

A Godly Family, Part 3: Grace-Transformed Love (Ephesians 5:25-27)

Preached by Pastor Phil Layton at Gold Country Baptist Church on August 20, 2012

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Exactly one month ago today, an Aurora Colorado theater audience was attacked by a heavily-armed gunman who opened fire on the audience with semi-automatic weapons, shooting 70, murdering 12 – a truly dark night, ominously orchestrated at the movie named “Dark Knight Rises,” a mass murder by a true villain. The Colorado governor called it “an act of depravity,” as CBS News reported it.

As we study the Bible systematically verse-by-verse, there are times when current events intersect with some of the truths we are studying, and today is one of those times. As Christians we need careful theology and deep doctrine to think biblically about our world’s news and views. The Scriptures give us a framework to understand the darkness of depravity in the heart of man in a way the secular media and world cannot. The gospel in particular gives a framework to understand that Satan has blinded the minds of unbelievers in sin’s darkness, but a sovereign God is working even in the deepest darkness to shine the light of Christ to men’s hearts through the gospel as Christ is preached (2 Cor 4:4-6)

Man’s sinfulness doesn’t stop God’s sovereignty or surprise Him. The God whose first words in Genesis called light from darkness, He has the last word in the gospel, calling forth salvation’s light as Jesus comes to rescue a world turned evil by the first man’s sin. The darkest day in history, the literal darkness over the earth when God’s Son died, was backdrop for the light of the grace of God to shine brightest. After that dark night, our hero Jesus rises 3 days later, so His grace can shine in our darkness, any darkness we go through. From the horrific murder of Jesus comes healing and meaning. As hatred is poured out on Christ, His love is poured out for us.

Ephesians 5:2 tells us “*Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us*” and that’s the truth Paul is repeating and leading off with in v. 25-27. I want you to see how today’s passage, Ephesians 5:25-27, our next text in our consecutive study, is more up-to-date and relevant than tomorrow’s newspaper, and relevant to what’s been all over the news the past 4 weeks in this shooting. God’s timeless truths not only transformed by grace the 1st readers of this passage 2,000 years ago, who were saved out of the sinful darkness of Ephesus, these truths transformed some involved in the darkness of Aurora Colorado recently by grace. This same grace is intended in God’s providence to transform us today, our marriages, our families, lives.

1. Man’s Problem and Need of Grace

Ephesians 5:25 begins: *Husbands, love your wives just as Christ...*

But the difference is Christ’s love for us His church was not based on our being attractive to Him, in fact, we were quite the opposite.

- We were unlovely
- We were undeserving
- We were unresponsive [it’s the doctrine “total depravity”]

Not as bad as we could be, depravity of total person (Rom 3:10ff).

It’s the problem of all mankind, not just murderers; we need grace.

First of all, we were unlovely.

The prophet Isaiah describes man as spiritually *unclean*, using the word for leprosy, that offensive and unattractive disease, decaying skin and dead flesh falling off (Isa. 64:6). Theologians call it radical corruption/depravity. That verse in Isaiah says righteous religious things we do are in God's sight a filthy rag, using a graphically unlovely Hebrew word.

Eph. 5:26-27 says we needed to be cleansed, washed of impurity. Our impurity in v. 5 keeps us out of His perfect and holy kingdom. Also in context, 2nd half of Eph. 5:16 says "... *the days are evil.*" Not only do we live in evil days, v. 16, in an evil world, we *were* evil. Not only were we in darkness, it was *in us*. We were darkness in **5:8**: "*for you were formerly darkness ...*"

28 year old Pierce O'Farrill survived being shot three times, by every type of weapon James Holmes had. The reporter on a CBN television interview asked Pierce "Tell me about that evil feeling." Pierce responded to the reporter: "it's very real. It's just an evil and a darkness that you can feel. You could feel that hatred...that hatred towards humanity."¹

We've seen dark evil on the news these days with James Holmes in his disheveled appearance and wild hair in court, his zero remorse for the families shattered and lives destroyed by his evil massacre. But we need to realize as unlovely and unattractive as his image is to us because of his wickedness, God the Judge *sees us* guilty, too. People a judge sends to jail may have different crimes, some worse than others in the eyes of society, but the same jail (same w/ hell). Our sins take different forms, but all sin is greatly offensive to God and we're all guilty before His justice that requires our punishment and we should all be sent to the same place.

We were unlovely, and were undeserving of the grace we needed.

Grace by definition is *undeserved*. We deserved God's wrath, v. 6. But for the true church – all who put their faith in Christ and submit to Him (v. 24) – it says in v. 25 that Christ gave us His love instead of the wrath we deserve, and He "*gave Himself up for*" us, taking on the cross the punishment we deserve, satisfying justice so that The Judge can legally dismiss our case because Jesus paid our fine! As we recognize our problem and need, this makes His grace amazing

We were unlovely, undeserving and we were thirdly, unresponsive.

Eph **2:1**: *And you were **dead** in your trespasses and sins [spiritually dead, i.e., not responding or doing anything positive toward God, no spiritual life] ² in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³ Among them **we too all** formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were **by nature children of wrath** [i.e., all objects of wrath, deserving wrath, not just murderers], *even as the rest.* ⁴ **But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,** ⁵ *even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)**

When we were unresponsive, undeserving, unlovely corrupting corpses, God raised us from spiritual death, by regenerating grace, life-giving resurrecting grace -- the grace we needed to be saved by faith in v. 8, and even that's part of His gift.

Some think a better term than total depravity is ‘spiritual inability.’ In other words, we were unable to do anything to save ourselves or change our condition apart from sovereign grace and didn’t want to –we did what we desired in v. 3. End of v. 12: *without hope or God*

Sovereign grace is pictured in Ezek. 16 as the Lord comes upon an unwanted unclean baby lying in dirt mixed with a pool of its blood but His sovereign grace commands “Live!” And the Lord rescues and cleanses and makes this people to be a bride (ala Eph 5:26-27).

It’s the grace Paul who’s writing Ephesians also writes in Rom. 5: “*because **the love of God has been poured out within our hearts ... For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly ... God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us ... while we were enemies we were reconciled to God ...***” (v. 5-10).

It’s the grace Martyn Lloyd-Jones explained: “He loved us, not because of anything in us; he loved us in spite of what was in us, ‘while we were yet sinners’. He loved the ungodly, ‘while we were yet enemies’. In all our unworthiness and vileness He loved us.”²

1. Man’s Problem (Total Depravity) and Need of Grace
2. **God’s Predetermined Choice of Grace**

The Lord graciously chose a bride, v. 27: “*that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless.*”

The Lord predetermined to set His love on her, knowing full well her blemishes. He didn’t choose to marry her because of her beauty but He chose to...despite her lack of beauty. She wasn’t “all that.” The church isn’t wrinkle-free. She has ugly spots still. She, *we* are not naturally glorious and radiant, but His grace is transforming us to be that. And He’s not finished with us yet -- He’s getting us all ready for the big day! His grace cleans us up and washes us (v. 26), makes us unlovely sinners to be His lovely spouse in v. 27. Once unresponsive spiritually dead sinners are made alive to respond to His love, as 1 John 4:19 says “*We love because He first loved us.*”

He didn’t marry the church because she was already beautiful; He commits, *then makes her beautiful*. Christ’s love was not based on her attractiveness or His romantic feelings, it was a gracious choice to love and to seek her highest good, that’s the love we’re called to.

The words at end of v. 27 “*that she would be holy and blameless*” take us back to Eph. 1:4 in God’s predetermined choice of grace: **1:4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love⁵ He predestined us ...** [v. 6 says so we’ll praise the glory of His grace He bestowed on us, blessing/accepting us in/with the beloved Son, presenting us before Him as holy and blameless]

That’s His predestined or predetermined choice of grace and love, what theologians call unconditional election or choice. In other words, it’s not conditioned on the one loved, it’s unconditional love, a predetermined choice to set His grace upon her as His bride

Eph 1:11 says it again: "...*having been **predestined** according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will...*"

Does "all things" include sinful actions? The paths of bullets by sinful shooters? Is His purpose only big things like our salvation, or also little things? Jesus taught God's providence means birds can't fall to earth and hairs can't fall from our head apart from God's will (Mt 10:29-30).

A CNN News article in the aftermath of Aurora opened this way:

'Call it what you will -- providence, fate or simply a stroke of incredibly good luck -- Colorado shooting victim Petra Anderson has some of it. [She] sustained multiple gunshot wounds in the movie theater rampage last week ... one went through her nose into her brain. The head injury could have been fatal, but thanks in part to a brain abnormality she never knew she had, Anderson is on her way to a full recovery ...

"The doctor explains that Petra's brain has had from birth a small ... channel of fluid running through her skull, like a tiny vein through marble, or a small hole in an oak board, winding from front to rear," Brad Strait, senior pastor at Cherry Creek Presbyterian Church in Englewood, Colorado, wrote on his blog.³

'Only a CAT scan would catch it, and Petra would have never noticed it ... the shotgun buck shot ... enters her brain from the exact point of this defect. Like a marble through a small tube, the defect channels the bullet from Petra's nose through her brain. It turns slightly several times, and comes to rest at the rear of her brain. And in the process, the bullet misses all the vital areas of the brain ... Like a giant BB though a straw created in Petra's brain before she was born, it follows the route of the defect. It is channeled in the least harmful way. A millimeter in any direction and the channel is missed. The brain is destroyed ... [her pastor adds] In Christianity we call it prevenient grace: God working ahead of time for a particular event in the future. It's just like the God I follow to plan the route of a bullet through a brain long before Batman ever rises. Twenty-two years before.'⁴

Her mother (fighting cancer) told KUSA-TV in Denver that God "has these things in his hands."⁵ That's true not only for channels of fluid in the brain: Prov 21:1 "*The king's heart is like channels of water in the hand of the LORD; He turns it wherever He wishes.*" The Lord in the gospel turns hearts (Luke 1:17) and opens hearts to respond to it (Acts 16:14) so all He's pre-appointed believe (13:48) and all the Father gives to Jesus are safe in His hands (Jn 10:28-29)

In Acts 4, the apostles said of that darkest night of the crucifixion:

²⁷ "*For truly in this city there were gathered together against Your holy servant Jesus, whom You anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, along with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel,*
²⁸ *to do whatever Your hand and Your purpose predestined to occur.*"

Even man's darkest sinfulness doesn't remove Divine sovereignty. Even that worst murder in history, the very cross of Jesus became a place of grace. Man is responsible for his sin but God reigns over man's sin. A *USA Today* article from Aurora, CO: 'Worshippers in this city rocked by [the] ... mass shooting flocked to church Sunday ... "People are saying that if there's a day to go to church, this is it," says [an] associate pastor ... about a mile from the movie theater ... "They're looking for a sense of something bigger than themselves."' ⁶

God's big gospel purposes overcome sin, calling sinners to Him. Romans 8:30 says of those God foreknew (set His love on before): *these whom He predestined, He also called; and these whom He called, He also justified; and these whom He justified, He also glorified.*³¹ *What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? ...*³⁵ ***Who will separate us from the love of Christ?*** [for those God predestined to love in this way, no one, nothing can!]

1. Man's Problem (Total Depravity) and Need of Grace
2. God's Predetermined Choice of Grace
3. **God's Particular Redemption Grace**

Eph. 5:25 "...*Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her*"

This is the love Christ calls husbands to for their wives, and it's the love 4 men showed in that CO theater, for girlfriends who weren't their wives. Alex Teves gave himself up for the girl he loved that night, immediately lunging to block the bullets flying at Amanda Lindgren by laying down his body between her and the shooter. He died taking the gunshots that would have hit her, and she survived unharmed. Amanda told ABC News "When someone loves you that much and you love somebody that much...how do you believe that this is real?" Alex's father Tom Teves told ABC News, "I know now more than ever that there is a God. Because of Alex."⁷

John Larimer started going out with Julia Vojtsek with the blessing of her dad who was involved in the relationship of the couple. Her dad appreciated John's respect to him as her father, unlike typical daters. John had already planned to go to church with her dad that weekend. Julia explained when the theater shooting started, "John immediately and instinctively covered me and brought me to the ground in order to protect me from any danger ... Moments later, John knowingly shielded me from a spray of gunshots. It was then I believe John was hit with a bullet that would have very possibly struck me ... I was saved by John and his ultimate kindness."⁸

Other men similarly gave up their lives protecting their women by shielding them with their bodies, absorbing the deadly shots their girls would have received. That's what a real man is, not some of the stuff you see in movies, but what those men did at that movie. It's what the greatest Man who was also God calls husbands to do and did for His own bride, the God-Man Christ Jesus, our example

John had only been together with Julia for 3 weeks. According to Julia's dad, after John died for her, 2 Navy friends with him were "unbelievable" in making sure Julia got out safely, even though they had just met her earlier that day.' John had told his brother he felt it would be the best way to die, saving someone's life.⁹ Jesus taught there's no greater love than a man who lays down his life for his friend (John 15:13). And there was no greater example of love than Jesus laying down His for His friend He married (5:25).

Jesus loved the church preeminently, particularly thinking of her as He laid down His life to shield her from the onslaught of hell. When you read "church," think believers in Christ, both now and those who believe in the future. It's all true Christians in history, all who have turned from their sins to trust Christ alone to save.

The church is not a building, it's all true believers in Jesus Christ in submitted relationship to Him as Lord, Head, Savior (5:23-24). If He is not your Lord and Head, He is not your Savior in v. 23 and you are not in the true church in v. 25 and He hasn't given *Himself up for you* in the sense of paying, removing your sins on the cross. If you reject Christ, you can't stand before God the Judge on judgment day and tell Him you're ok because your sins are already paid for. They aren't if you died in your sins and you must pay for your own sins in hell. But if He *is your Lord by faith*, you and all true believers in the true church have sins truly paid for and truly redeemed.

²⁵ *Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved **the church** and gave Himself up for her, [**her**] because imagery is Christ's bride* ²⁶ *so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word,* ²⁷ *that He might present to Himself **the church** in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that **she** would be holy and blameless.*

7x in 3 verses, there is emphatic emphasis on *the church/her/she!*

The church's one foundation is Jesus Christ **her Lord** [Eph 2:20]

she is his new creation [2:10] by water and the Word [5:26].

From heaven he came and **sought her** to be his holy bride [5:27];

with his own blood he **bought her, and for her life he died** [5:25].

Elect [1:4] from every nation [3:6], yet one o'er all the earth [4:4];

It is *her, the church*, He came and sought and bought and died for.

A more modern poet in a different genre explains it this way:

It's true, Jesus gave up His life for His Bride
 ... His Bride is the elect to whom His death is applied
 If on judgment day, you see that you can't hide
 And because of your sin, God's wrath on you abides
 And hell is the place you eternally reside
 That means your wrath from God hasn't been satisfied
 But we believe His mission was accomplished when He died ...
 So many think He only came to make it possible
 Let's follow this solution to a conclusion that's logical
 What about those who were already in the grave?
 The Old Testament wicked - condemned as depraved ...
 [did He redeem them? Or are you] saying the cross by itself doesn't save?!
 That we must do something to give the cross its power
 That means, at the end of the day, the glory's ours
 That man-centered thinking is not recommended
 The cross will save all for whom it is intended ...¹⁰

If you go back to chapter 1, we see whom God intended to redeem: Look at Eph **1:4** '*He chose us... ⁵ He predestined us to adoption... ..⁷ In Him we have **redemption** through His blood, the **forgiveness of our trespasses...***' [note: redemption includes forgiveness. If we have redemption, we have our sins forgiven. If everyone has this redemption, everyone has forgiveness. So I reject the Arminian theological theory of *universal redemption*; not all are redeemed]

It's the elect or those God chose (1:4) who have redemption (v. 7). Christ's redemption is *sufficient for all who believe*, not efficient for or applied to those who never believe -- they're not redeemed. To redeem isn't just to pay for--it's to set free a slave and in biblical usage, redemption results in adoption (Gal 4:4-7), and is reserved for those God saves.

We don't know who God's elect are the Father chose before the foundation of the world, so we offer the gospel to all and call them to repent and believe to receive the forgiveness of redemption. But if you believe salvation and forgiveness is limited to believers, you believe in *limited redemption*, because 'redemption' or 'redeemed' are Bible words *limited to those God actually saves and forgives*. Redemption isn't universal or hypothetical, it's particular, actual.

- He redeems *his congregation* (Ps 74:2), *his servants* (34:22)
- In 1 Chron 17:21 it is God's *own people* whom He redeems
- In Eph 1:4-7 it's the *chosen, adopted* who have redemption
- In Eph 5:1-2, it's God's *children* Christ loved and died for
- In Eph 5:25, *the bride of Christ* He loved and gave Himself for
- In Acts 20:28 it's *the church* He purchased with His own blood
- In Heb 2:17 it's *His brethren/people* His priestly work was for
- In Heb 9:15 it's *the called/elect* who are redeemed by his death
- In Heb 9:28 it says Christ was offered to bear the sins *of many*
- In Rev 5:8-9 it is *the saints* redeemed by the blood of the Lamb
- In Jn 10:11 Jesus as shepherd lays down His life for *His sheep*
- In Jn 15:13-14 it's *His friends/followers* He gives His life for
- In Mt 20:28 the Son of Man gives His life a ransom *for many*
- In Mt 26:28 He said His blood is poured out for sins of *many*

You can study those verses later, but it's all over the Bible, God's Particular Redemption Grace
#4. God's Prevailing Heart-Changing Grace

Christ loved and died for the church in v. 25, and in v. 26-27 He's continually changing her by His grace. His heart-changing grace in Eph 2:5 began when we were spiritually dead, He made us alive, or as another Scripture says it, God exchanges our dead heart for a new living heart of flesh put in its place, a spiritual heart transplant and spiritual heart transformation, changing our lives and our loves

Another word for this prevailing grace would be "irresistible." It's not the idea of some force or coercion, this is in the realm of a wife and husband who she finds irresistible because her heart has been changed by his prevailing love. I find my wife Jaime irresistible. In order for me to do something for her she doesn't have to use force or coercion ... usually. My heart has been changed by her and it's growing in love for her and I can't help it because she's irresistible

We don't need to resist this doctrine of grace some call *irresistible*, but a better phrase may be *prevailing heart-changing grace*. This grace prevails and overcomes our natural resistance to Jesus and changes hearts *invincibly* to respond to Jesus (Acts 9). Paul hated Jesus, but now finds Him irresistible. Jesus is choosing and wooing a bride for Himself who did not love Him and would never love Him unless He first won her affections to Himself, conquering her heart, and capturing her love, not by doing violence to her will but drawing her will to Jesus irresistibly like a magnet of grace so that she freely and willingly comes because of what **He** has done! Jesus goes to greater length than any man to win His bride, and He has greater power to change her heart than any man can for the maiden he seeks, and Jesus will not lose this bride to another man.

Which brings us to point #5: **God's Persevering Purifying Grace**

This is the grace that enables true saints to persevere till v. 27 and the wedding day. If it was just up to us we wouldn't make it to v. 27, being presented to Jesus – we would be a runaway bride like Julia Roberts. Or to put it in a more biblical analogy, Jesus isn't like Joseph was to Mary, wanting to put away His betrothed when He sees how sinful we've been. He knows we've been impure and unfaithful but His grace is persevering and His love is purifying us and His commitment in v. 27 is to present us to Himself in glory.

Rev 14:12 says “*Here is the perseverance of the saints...*” (NASB)

Rev 19 mentions the saints again, but their perseverance isn't just based on their own faithfulness, it's One named Faithful and True who perseveres on their behalf with preserving and purifying grace and He is coming on a white horse and we'll live happily ever after

And this story has no “The End.” His love for us will never end. This is God's love story. The hope of the redeemed in seeing Jesus come for us is to be a preserving and purifying grace in our lives (read Titus 2:11-14). There is much more in this theme, and maybe we'll come back to this theme in a couple weeks in v. 32, how all human love stories and marriages are ultimately merely pictures of Christ's love for His church. But we've packed plenty of theology already into this message. Let's unpack some personal applications

These ‘doctrines of grace’ are all from Ephesians and all practical:

- T - Total Depravity – Our Need of Grace
- U - Unconditional Election/Choice of Grace
- L - Limited/Particular Redemption Grace
- I - Invincible/Heart-Changing Grace
- P - Persevering Grace (for Perseverance of the Saints)

1. Man's Problem and Need of Grace (Total Depravity)

- Remember your need for grace to fulfill 5:25 to your wife
- Remember (Eph 2:11-12 says) what you were and where you would still be, but for sovereign grace to you (2:1-5)
- Remember we were unlovely, undeserving, unresponsive as you love your spouse when they doesn't deserve it, when they're not so lovely, love them even if they don't respond

Love your wife regardless of her looks or loveliness or lack thereof, regardless how unattractive her sin is. Love her as Christ loved the church, when she was undeserving (not just when you think your wife deserves it). Love her even if she's not responsive, because that's how Christ loved us when we were spiritually dead.

It goes both ways: the wife is to love by submitting to her husband regardless of how unlovely or unloving he has become, to give grace to him when he is undeserving (that's what grace is and how Christ loved us), and to love him regardless of his response or love.

This kind of love is even possible toward the Aurora CO murderer. Pierce O'Farrill, one of the victims I quoted from earlier, explained how he could feel compassion and sorrow for his shooter. Pierce knew his own need for grace as he saw the killer in the courtroom.

Pierce talked about the dynamic of the darkness of depression and sinful thinking once in his life, telling the news: “When I found Jesus, then the darkness slowly and surely started to go away.”¹¹

2. God’s Predetermined/Unconditional Choice of Grace

- If we’re to love like Christ does (5:25), love is a choice, a commitment beforehand (ex: marital vows), not a feeling
- It’s not *conditional* based on what we think we see in the future our spouse will do/choose (Arminian election idea)
- It’s not a love “because of” but “in spite of” what she does

3. God’s Particular/Limited Redemption Grace

- Love sacrificially like Christ in a self-giving way (v. 25)
- Love your spouse supremely, limit your affections to her (“sanctify her” in v. 26 can be translated “set her apart”)

I love all of you in this room on one level, but I love my wife in a particular and different higher greater way than I love any of the rest of you, and what I do for her I don’t do for everybody, as this very verse explains as the model for husband’s love. The particular level love relationship I have with Jaime I can’t share with any other woman.

4. God’s Prevailing Heart-Changing (Invincible) Grace

- Love in a way that seeks to win the heart of your beloved
- Loving like Christ loved can soften hearts like nothing else

5. God’s Persevering Purifying Grace of His Saints

I want to talk about this last point more next time, but I want to end quoting from Pierce O’Farrill again about the heart-changing grace in his life that prevailed so that he didn’t just pray for the victims, he prayed for the villain who tried to kill him. Pierce said on TV to those who might struggle to understand how he could love his shooter: “read the gospel, meditate on it, pray on it. And reach for Jesus. Beg Jesus to just come into your heart and show you...”

[He said of his attempted murderer] “... if he would let me, I’d grab hold of his hand, I’d squeeze it, and I’d pray for him.” At the end of the interview, Pierce in fact prayed for James, “Lord, I would just ask that in the midst of all the darkness, all the sorrow, all the hatred, all the anger that’s in James’ heart, Lord, I would ask you to reach in there and see him for who he is, another fallen soul, who needs your love, needs your guidance. I pray that you would just help him first find that remorse that he needs to find --the remorse [biblical word repentance] for what he did, for the atrocious sins that he committed. And then Lord I would...ask you to do miraculous things and heal him. So that one day, one day, he actually gets to know you Lord, and I pray that the day comes that you will welcome him into your kingdom. We pray all of these things in the mighty and beautiful name of Jesus, Amen.”¹²

I think the Apostle Paul would have appreciated that prayer as a former murderer himself. Pierce shared his testimony at church last month to a large crowd including reporters from 10 news organizations, ABC, CNN, NBC, FOX, and others. After hearing Pierce share the gospel, a

number in the crowd professed faith in Christ, including one who had described himself as an atheist before coming to that church.¹³

That's the power of grace to transform someone to love someone who hated him, the grace that surely can help us love in our family, and church family, and whoever else God puts in our life who we find difficult to love.

¹ http://www.cbn.com/700club/guests/interviews/ZP93_Pierce_OFarrill.aspx

² D. M. Lloyd-Jones, *Life in the Spirit: An Exposition of Ephesians 5:18 to 6:9* (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker, 1973), p. 139.

³ <http://www.cnn.com/2012/07/24/us/colorado-theater-shooting-survivor/index.html>

⁴ <http://www.assistnews.net/ansarticle.asp?URL=Stories/2012/s12070146.htm>

⁵ http://www.recordnet.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20120724/A_NEWS/207240319

⁶ "Aurora Shooting: Worshippers Seek Solace, Guidance After Massacre," by Trevor Hughes, Elizabeth Weise and Jessica Tully, *USA Today*, 7/24/2012.

⁷ <http://abcnews.go.com/US/women-survived-theater-shooting-grieve-hero-boyfriends/story?id=16840623>

⁸ <http://www.morrisdailyherald.com/2012/07/24/woman-says-she-was-saved-by-slain-boyfriends-ultimate-kindness/an9k6ix/>

⁹ http://articles.chicagotribune.com/2012-07-24/news/ct-met-colorado-shooting-illinois-20120724_1_questions-in-good-humor-julia-vojtsek-john-larimer

¹⁰ Shai Linne, "Mission Accomplished," *The Atonement Album*.

¹¹ http://www.cbn.com/700club/guests/interviews/ZP93_Pierce_OFarrill.aspx

¹² *Ibid.*

¹³ <http://www.cbpc.org/content/shooting-victims-message-forgiveness>