

Sin and Grace in Transformative Evaluation

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[Note 2014. I have deleted some material specific to World Vision International; I have posted some sections of the original paper separately to be consistent with the blog format; and I have inserted references to other material on EvalFrank.com with permission.]

This paper is a work in progress. I am not a theologian. I have much more to learn about the dynamics of sin and grace before I can claim that I have developed useful evaluation techniques that illuminate the essence of transformational development (TD). (The essence of TD is to facilitate greater love of God and neighbor in the midst of confronting the challenges of everyday living, especially for those who are poor in the eyes of Jesus. I use the term “transformative evaluation” to refer to evaluation of TD that enables stakeholders to understand the essence of TD better.) But I believe what I have to say is worth consideration by colleagues that seek to follow Jesus as they do evaluation work. I welcome critical comments as well as suggestions about other paths to explore.

Principles of Transformative Evaluation (TE)

Transformational development evaluation is evaluation of a transformational development program, where development interventions are used to create opportunities for holistic transformation. It is evaluation of changes in individuals and communities that occur in the context of facilitating holistic community development by Christians. It is evaluation OF transformation effort.

Transformative evaluation is a special type of transformational development evaluation that includes the objective of *renewing the minds of stakeholders* regarding what really matters in transformational development. It is evaluation FOR transformation of people associated with the program as well as the evaluator. The modifier “transformative” is used to signify evaluation FOR transformation in the thinking of stakeholders and evaluation team members, while “transformational” is used to signify evaluation OF transformation effort.

In this paper I answer the question: What is evaluated in TE from the perspective of sin and grace at work in the lives of development facilitators and those that they are facilitating?

In the typical midterm project evaluation the evaluator documents what has been accomplished against project goals, and explores reasons for both under- and over-accomplishment. Then recommendations are developed to enable accomplishment of appropriate goals effectively and efficiently within existing constraints (e.g., the project timeframe, capacity of the different groups of program participants, etc.).

But does our desire to be in control of things by setting and achieving goals reflect rebellion against being submissive to God's unfolding plan for salvation and redemption? If one purpose of program evaluation is to seek truth about progress toward goals, a broader purpose is to illuminate belief in the truth that sets people free. To do this we must describe the context within which program activities related to goals take place. There are important things to consider like the following.

- There is a mix of motives that can be placed on a continuum from selfish gain to selfless service to those who are in need.
- There is a mix of perceptions about God that range from God is at work for the greatest good of people from a divine perspective; to understanding God is irrelevant for describing the dynamics of community development.
- There is a mix of faith touchstones from God is compassionate but single-mindedly focused on personal salvation, to people mean to do good deeds but get diverted easily.

Typically an evaluation involves searching for knowledge that we can use to change the world so that it is more like our vision of the good life. An alternative approach to evaluation involves seeking knowledge that we can use to worship God in more ways through our day-by-day living as well as our project work.

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and there is no truth in us. But if we confess our sins to God, he will keep his promise and do what is right: he will forgive us our sins and purify us from all our wrongdoing. If we say that we have not sinned, we make a liar out of God, and his word is not in us.

1 John 1:8-10 Good News Bible

Nature of Sin

Evil forces will oppose TD.

Webs of lies will lead to bad choices by people. The intended mission of structures will be subverted. There is no room for romantic optimism about the role of evil in the midst of TD effort. Philip Yancey (1988) and Oswald Chambers (1937, have helped me describe the nature of sin.

Philip Yancey has described this aspect of transformational development well (*Disappointment with God*, 1988, chapter 23) as participation in the great reversal. Our lives on earth are affected by the ongoing cosmic struggle between good and evil. The story of Job illustrates how God has freely chosen to be dependent on individual persons in the cosmic process of restoring creation to its original state, even though individual persons disrupted God's perfect creation. One sinner's repentance brings great joy to God. Bit by bit the great reversal takes place, act of repentance by act of repentance.

"Belief in an unseen world forms a crucial dividing line of faith today.... According to the Bible, human history is far more than the rising and falling of people and nations; it is a staging ground for the battle of the universe. Hence what seems like an 'ordinary' action in the seen world may have an extraordinary effect on the unseen world." (Yancey, 1988, p.169)

According to Yancey, from the beginning the central question of history has been, Will humans choose for or against God? People in difficult circumstances, experiencing various kinds of tragedy, are the foundation of hope. God is hoping that in their freedom persons will choose to believe that God loves them beyond their imagination. This belief is at the heart of transformational development, at the heart of discovering our true identity and our true vocation (Myers, 1999, p.114).

"Why does God let evil and pain so flagrantly exist, even thrive, on this planet? Why does God let us do slowly and blunderingly what God could do in an eyeblink? God holds back for our sakes. Re-creation involves us; we are, in fact,

at the center of God's plan. The Wager [portrayed in the book of Job], the motive behind all human history, is to develop us, not God. Our very existence announces to the powers in the universe that restoration is under way. Every act of faith by every one of the people of God is like the tolling of a bell, and a faith like Job's reverberates throughout the universe." (Yancey, 1988, p.174)

The only way to confront sin is through truth telling and the promotion of justice and righteousness. This should be focused on discovering true identity and true vocation. It should be focused on how poverty is created by god-complexes of the non-poor, inadequate worldview, and deception by principalities and powers (Christian, 1999).

Chambers (1937) emphasizes the point that wrong thinking about sin leads to wrong theology. Wrong thinking occurs when our ideas about sin are not based on biblical truth. In the age of modernity there has been much wrong thinking about sin. In TE, wrong thinking about sin will lead to weak and relatively insignificant evaluation work. The following discussion highlights some of the key points made by Chambers:

- Sin is wrong being more than it is wrong doing.
- Self-centeredness ensnares us in sin.
- Being in disharmony with the divine presence within us is sin.

Sin is wrong being

Most importantly, sin is about wrong *being* more than it is about wrong *doing*. Sin is deliberate and emphatic independence from God or defiance of God's will for my life. This understanding of sin goes beyond a definition of sin based on selfishness.

Chambers (1937) advises us to focus on the disposition of sin, not the outcomes of sin. The disposition of sin is my right to myself. What governs my thinking and acting? Anything less than submission to God's will for my life is sin. Submission to God is possible only through the Atonement, which removes the ruling disposition of rebellion against God. Through the Atonement, "human nature remains unaltered, but the hands and eyes and all our members that were used as the servants of the disposition of sin can be used now as servants of the new disposition (Romans 6:13)." This requires militant holiness, which is the basis for repentance. This understanding of the role of the Atonement in the dynamics of sin is contrary to the great emphasis on self-help approaches to better living, and therefore to some approaches to community development.

Self-centeredness is what ensnares us in sin

We learn about sin when we stop being enamored of ourselves. "As long as we are not at the last place, not facing our problems at all, but simply pleased to be in existence, pleased to be healthy and happy, we will never find God – we do not see any need for [God]." (Chambers 1937/1998, p.269) When we are driven to acknowledge that the

personal self is not the center of existence, then we can let God teach us about the reality of sin, as well as the reality of grace that is intricately interwoven with it.

“Our right to ourselves in every shape and form was destroyed once and forever by the death of Jesus, and we have to be educated into the realization of what this means in all its fullness... We are here with no right to ourselves; we are here for one purpose only – to be made servants of God, as Jesus was.” (Chambers 1937/1998, p.279)

Even as servants of God we are vulnerable to self-centeredness, which leads to moving away from God, which is sin. “A life laid down for Jesus is a life of narrowed interests, a life that deliberately allows itself to be swamped by a crowd of paltry [trivial] things. It is not fanaticism, it is the steadfast, flintlike attitude of heart and mind and body for one purpose – spoiled for everything except as we can be used to win souls for Jesus. It is not a passion for souls, but something finely profounder than – it is the passion of the Holy Spirit for Jesus Christ.... I am convinced that what is needed in spiritual matters is reckless abandonment to the Lord Jesus Christ, reckless and uncalculating abandonment, with no reserve anywhere about it.” (Chambers, 1998/1937, p.285)

I believe that Chambers is suggesting that self-centeredness enters when we think that *we are winning souls* instead of believing with all of our heart that *God is using us to win souls*. God is at the center, not us. To love the situation that God has put me in is to pay attention to what the world may perceive as trivial. But God has placed me there for some divine purpose, not to do what I want to do, but to do what I discern God wants me to do. It is very easy in development work to be so focused on achieving objectives that we do not see and hear what God is doing and saying. This tendency toward self-centeredness must be acknowledged and dealt with if we are to be agents of transformation.

Distorted reality (disharmony with the divine in us) is sin

“By reality we mean that all the hidden powers of our lives are in perfect harmony with themselves and in perfect harmony with God. None of us are real in the full sense of the word; we become real bit by bit as we obey the Spirit of God. It is not a question of sham and reality or of hypocrisy and reality, but of sincerity being transformed into reality...The only reality is being in harmony with ourselves and other people and God. That is the one great reality toward which God is working and toward which we are working as we obey [God].” (Chambers, 1937/1998, p.297-298)

“God’s purpose is to make us real, that is, to make us perfectly at one with all our own powers and perfectly at one with God, no longer children but understanding in our heads as well as in our hearts the meaning of the Redemption and slowly maturing until we are a recommendation to the redeeming grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Chambers, 1937, 1998, p.306)

It is in the means of grace that we encounter the presence of God in all its transforming and loving power. As we faithfully participate in means of grace through worship, sacraments, daily devotions, fellowship, and service, God enables us to increasingly recover the divine image of love in which we were created.

The Wesley Study Bible, p. 1158

From this characterization of reality, it follows that when being is doing something other than sincerely seeking to obey God without concern for personal consequences, we are ensnared by sin.

Nature of Grace

Yancey defines grace (1977, p.70) in terms of who controls how much love God has for us: “*Grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us more* – no amount of spiritual calisthenics and renunciations, no amount of knowledge gained from seminaries and divinity schools, no amount of crusading on behalf of righteous causes. *And grace means there is nothing we can do to make God love us less* – no amount of racism or pride or pornography or adultery or even murder. Grace means that God already loves us as much as an infinite God can possibly love.”

I have no control over what God loves, or how much God loves. Especially, I have no control over how much God loves me, or how much God loves the person that I experience as unlovable. All I can do is accept that love on God’s terms, not my terms, and surrender myself to divine direction. When I choose to do that, I discover that I have the strength to do whatever I am being led to do, and I am amazed.

There are many principles of grace that I do not discuss in this paper. I have selected four principles that I believe have special relevance for facilitating and evaluating transformational development:

- God provides sufficient grace for any situation.
- Knowing how to receive grace is central to facilitating transformation. This involves overcoming barriers and cultivating sensitivity.
- Live freely as a slave to righteousness.
- Do not judge others; forgive them.

Hughes (2002) has helped me understand grace.

1. God provides sufficient grace for any situation

“The great purpose of God for our lives is first to free us from the penalty of sin (at conversion), and then to destroy the power of sin in our daily experience.” (*Every Day with*

Jesus, 09 December 1999) Today we do not give sin the attention that it deserves. “The right way to deal with sin is to acknowledge it as an intrusion [it is not built into us, it intrudes from outside], confess any participation in it [we are disposed to sin], and ask for Christ’s perfect cleansing and forgiveness.” (*Every Day with Jesus*, 09 December 1999) Christ does not excuse us for participating in sin. Rather, through Christ we experience the grace of mercy given because that is what love demands for the confessor.

“Whenever there is been a slowing down and a slackening off in spiritual things it can always be traced back to some sin of commission or omission. You see, whenever God gives us a task or a challenge God also provides the grace which enables us to rise to it. By refusing the task or challenge we refuse the grace....Refusal to receive the grace at that point means we are not offered subsequent supplies of grace.” (*Every Day with Jesus*, 02 February 2002)

Paul saw his thorn in the flesh as godly (2 Corinthians 12:1-10). God’s strength is revealed through loving God in our weakness, through an attitude that our weakness is a precious gift (not a curse) from God. God uses problems to deepen our character and draw us closer to God. God is telling a story through everyone’s life; listen for it. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 12 September 1998)

There is always enough grace to overcome discouragement. A common error among erstwhile Christians is “to regard disciplined self-advancing effort as the secret of becoming a godly person.” (*Every Day with Jesus*, 02 January 1997) Paul was one of the most disciplined saints in all of history, but he gives credit for his progress to the grace of God (1 Corinthians 15:1-11). May I depend on God’s grace rather than my own knowledge or experience to behave in a godly manner; may I use my knowledge and experience as I am divinely directed.

“We must use the grace God gives us in the present to be ready to use the grace which will then succeed it.” (*Every Day with Jesus*, 01 February 2002) I must avail myself of grace available to me now before I can expect to have the capacity to avail myself of grace at a deeper level; it is similar to building knowledge through study at a university. “There is an old saying about there being no short cuts on a straight road. The Christian life is a straight road and we proceed along it one step at a time... Present grace must be used before future grace is given.” (*Every Day with Jesus*, 01 February 2002)

2. Receiving God’s grace is central to facilitating transformation, but there are barriers

TD facilitators need to know how to take down barriers to grace, and they need to know how to be open to it (how to recognize it). That is, they need to know how to surrender ego and let God be God. Only then can they become channels for transformation.

“God, the infinite reality, is pervading us and invading us, and the pathway over which

God comes to the center of our being is the pathway of receptivity.” Receptivity is the surrender of all fears, all doubts, all inhibitions, and especially the self that wants to be God (*Every Day with Jesus*, 26 January 2002).

I have selected just a few of the barriers to receiving grace that I believe are especially relevant to facilitating transformational development: ego, professionalism, and scientism. Seeing things through the eyes of Jesus, and cultivating an attitude of humility, are important ways of becoming more receptive to the gift of grace. Since the evaluand for Transformative Evaluation is transformational development projects, examining at least some of these barriers can be included in a TE evaluation design.

Ego as a barrier

When we find ourselves in conflict, generally it is because we desire something other than the will of God. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 18 November 1999; 08 November 2002) When what we desire is for wrong motives, we get out of fellowship with God. The only way back is through prayer. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 19 November 1999) If I neglect my prayer life, then wrong motives will emerge, and my daily living will wander off the path of righteousness.

My ego was never meant to be central to my personality. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 27 January 2002) I was made to have God at the center of my being. My ego is intended to actualize who I am created to be, which I can discover only if God is at the center. Note that to surrender to God is not to collapse in a heap. I am to surrender myself alert, eager to serve God rather than myself. When I surrender I become a person with a controlling purpose, which makes me stand upright with energy to be guided forward.

Professionalism as a barrier

A major barrier to receiving grace is the belief that being a professional means depending only on my knowledge and skills and attitudes acquired through professional training or relevant hands-on experience. This belief, which is centered on my ability to improve the quality of life in others, gets in the way of surrendering my knowledge and skills and attitudes to God’s direction. God may not use that professional expertise in a particular situation. Or God may use it in a way that seems very strange to me, or not professional in the eyes of the world. My dependence on my self-image as a professional can become a barrier to receiving God’s grace to do what God wants done.

Through grace we become children of God. Unless I receive from God, I have nothing of value to give to others. My professional expertise has no value unless I am filled with God’s grace. If I have no receptivity, then there is no possibility of meaningful response to the poor, regardless of the depth of my professional knowledge and experience. We live spiritually by taking in what God offers; we give to others spiritually only after we have taken in from God. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 20 October 1997)

Scientism as a barrier

For many TD facilitators reality is expressed in logical frameworks where cause-effect relationships are paramount. For donors who want to see their resources make a difference, reality is described as a logical process of doing activities demonstrated and observed objectively to lead to certain desirable results. This is the heart of the scientific worldview. But the realities of personal relationships, which are central to transformation, do not follow a logical process based on causal principles that work in the physical world. To rely on logical framework analysis for facilitating transformation is to slip from a scientific worldview into scientism, which is the application of scientific principles where they are not appropriate.

The nature of transformational reality can only be grasped through following Jesus, or living according to His principles. Words alone (e.g., a logical framework) cannot express it. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 25 December 2001) Jesus came full of redeeming grace and truth; there is no room for other characteristics. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 24 December 1996) Grace, redeeming love that we do not deserve, comes before truth. Jesus is the embodiment of both motherly love (grace) and fatherly love (truth). (*Every Day with Jesus*, 24 December 2000) Fatherly love makes demands, establishes clear principles, and takes a firm grip on the one he loves (Matthew 23:38); motherly love is unconditional, nurturing, all-protective, and all-enveloping (Matthew 23:37). In Jesus they are blended perfectly.

Failure to focus on this reality is a barrier to facilitating transformational development.

The role of humility in receiving grace

To recognize grace in any situation we must see that situation as Jesus sees it. Most importantly, we must have a personal relationship with God as Father. I must let feelings of compassion inform me, trusting that God is being compassionate. I must advocate for mercy and forgiveness for those around me, trusting that receiving God's merciful forgiveness always has priority from my point of view. (Judgment is not my responsibility; only God can exercise judgment in love.)

We must want God's grace ardently to be able to receive it. This passion to have God's grace is necessary before I can recognize it as it comes into me. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 11 January 2002) Driven by this passion I must ask God for grace, for asking for it predisposes my soul to receive it. This is what humility is all about; I am dependent on God to give me what I cannot give myself. I must acknowledge this dependency, and wait on God to respond.

The invitation to receive God's grace is just as important as the command to renounce sin. When we learn the attitude and art of receiving, then we will rejoice. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 03 February 1990) God gives grace to the humble according to their desire to receive it. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 11 January 1995) There is no favoritism in God; the

amount of grace that I receive is in my control. The amount that is available is in God's control, and that amount will always exceed what I desire. There is no chance that my desire for grace will go unfulfilled. God wants to break the power of sin over my life, which goes far beyond simply forgiving it. As I continue to receive grace from God the power of sin over me will diminish.

Hughes points out the difference between inferiority and humility. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 11 June 1998) Inferiority comes from dwelling on my inabilities or my undesirable traits and behaviors. Humility, however, comes from an honest assessment of my abilities, and my recognition that those abilities come primarily from God, not from my efforts alone. Whatever I do to enhance my abilities, I do with the power of the Holy Spirit working through me. I may claim to be inferior to receive extra attention from others, or to avoid trying to do something and failing. To reach humility, I must acknowledge such motives and give them up. "Let us not take such pleasure in our inferiorities that we refuse to be lifted up, decline to be used, or refuse to assess ourselves realistically as God intended us to do."

Peter advises young men to be submissive to elders (1 Peter 5:1-7). If we follow Peter's advice we will be eager to serve. We will be an example of the essence of serving others. We will clothe ourselves with humility towards one another, for God gives grace to the humble (Proverbs 3:34). "Humble yourselves under God's mighty hand, that God may lift you up in due time. Cast all your anxiety on God because God cares for you."

Stooping with eyes cast down can prevent me from being humble in the sense that my attention is focused on my stature in the world rather than my stature in the Kingdom. I must stand as tall as I can and then compare myself with the higher nature of God to see the real smallness of my greatest greatness (Philip Brooks). Humility comes as I contemplate the greatness of God. When I lose sight of God, the self begins to loom large and humility is lost. Humility comes as I sit at the feet of God. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 18 September 1994) It comes as I seek to follow Jesus.

3. Live freely as a slave to righteousness

In Romans 6 Apostle Paul describes slavery is a fact of life. Either I am a slave to sin, or I am a slave to righteousness. (As a willing slave to righteousness I am a servant of God.) Either I obey the devil, or I obey God. There are no other options.

When I as a Christian, who was freed from sin when I accepted God's holistic forgiveness, permit sin to have a part in my life, I make it possible to become a slave to it again. Sin operates according to the dynamics of addiction. Just as the recovering alcoholic stays away from alcohol, I need to stay away from anything that tempts me into sin. This is what it means to be free.

True freedom is based on the willingness to obey Christ in spite of our wretched condition, not the possibility to disobey Him. The only way that the mind can become free is to be under the authority of truth; we are free to do what we ought, not what we want. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 30 September 1994) David ordered the killing of Bathsheba's husband because he allowed his carnal nature to determine his thinking and acting. We sin because we want to – never forget that. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 20 November 2003)

When I am a slave to sin, I am free from righteousness. The reward, however, is shame and guilt and death. When I am a slave to righteousness, I am free from sin. The reward is sanctification and eternal life. The reward is joy in doing God's work for which I was created.

We are weak in our natural selves (Romans 6:19). Therefore, we need help in resisting temptation. The spiritual disciplines are ways to cultivate means of grace for resisting temptation. To stay free I must exercise discipline

Self-control is tied to what pleases us. Therefore, unless it is strengthened by the practice of spiritual disciplines that surrender self-control to Christ-control through the Holy Spirit, it is not effective in resisting temptation. When we desire to please Christ, then we will have no problem with self-control. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 29 July 2003) The Holy Spirit is more than the reservoir of truth. The Holy Spirit provides the power to live in accord with truth. (*Every Day with Jesus*, 23 June 2003)

The adversary, devil, enemy is prowling nearby (1 Peter 5:8-14). Casting our anxiety on God does not relieve us of the responsibility to be watchful. This is serious business, for God expects us to fight the devil, and win.

4. Do not judge others; forgive them

Righteous people do not condemn brothers and sisters. Righteous people seek to live by God's laws that spell what they themselves must do in relating to God and neighbor; those laws do not say that they should hold the neighbor accountable for living by those laws. I should enable others to understand the benefits of righteous living, and encourage them by forgiving them. I should not judge them.

We cannot be a channel to others for grace when we judge them. God can give the gift of grace to others through us when our attitude is forgiving.

Considerations for Transformative Evaluation (TE)

The extent to which the potential of TE for addressing fundamental obstacles to transformational development is influenced greatly by the evaluator's understanding of relevant evidence. Objectively exploring the dynamics of sin and grace in program planning and operations is one important body of evidence.

Many evaluators will challenge the notion that objective evidence can be collected about the dynamics of sin and grace. Creative application of qualitative research techniques can meet the challenge.

In TE the evaluator must examine views of sin and grace held by the development facilitators. This must be done with great sensitivity and frequent pauses in the conversation to invite the Holy Spirit to provide insight and guidance.

Development facilitators living among the poor may experience suffering in a different way. In spite of knowledgeable perseverance, there may be little or no visible progress in the quality of life for the people in the area for a long period of time. Facilitators can suffer discouragement, and may gradually lose hope until somehow God's grace again breaks into their lives. This is an important topic for TE.

Another important area is observations on how people relate with each other in good and bad times. Do they demonstrate concern for the welfare of others, or is their own welfare the primary concern? Are there groups of people that are marginalized; has the development program done anything about raising awareness and encouraging the community to address the needs of the marginalized?

Often an agency facilitates transformational development in areas characterized by extreme poverty. Particular aspects of poverty shape people in different ways, but a common outcome is that they see no end to their suffering. They expect to suffer until they die, and to be miserable in their suffering. They have little or no hope until somehow God's grace breaks into their lives. This is an important topic for TE. How has the program encouraged hope in the midst of despair? How do program participants talk about the future?

When we find ourselves in conflict, generally it is because we desire something other than the will of God. TD facilitators can analyze conflicts in a community to learn more about barriers to receiving grace: what are the self-centered desires that fuel the conflict? How are those desires contrary to the will of God as revealed in the way that Jesus lived? This is another important topic for TE that may be central to achieving sustainable development.

Do not judge; do not condemn; instead forgive (Luke 6:37). If I as an evaluator take this brief statement literally, I must quit my job. Evaluation is all about making judgments. I think what Jesus is saying is, Do not judge in areas where God is responsible for doing the judging. What people need from other people is not judgment and condemnation, but understanding coupled with a description of reality, and assurance that divine forgiveness is waiting for them if they seek it. That does not mean wrong or evil behavior is ignored in an evaluation; it means that people who do wrong or evil things

need to be shown that God can forgive them. Evaluation work should carry this message.

It is important for the transformative evaluator in the initial conversations with stakeholders to explore the importance they give to the idea that the purpose of evaluation is to find out what is wrong and recommend ways to fix it. Somewhere in the discussions note that Jesus tells us to remove planks from our own eyes before we try to remove specks of sawdust from another's eyes. Explore the willingness of stakeholders to engage more in self-examination than in finding what others are doing poorly or wrongly.

Program evaluation can help people affected in one way or another by a program to realize their shortcomings, experience God's saving grace, and then commit themselves to additional program work that demonstrates righteousness in the presence of God. As TE is planned in a Christian community church leaders can be asked for input regarding different ways this can be done.

As evaluation conclusions and other findings take shape the transformative evaluator "prays without ceasing" for insights about the connections between project plans and activities, and the potential for creating opportunities for individual and social transformation. This is a critical activity for making the evaluation itself an instrument for transformation.

The evaluator must balance the tension between truth and love. Love that is undergirded by truth is not soft or sentimental, while truth that is spoken in love does not demean. One application of this principle is that the evaluation should present the whole picture of that which is evaluated. When only the bad things are presented or emphasized, or only the good things are presented or emphasized, people are deprived of an opportunity to grow in their understanding of what it means to love God and neighbor.

As a transformative evaluator discusses evaluation findings with stakeholders she should be ready to facilitate discussion of principles of forgiveness, particularly where there are substantial negative findings. The evaluator should prayerfully consider how to formulate recommendations for dealing with sin around forgiveness rather than punishment.

In summary, an essential skill for the transformative evaluator is facilitating deeper understanding of how the dynamics of sin and grace can influence community development planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

References to extend your understanding of sin, grace, and TD

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