Addiction And Grace Essay, Research Paper

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Addiction and Grace

I think Dr. Gerald may have done a marvelous job as to the writing and format of his book Addiction and Grace. As a psychiatrist and teacher with years of experience, I totally agree with his statement that all human beings have an inborn desire of God, whether one is consciously religious or not. Some people repress this desire by intentionally or inadvertently hiding it among the many other interest of life. I have noticed frequently in my line of work as working closely with people in the health field that many individuals whether they are believers of non-believers of God, often choose to cry out in the last and most crucial moments of pain and despair “Oh God pleas help me!” As he brings out the fact that many of us may experience this yearning in different ways as a longing for fulfillment, completion o wholeness. It all boils down to a longing for love, a hunger to be loved and to be drawn closer to the source of love. The scripture states “whosoever will let him come.” This simply tells us that whenever we are willing to surrender all, Christ is always there willing to pour out His unmerited favor to support and strengthen us along the way. This favor is His Grace. A love without condition. How often we ignore this simple call, we as individuals often allow other desires to get in the way, which can gave a long or short term bearing upon our bodies. We as a people have the tendency to fix it ourselves “not realizing that the truth of the matter is that we have no power of our own not excepting the fact that God is All Love and All Powerful. Dr. May brings out very clearly as Paul states. “For that which I do I allow not, for what I would that I do not; but what I hate, that do I—It is no more that I do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.” Here he brings out that Paul was talking about sin, though the will is in us away from God’s love, and love for one another and us. Dr. May brings out that psychologically there are two forces that are responsible, which is repression and addiction, repression being the milder force. We frequently repress our desire to love

In fear of being hurt, because bringing joy, love can make us suffer so our repress desire to love to minimize suffering which is a normal human response, so we fall into displacement when we depress a desire to keep it out of our awareness by placing our focus on other things-safer things. So by the same method we repress our longing for God. Repression is there to deal with whenever we are ready and it is workable. On the other hand addiction, the other force that turn us away from love, is much more vicious. It was long believed by psychologist that repression was the cause of all self-defeating force that abuses our freedom and causes us to do things we really do not want us to do. It is known that repression stifles desire, and addiction attaches desire, bonds and enslaves the energy of desire to certain specific behavior, things or people. Dr. May brings out the fact that addiction are not limited to substances but one can easily be addicted to work performance, responsibility, helping others, or being liked, just to name a few. Dr. May brings out that it was his work with addicted people and the realization of he own addictive behavior that brought him to his knees and realize that grace was there he, had tried to run his life on the basis of his own will power, and finally realized when he supply of success of this egotistic autonomy ran out he became depressed, and with the depression, by means of grace came a chance for spiritual openings which helped him to become more humble, as to the application through growth the know what he could and could not do to help himself or anyone else. He also learned that all people are addicts and that addiction to alcohol and other drugs are simply more obvious and tragic. To be alive is addicted, and to be alive and addicted is to stand in need of grace. I especially like the fact that we are all give free will, so we may choose freely, without cohersion or manipulation to love God and one another. Our whole creation was brought to being by love, in love the freedom is not complete because working against it is the powerful force of addiction. Addiction uses up desire. It is like a psychic malignancy, sucking out life energy into specific obsessions and compulsion, drawing us away from other people and pursuits. As I had been reading I was thinking that addiction is a form of idolatry, and sure enough as I read on Dr. May states also that spiritually addiction is a form of idolatry because the objects of our addiction become false gods, and as we know idols are anything that prevent us from coming to God, to receive His love and the full measure of Grace. In other words we begin to worship these false gods by allowing them to rob us of our time and energy. Addiction is a state of compulsion; obsession or preoccupation that enslaves a person’s will and desire. Addiction sidetracks and eclipses the energy of our deepest, truest desire for love and goodness. We succumb because the energy of our desire becomes attached to specific behaviors, objects, or people. Attachment then is the process that enslaves desire and creates the state of the process that enslaves desires and creates the state of addiction. As Dr. May deals with detachment, he removes the distorted meaning as assuming that detachment dissolves desire and denies the potential goodness of the things and people to which one can become attached and associated with coldness, and lack of passion, but the authentic spiritual understanding of detachment devalues neither desire nor the objects of desire, but aim at correcting ones anxious grasping in order to free oneself for a committed relationship to God. Detachment enkindles the heart, awakens the spirit, stimulates our longings, and shows us where God is. Detachment also uncovers our basic desire for God and sets it free, and with this freedom of desire comes the capacity to love and to grow in fullness of love. So instead of detachment promoting a dry, uncaring stat, detachment does just the opposite, it seeks a liberation of desire of desire, an enhancement of passion, the freedom to love with all ones being, and the willingness to bear the pain such love can bring. I agree with Dr. May when he states that our failure is necessary, “trials as call it” for it is in failure “trials” and helplessness that we can most honestly and completely turn to grace. Grace is our one hope in dealing with any addict the only power that can truly vanquish its destructiveness. Grace is the invincible advocate of freedom and the absolute expression of perfect love. Addiction cannot be defeated by the human will acting on its own, or by the human will opting out and turning everything over to divine will. Instead, the power of grace flows most fully when human will chooses to act in harmony with the divine will this means staying in a situation being willing to confront it as it is, remaining responsible for the choices one makes in response to it and at the same time turning to God’s grace, protection and guidance as the ground for one’s choices and behavior. It is the difference between testing God by avoiding one’s own responsibilities and trusting God as one acts responsibly. Responsible human freedom then becomes authentic spiritual surrender and authentic spiritual surrender is nothing other that responsible human freedom this is the condition of humble dignity, the power of addiction can be overcome. For the power of addiction to be overcome, human will must act in consent with divine will. The human spirit must flow with the Holy Spirit; this is done at heart level, faith and prayer and full surrender. When we turn to God it is grace that enables us to do so. God enables dignity within us by empowering our efforts to be hones and responsible. Grace enables humility within us by empowering our realization that our efforts are insufficient by themselves. Grace enables receptivity and responsiveness within us by empowering our growing trust and our willingness to take the risk of faith. All this grace comes from God-God in immanence moving gently in us and God in transcendence reaching out to us in radiant Love.