

Grace Is Coming!

Small Group Guide

Warm-up Question: (Choose one, make up your own, or skip this part altogether, depending upon the nature of your group.)

1. Describe a time when you were surprised by a favor or act of generosity?
2. What is one of your favorite topics of conversation?

Read the following passages: John 5:1-15.

Jesus' question (Do you want to get well?) is somewhat surprising, perhaps even insulting. But there were good reasons for Jesus to ask this question. Seeking healing at a special pool would almost surely have been frowned down upon by devout Jews in the first century. In addition, Jesus later tells the man, "Stop sinning or something worse may happen to you." The evidence that we have suggests that this man was not just suffering physically; he was far from God.

But Jesus surprised this man with grace. Jesus was the one who took the initiative to talk to him and then to heal him. God will similarly surprise us with his grace because he loves us. When his grace comes, how will we respond?

Questions for Discussion (Choose several that are relevant for your group):

1. After many years of dealing with the same circumstances or the same struggles, it can be easy to believe that nothing will ever change. Can you think of any areas in your life in which your "normal" needs to be disrupted? Explain.
2. Why is pain so often an important catalyst for change in our lives? How might insulating ourselves from discomfort negatively impact our growth?
3. Read Genesis 1:26-28. What are some important implications of this foundational passage?
4. Are you confident that God is for you and is working for your good? Can you think of times when you have struggled to believe this?
5. How would you describe grace? Explain how grace is at the core of the Gospel. What are some ways you have experienced the grace of God?
6. What does Jesus' interaction with this man suggest about the ultimate purpose of miracles?

7. Read 1 Corinthians 15:9-10. How was Paul impacted by the grace of God? What does Paul's example teach us about responding to the grace of God?

Pray