentant rebellion.

But it gives the only opportunity
that the bad man can have for amendment.

It removes the veil.

C. S. Lewis, *The Problem of Pain*