

GROWING IN FAITH



Key Verse:

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.”
– John 10:10

“God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.” - Genesis 1:31

THE GOOD NEWS: Sin is not the final word, sickness is not our final condition...GRACE, AMAZING GRACE is the heart of Christianity and the hope of our faith. Grace is what saves us, heals us, keeps us saved and moves us towards the life we long for, a life of abundant joy, peace and love.

GOING DEEPER

John tells us that Jesus has come so that we may have life “Abundantly?”

What does an “abundant” life look like to you? What do you believe are the key elements to a full life in Christ? (Peace, joy, etc.)

John writes that, “The thief comes to steal, kill and destroy.”

What do you John is referring to when he says, “The thief?”

What things do you see that hinder us from experiencing the abundant life?

In the video sin is referred to as, “Breaking the rules, going against God’s will, and disease.”

How do you define sin? Do you agree with any of these definitions more than the other?

As a people of faith we understand that we are both a hurting people and a people of sacred worth. Read Genesis 1:31

When you think about the people around us do you see people as, “very good?” We are by no means perfect, yet God views us differently. How should we view others in light of how God sees us?

Grace a short definition: The Presence of God/ The Power of God at work in the world

What comes to mind when you hear this definition of grace? Why

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“But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
– Romans 5:8

“Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be frightened, and do not be dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go.”
– Joshua 1:9

GOING DEEPER

The whole journey of grace begins before we ever are aware of it. God is love. Grace is active. This is what we refer to as Prevenient Grace.

What comfort does it bring you that God’s grace is active in our lives before we even know of God’s presence? Why is this good news?

Prevenient Grace, the grace that comes first, tells us that God is active in the world. It is God that acts first. It is God that is with us and God’s power that is working to give us the abundant life.

Do you believe that God is active in the world? Do you believe that God is present and active in your life?

This Grace is the beginning of hope. It tells us that we are not stuck in our current circumstances.

Do you believe that people can change? Why? What hope does God’s grace give you that we are not bound to our current conditions?

The scripture from Joshua today reminds us of how afraid Israel was to move into the promise land.

What comfort was offered to the people of Israel and Joshua? How does this give us comfort today?

Grace: The presence of God and the power of God at work in the

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“May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.”
–Romans 15:13

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— **9** not by works, so that no one can boast. **10** For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.”
–Ephesians 2:8-10

GOING DEEPER

Grace is the presence of God and the power of God at work in the world?

What comfort does it bring you, when you think about the definition of grace?

John Wesley writes, “ The plain Scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins...And from the time we are ‘accepted through the Beloved’, ‘reconciled to God through his blood’, he loves and blesses and watches over us for good,’ even as if we had never sinned.”
How important is forgiveness to the Christian faith? How has forgiveness made a difference in your life?

At the center of the journey of grace is answering the question, “Who am I?”

How do you answer this question? Wife, husband, mother, father, son, daughter, work title.

Answer: “Child of God”

“See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” – 1 John 3:1

What does it mean to you to be called a child of God? How does that title define how you act, think and live in the world?

When you think about the people around you do you see the as, “Children of God?” How might thinking of others as God’s children change how you interact with them?

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“When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. **13** “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. **14** Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. **15** I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. **16** Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. **17** Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.”

–John 13:12-17

GOING DEEPER

Sanctifying Grace is our belief that God wants to shape and mold us into His very image and move us into the abundant life He has always intended for us.

Sanctifying grace is God’s work in our lives to help us change into the person God has always intended us to be. Are you comfortable with change? What might this change look like?

John Wesley writes, “We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. We feel the ‘love of God shed abroad in our heart, producing love to all mankind...”

The transformation that takes place in our lives when we encounter God’s grace produces love for God, for people. How has your journey with God helped you to grow in love?

Read John 13:12-17

Jesus final act, before being crucified, is washing his disciples feet. Why do you think he chose to do this? What does it say to us, his disciples, today?

God, in grace, is shaping us into a people who will make a difference in the world.

The video today discusses the practice of serving others. When have you had a time when you were able to be in service to others? How did this make a difference for you? Did you see God at work in your service?

How could your group practice service together?

Grace: The Presence of God/
The Power of God at work in the world and in our lives.