Striving for Something We Already Have

Grace slips through our fingers like water, not because it's elusive, but because we keep clenching our fists. There's something almost maddening about the concept of grace—how it defies every instinct we have about earning our place in this world. We live in a universe of transactions, of cause and effect, of merit and reward. So when we encounter love that asks for nothing in return, acceptance that comes without prerequisites, forgiveness that arrives before we even ask for it, our minds revolt. *This cannot be*! *There must be a catch.* And so we bargain for things we already possess.

We spend our days climbing mountains, thinking God waits at the summit with a checklist and a stopwatch. We catalog our good deeds like currency, counting up our prayers like coins in a jar, convinced that somewhere there's a cosmic ledger where our efforts will finally tip the scales toward worthiness. All the while, He stands in the valley below, arms open, calling us home.

"There is always room for one more," echoes through the chambers of our striving hearts. One more son. One more daughter. One more opportunity to simply receive what has already been given. But we've forgotten how to have open hands. We've trained ourselves to grasp, to work, to prove.

We know grace like the back of our hand—that familiar territory we've mapped with our minds—and yet we cannot seem to turn that hand palm-up in surrender.

The truth is devastating in its simplicity: the work has already been done. Every prayer we think we need to earn, every moment of acceptance we believe we must achieve, every drop of love we imagine we must prove ourselves worthy of—it's

already ours. Not because we're perfect, but because we're His.

We don't need perfection. We need direction. Not toward some distant goal of worthiness, but toward the radical act of receiving. There's something achingly familiar in the way we catalog our spiritual efforts, isn't there? Like that haunting refrain that asks if we've got soul—we keep taking inventory of all the things we've done, as if the ledger itself might save us. But grace doesn't keep score.

Still, we climb. We strive uphill, bloodied knees and calloused hands, trying to improve our spiritual résumé while Love itself waits in the mess of our valley. In our woundedness. In our spiritual chaos. The invitation isn't to clean ourselves up first—it's to come as we are, broken and beautiful and bewildered by grace.

"Come home," He whispers, while we shout up the mountain asking to be accepted.

"Help me," we cry, not realizing we're already held.

"Redeem me," we plead, blind to the fact that redemption happened long before we knew we needed it.

What He wants isn't our perfection—it's our passion. Not our achievements, but our attention. Not our worthiness, but our willingness to be loved without earning it. He's waiting for that moment when we finally exhale the words that change everything: *"Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."*

Broken, bloodied, and feeling utterly useless as we may be, this is the movement from chaos to serene—not through our striving, but through our surrender. Not by climbing higher, but by coming home.

Grace remains maddening because it asks us to accept what we cannot earn, receive what we did not work for, and trust in

love that makes no sense by the world’s standards.

Perhaps that’s exactly the point.

In a world obsessed with merit and achievement, grace stands as a quiet revolution—a love that simply is, without condition or clause, waiting for us to stop climbing long enough to be embraced.