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## Can a Lightning Rod of Grace Short-Circuit Stress?

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## Can a Lightning Rod of Grace Short-Circuit Stress?

### **Abstract**

In lieu of an abstract, below is the essay's first paragraph.

"How can we break through the many pressures faced daily, to find that rare gem of divine love that leaves us free of anxiety? I'm referring to an adrenaline of sorts that gets us going again after we slip or fail. Let's face it, most people expect stress to slap back when criticized, and we feel its sudden sting whenever we judge others unfairly. Or have you battled the pressure to repair a broken relationship lately? If so, you've likely noticed how stress blurs your vision and leaves you slogging alone through the mire. It doesn't have to be that way."



*Dr. Ellen Weber*

### **Can a Lightning Rod of Grace Short-Circuit Stress?**

*To sidestep a life fueled by grace is to settle for days often stalled by stress.*

How can we break through the many pressures faced daily, to find that rare gem of divine love that leaves us free of anxiety? I'm referring to an adrenaline of sorts that gets us going again after we slip or fail. Let's face it, most people expect stress to slap back when criticized, and we feel its sudden sting whenever we judge others unfairly. Or have you battled the pressure to repair a broken relationship lately? If so, you've likely noticed how stress blurs your vision and leaves you slogging alone through the mire. It doesn't have to be that way.

To understand grace, especially when stressors hit, is often to access its tangible encouragement. It's free, *Agape* gift from God literally defaults us into unconditional love that carries courage to speak gently to others as if they too were wounded, especially when conflict arises. How so?

No question, our need for God's favor challenges individuals and churches to teach grace as *sufficient* whenever we feel weak. (2 Cor. 12: 8 – 9) In spite of endless sermons on grace though, it often takes *A.W. Tozer's* kind of mental makeover to take on grace as fuel for a life without stress.

*"The cross is a lightning rod of grace that short-circuits God's wrath to Christ so that only the light of His love remains for believers."*

Whenever we do enter the pool of Christ's grace though, we find waves of his all-consuming favor. Lucky for each of us, it's based on his goodness and not dependent on ours. Perhaps our own sense

of fairness makes us miss refreshing ripples of unconditional love that follows at times when we deserve love least. Have you ever wondered why it's almost impossible at times to experience the kind of grace we'd like others to see in us? Or have you considered why we tend to live in the gap between sermons on divine favor and stressors that weaken and defeat us without much warning? My brain based research and implementation in learning and leading causes me to question our access to the kind of grace that changes lives daily. It leaves me wondering - *could a mental makeover bridge God's consuming love and give us grace that visibly reduces or eliminates stress?* And what's the key connection between the gift of divine grace and our natural determination to activate newly discovered brain parts?

Few disagree that grace at its core means unmerited favor, based on God's perfection rather than on our flaws. I'd like to propose that lightning rods which involve cortisol toxins – can find finer responses through access to grace, and suggest that serotonin (or the brain's well-being chemical) tangibly expresses that grace –filled life. What do you think?

Is it possible that divine grace and human brainpower actually work together in high-performance minds? For example, could grace and serotonin work together to offer a life overflowing with more love and less stress? Simply stated, could God's Agape love stir our mental makeover and help us access the depth of its mind-bending reach in spirit, mind and body? Brief articles below show levels of serotonin or cortisol and illustrate choices that help us access God's amazing grace as our lived experience.

Blog posts with mind-bending pathways that likely impact our ability to access grace:

1. How does serotonin help us access grace and add stress-free days? URL = <http://www.brainleadersandlearners.com/serotonin/serotonin-miracle-drug-at-work/>
2. Do cortisol toxins rob your calm, and block your access to grace? URL = <http://www.brainleadersandlearners.com/general/the-brain-on-cortisol/>
3. How does a brain thrive on grace that accompanies forgiveness? URL = <http://www.brainleadersandlearners.com/amygdala/a-brain-on-forgiveness/>

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*Ellen Weber teaches SJFC MBA students the course “LEAD INNOVATION WITH THE BRAIN IN MIND.” Weber also directs the Mita International Brain Center which operates out of many countries to help people lead and learn with their brain more in mind.*