

Finding Grace Small Group Guide

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

1. Describe a time in your life when you were completely exhausted physically.
2. If you could receive a \$1,000 gift card to any store, what store would you choose?

Read the following passage: 1 Samuel 30.

One of the darkest moments in David's life is described in 1 Samuel 30. In order to escape Saul's relentless pursuit, David and his men had left the land of Israel to live among the Philistines. Given the way ancients associated land with the jurisdiction of various deities, this was a significant move for David.

While David was living among the Philistines, the Philistines marched out to battle the Israelites. Perhaps surprisingly, David and his men marched out to face the Israelites with Achish, a Philistine leader. Although it's not completely clear what David's intentions were, the other Philistine commanders were concerned that David and his men would turn on the Philistines during the battle. So they pressured Achish to send David and his men away. For three days they marched, and eventually arrived back at their camp in Ziklag. What they found was overwhelming. Ziklag was destroyed, and everything was gone.

In this dark moment, the text tells us that, "David found strength in the Lord his God." David found grace in the middle of devastation, loss, and loneliness. The grace that David found not only enabled him and his men to recover what was lost, but this grace impacted how he engaged the people around him. When we receive God's grace, we can live as people of grace.

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

1. How would you define the grace of God? How is the grace of God connected to Jesus Christ?
2. Read 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. What did the apostle Paul discover about the grace of God? Are you comfortable expressing your need for the grace of God?
3. What are some practical ways we experience God's grace in our lives? (Theologians sometimes refer to these practical ways of experiencing God's grace as "means of grace.") How does receiving the grace of God practically impact how we live our lives?
4. David became an instrument of grace for his men (especially the 200 men who were too tired to pursue the Amalekites who had destroyed Ziklag). What are some

ways you could be an instrument of grace in someone else's life?

5. Would you say that you are both receiving grace (including through others) and giving grace in your life right now? Explain.
6. What is one area in your life you need to freshly experience the grace of God?
7. What is one way you can be an instrument of God's grace this week?

Pray