



GROUP ICE BREAKER

Finish this sentence: One of my biggest pet peeves _____.

REVIEW LAST WEEK'S NEXT STEPS

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

- I will take the spiritual growth assessment to learn where I am spiritually.
- I will attend each week in this series and take next steps toward spiritual growth.
- I will not let failure hold me back from growing spiritually.
- I will join a small group, making spiritual community a priority.
- I will forget what is behind and press on toward what is ahead.

MESSAGE SUMMARY

The first belief that is catalytic to spiritual growth is salvation by grace. This includes the forgiveness of our sin, but it's not just a way of dealing with the problem of guilt. It is that, but it's not just that. It's about life! It's about life right here and now. There are three images that represent what's at the heart of Christianity. The first image is a stain. We are stained in our souls and cannot remove the guilt, the stain, ourselves. Through the cross, through the shed blood of Jesus, our stains are removed. The next image to consider is a computer. Computers have what we call memory - RAM- random access memory. But of course, a computer can remember nothing next to God. God remembers everything we've ever said, done, or thought. But God longs to remove from our record all of the guilt and the wrongdoing. God longs to forgive based on his grace. Will you just say 'yes'? Will you just take from God this gift of forgiveness that He's offering? The third image is that of adoption. We can, not on the basis of our good works, but by God's grace through what Jesus did on the cross, be adopted forever into God's family. Within the doctrine of salvation we are safe and secure, nothing can snatch us from the Father's hand.

KEY VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Scripture memorization is a valuable spiritual practice in a Christ-centered life. Spend a few minutes each day committing this verse to memory.

- "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast." Ephesians 2:8-9



SALVATION BY GRACE

Matt VanCleave
February 28, 2021

KEY STATEMENT FOR THE WEEK

- I believe a person comes into right relationship with God by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Read Mark 1:14-15. How would you explain the "good news" to someone? How was it first explained to you?
2. Read John 10:1-18. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, came that His sheep might have life and have it abundantly. We often fail to experience the benefits of this abundant life Jesus came to give us. Why do you think that is? Take time to define as a group what having an abundant life in Christ should look like.
3. At the death of their brother Lazarus, Mary and Martha were asked if they believed that Jesus was the "resurrection and the life." Do you believe that, or do you have questions? Share why you believe, or your questions with the group. Remember, we are all on a journey of spiritual growth and this group is a safe place to ask your questions.
4. How should the knowledge that Jesus is the resurrection and the life shape our lives here and now?
5. It's been said that sin is like spaghetti sauce; it stains everything it touches. Jeremiah 2:22 tells us that we are all stained by sin. Read 1 John 1:5-10 and compare what keeps us "stained" with what allows the stain to be removed.
6. God said in Jeremiah 31:34 when He forgives, He remembers our sin no more. If God can forget our past, why do we often have a difficult time forgetting? How does holding on to our past keep us from experiencing the abundant life God intends?
7. Make a list of the markers of our adoption from Romans 8:14-17. If you'd like, read this passage for these different Bible translations which can be found in the YouVersion Bible app: NIV, ESV, TPT, CSB

NEXT STEPS FOR THIS WEEK (COMMIT TO GROW)

Use these as a guide to take your next step and commit to what you learned this week:

- I believe I will inherit eternal life because of what Jesus has done for me.
- I believe nothing I do or have done can earn my salvation.
- I will say a prayer to receive Jesus as my savior.
- I will follow Jesus and live the kind of life he offers.
- I will reflect on John 10:27 when I doubt my salvation.



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PRAYER

Prayer as a spiritual practice is our conversational life with God, where He hears from us and we hear from Him, with the intent of learning and leaning into His will for our lives. Let this prayer guide you over the next week.

- God, I acknowledge that I'm a sinner. I have stains, I've got guilt. That's been a burden on me. Sometimes I try to forget it but I know it's there, and I know You know it's there. So I'm going to stop trying to earn my way into your favor by doing good things. I'm not going to depend on a list of good behaviors. I understand now, God, that when Jesus died on the cross he died in my place. He paid my penalty. His blood was shed to cleanse me and he would have done that if I was the only person in the world. And so now, as an act of faith, God, I receive your forgiveness, your mercy. I want to be your child, adopted into your family. I put my life into your hands. I will spend the rest of my life as a follower, as a student of Jesus. Amen

SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

- John 1:4
- 1 John 5:11-12
- John 10:7-10
- John 11:21-27
- Jeremiah 2:22
- Romans 6:23
- 1 John 1:7
- Jeremiah 31:34
- Romans 8:15-17
- John 1:12
- Titus 3:7
- Romans 8:17
- John 10:27

SUPPLEMENTAL RESOURCES

The following are suggested resources if you would like to further your study of this topic.

- [The Truth About Salvation](#)
- [The Doctrine of Salvation](#)
- [Soteriology: The Doctrine of Salvation](#)
- [40 Questions About Salvation](#)
- [What's So Amazing About Grace](#)