

DESPERATE GRACE

By, Bette Dale Moore

© 2006 by Bette Dale Moore
All Rights Reserved. Use by Permission Only.

Can be performed with “He Giveth More Grace,” or other suitable music

Running Time: 6 minutes

Theme: God’s grace.

Scripture References: 2 Corinthians 12:9 “My grace is sufficient for you ...”
Proverbs 22:6 “Train up a child ...”

Synopsis: Two long-time friends meet for lunch. Both are experiencing trouble with rebellious kids.

Cast:

CAMI – Mother of two children - Shawn and Jessica. Shawn has just graduated from High School and Jessica is going into the 9th grade.

STACY – Mother of two children - Tom and Becky. Tom has just graduated from High School and Becky is going into the 9th grade.

Setting: A fast food restaurant

Costumes: Casual

(STACY and CAMI stand side by side while ordering at a fast food restaurant)

STACY *(looking up, reading off of overhead menu)*: Okay. I’ll have the number three: extra sauce, biggie the fries, hold the onions, a small vanilla shake, and ... uh .. *(scanning the board)* ... diet Pepsi.

CAMI *(laughs)*: ‘**Diet?**’ With that order, why bother?

STACY *(mock indignant)*: You cut back where you can! Come on; life’s short . . . you gotta set your priorities!

CAMI: Works for me! *(beat, to cashier)* I’ll have the same.

STACY: That a girl!!

CAMI: Oh, but give me one of those little apple pie thingees, too. After all, this is a celebration!

STACY (*triumphant*): High school graduation! Who would have ever thought we'd have kids this old?! (*to cashier*) I guess you better add a pie to mine, too. But make it cherry. (*aside to Cami*) There's more fruit in those; less fat.

CAMI (*laughs*): Whatever! Come on, let's wait over here.

(*Both step back from "counter" and settle in to wait for their food.*)

STACY (*pointing towards audience*): Oh, look at those little cuties on that Jungle Gym. Remember how we used to buy the kids a Happy Meal and send them out there to play so you and I could talk?

CAMI: Yeah. (*beat, rueful*) Didn't work so well after the boys got in Junior High, though.

STACY: No. Something about size twelve feet trying to go up those little ladders.

CAMI (*laughs*): Yeah, probably. And now, the girls are ready for high school and the boys have actually graduated. Can you believe that?

STACY: I'm trying, but it's hard! I'm thinking it'll be easier when we actually see Tom's diploma.

CAMI (*surprised*): You haven't seen it?

STACY: Umm - no. Not yet.

CAMI (*laughs*): Well, I tell you, we've already got Shawn's framed and hung on his trophy wall. At first, I was afraid there wouldn't be enough room for it, what with all his other awards over the years. But with a little clever rearranging, it all fit! I guess we'll have to start a new wall for all his **college** trophies and degrees!

STACY (*grins*): Must be rough.

CAMI (*mock serious*): You have no idea! It just goes to show that if you "train up a child in the way they should go,"¹ they're not gonna get all messed up when they reach the teen years. Take 'em to church, walk the walk, talk the talk ... and they won't get all rebellious on you.

STACY (*hedges*): You know, Cami, it's not always that easy. A lot of church kids end up making poor choices ... in spite of a good upbringing.

¹ Prov. 22:6 "Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

CAMI (*interrupts*): Then there's something that those parents did, maybe early on, or, I don't know, **sometime** ... that prevented those kids from making the right choices.

STACY (*shaking head, smiling*): Kids aren't robots: they have a free will.

CAMI: Exactly!

STACY (*amused*): Exactly what?

CAMI (*looks at watch*): It's been exactly three minutes since we ordered. How long can it take to nuke a pie?

STACY: I don't know. Maybe they had to **pick** the fruit first.

CAMI (*laughs*): Yeah; maybe.

(*Both laugh*)

STACY: So, what's Shawn going to do?

CAMI: Right now, he's working for his dad. But he's got a couple of scholarships at (*name local college*) so he'll probably go there in the fall ... maybe major in Business or Law. What about Tom?

STACY (*takes big breath*): Well, we're hoping he'll consider college, of course. But he's still got ... six more months in ... uh ... Juvie before we have to cross that bridge.

CAMI (*aghast*): In "Juvie?!"

STACY (*startled*): Oh. I'm sorry; I thought you knew.

CAMI: Tom's been in Juvenile Hall?! Stacy, what happened?

STACY: I don't know ... a lot of things, I guess: wrong crowd, poor choices.

CAMI: But ... you and Michael are wonderful parents!

STACY (*smiles sadly*): Yeah, well, you know how that 'free will' thing works.

CAMI: Jim and I would be devastated! How have you managed?

STACY: Well, we didn't really, at first. (*beat*) We were so angry; at Tom, the police, each other ... even God. (*beat*) Oh, and then after a while, *that* died down and the guilt set in. We pretty much blamed ourselves for everything, "What did we do wrong?" "What should we have done differently?" But that only made things worse.

CAMI: So, what'd you do?

STACY (*simply*): We came to the end.

CAMI: Of ... ?

STACY: Everything. Emotions, endurance ... you name it; we were at the end. (*beat*) You've heard of "Dying Grace?"

CAMI (*hesitant, scared to hear the rest*): Yeah?

STACY: Well, the theory is that you don't get it until you need it ... as in, you have to be dying first. (*small laugh*) Even though we felt like it, we weren't dying. What we needed was "Desperate Grace."

CAMI (*understanding, relieved*): Because ... that's what you were.

STACY: Yes. When we finally admitted to ourselves, and to God, that we were at the end, He gave us "Desperate Grace." (*smiles*) And that grace has given us the faith and the strength to trust God through all this.

CAMI (*nods thoughtfully*): 'Desperate grace.'

STACY: Yes: to trust; and to know that we were trusted.

CAMI: I'm not sure I follow.

STACY: God knew Tom would have trouble growing up; that's why He gave him to us. He knew we would do our part getting him ready to fight this thing. Yes; right now he's drifting. But, his early training is wedged deep inside of him ... like an Anchor of Love. Someday, by God's grace, it's going to pull him back. That's what we believe.

CAMI (*softly*): Yeah. (*pauses while thinking*) Wow. (*beat*) Maybe it's not so much a question of, "What did you do wrong?" but ... "What did you do right?"

STACY: Well, I know we've made mistakes as parents; but ... even if we **were** perfect, there's no guarantee our kids will always be okay. (*smiles*) After all, the only **perfect** Parent (*looks heavenward*) had a little trouble with His children, too, you know.

CAMI (*smiles*): Yeah. (*again, softer*) Yeah.

(*beat*) So ... how's Becky doing with all this? I mean, Tom's her big brother.

STACY: Well, she's got some scars, of course. We all do. But I think she's going to make it. Looks good so far, anyway. (*beat*) What about Jessica? We've spent all this time talking about everybody else; I haven't even asked about you about her. How's she doing?

CAMI (*furrows brow, slightly shakes head*): Jessica. (*tries to smile, looks away.*) Hm. Jessica is ... she's ... (*shakes head, looks away*) I don't know.

(*Pause; CAMI blinking back tears*)

MUSIC UNDERSCORES
“*He Giveth More Grace*” or other suitable song

(*beat*) Hey, if our food ever comes, you want to take it over to my place? I think . . . maybe Jim and I should talk to you.

STACY (*gently perceptive*): About Jessica?

CAMI: Yeah; (*long look*) . . . about Jessica.

(*Lights fade. They exit as Choir or Soloist begins singing.*)

END