



GROUP ICE BREAKER

Have you ever been given a gift you didn't deserve? Share with the group how it made you feel.

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

What, if any, next step did you commit to last week, how did it go?

- I will live with the truth of Christ in me.
- I will place my hope in Christ and not things of this world.
- I will allow God to transform me through the present season of life.
- I will pursue spiritual maturity and Christ-centered living.

THIS WEEK'S SERMON RECAP

What's the one thing God offers that people can't get anywhere else? It's grace. The ultimate expression of grace is Jesus Christ, the Son of God, nailed to the cross. We were all dead to God at one point or another, we had guilt we suffered over, but no one to forgive us. But then one day, we were made alive in Christ, and now we have strength to endure. If you ever feel pain over that gap between who God has called you to be and the reality of who you are, then you need to hear that God took your indebtedness, your guilt, and nailed it to the cross. You didn't even begin to exhaust that grace. Somehow at the crucifixion and then the resurrection, when the power of God raised Jesus from the dead, something happened. And powers that have arranged themselves against human beings since the fall- death, guilt, evil- they have been disarmed, stripped of the power to cause ultimate harm. Because of this, you can live with great joy. Grace is not pain avoidance. It's something much better and richer and deeper than that. It's what brings children home to the father. But how do we live in grace? Stay close to grace providing people, people that accept you and welcome you. Get around unchurched people who need grace and extend it to them. You have the one thing in this world to offer people that they can't get anywhere else- it's grace.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What comes to your mind when you hear the word "grace"? Is it an experience, an attitude, an action? Share with the group.
2. Remember back to the time when you first tasted grace. Remember what it was like when you came to grips with your own sinfulness, when you got a glimpse of your own capacity to mess up your one and only life. How did you respond to grace?



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (CONT)

3. Colossians 2:13 tells us that we were once dead but are made alive with Christ. What does that mean to you? What difference has it made in you?
4. Have you ever been forgiven of a debt that you would not be able to repay? Have you forgiven a debt that someone could not pay? How did the experience impact you?
5. Why do you think the church, the place that ought to be the most grace filled, often shows the least? How does this impact someone's understanding of God?
6. Do you have a "grace-providing" person in your life? Describe how they display grace through their life.
7. Think of the name of someone you know who needs to experience grace. Share the name with the group if you'd like. In what ways could you show grace to them over the next few weeks?

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

- I will come home to the father.
- I will stop abusing God's grace.
- I will end something that needs to be ended.
- I will spend time in prayer and reading the Gospels to learn about grace.
- I will write the word grace wherever I need to be reminded of it.
- I will spend time with grace-providing people.
- I will extend grace to the people around me.

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- Colossians 2:11-15
- Colossians 1:2
- Colossians 4:18
- Jude 1:4