

# MOMENTS OF GRACE

## ***“STRUCK BY GRACE”***

Paul Tillich

*Do we know what it means to be struck by grace? It does not mean that we suddenly believe that God exists, or that Jesus is the Saviour, or that the bible contains the truth. Grace strikes us when we are in great pain and restlessness....when we walk through the dark valley of a meaningless and empty life....when our disgust for our own being, our indifference, our weakness, our hostility, and our lack of direction and composure have become intolerable to us...when, year after year, the longed-for perfection of life does not appear.*

*Sometimes at that moment a wave of light breaks into our darkness, and it is as though a voice were saying: **“You are accepted....Simply accept the fact that you are accepted”**. If that happens to us, we experience grace.*

Paul Tillich

Tillich is particularly transparent in this passage. It is both raw and honest – but it provides an invitation for us to recall moments of great pain and restlessness, of meaninglessness and emptiness, moments of disgust and of despair when old compulsions seemingly reign within us.

**As we get in touch with such moments, we need a certain gentleness and patience with ourselves.**

**Imagine a close friend telling you their story of pain - disquiet – despair –**

**and imagine how you would respond.**

**Attend then to yourself with the same compassion and gentleness**

**and assurance that you would bring to your friend.**

Then recall any movements within yourself towards self-acceptance – reconciliation – transformation. You are accepted. It's all right. All shall be well.

“Moments of Grace” invites you to get I touch with experiences of grace in your life. These are not usually straightforward, nor easily defined, but deeply mysterious. Let what attracts or resonates in what you have read here lead you back into your experience- and savour such gracefulness.

They are waking moments, like Jacob waking from a dream exclaiming:

**“Surely the Lord is in this place – and I did not know it!”**

(Genesis 28: 16)