

## **Inviting 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. Who is one of your favorite people to be around?
2. What is one of the most physically challenging things you have ever done?

**Read the following passages:** Revelation 21:1-3; Hebrews 4:12-16.

When two of John the Baptist's disciples began following Jesus, Jesus turned and asked them, "What do you want?" (or, in another translation, "What are you looking for?"). This is one of the most important questions we will ever answer. Our longings shape our lives. As author James K. A. Smith puts it, "[we] live toward what [we] want." The Scriptures help expose what we really want (see Hebrews 4:12-13), but they do more than that. The Scriptures also show us what we were made for. As the passage in Revelation referenced above indicates, we were made for the presence of God. Augustine famously stated, "Our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee." The grace of God invites us into his presence.

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

1. What are some of the major pursuits in your life right now? Do you think you'll be satisfied with your life if you achieve these goals? Explain.
2. How can reading the Bible help us understand what's happening in our hearts? How often did you read the Bible this week?
3. Do you find it easy to be vulnerable with others? Explain.
4. The author of Hebrews says that Jesus is our "great high priest" (Hebrews 4:14). What does this mean? Why do we need a great high priest? How does this connect with experiencing the presence of God? (See, for example, Hebrews 5:1-10; 10:19-25.)
5. Why were people in the Bible often afraid when they were in the presence of God (Isaiah 6:5; Luke 5:8)? Should we be afraid to be in God's presence?
6. Do you make a regular practice of confessing your sins? Do you ever confess your sins to another person? How does confessing our sins help us?
7. Everyone who takes faith seriously will, at times, have questions or experience doubt. (At least everyone in the Bible did!) Some of the people the author of Hebrews was writing to were in danger of being swallowed up by unbelief. What can we do to strengthen our faith and push back on unbelief? What should we do with

our questions?

8. Overall, would you say you are passive or active in your pursuit of God right now? Explain.
9. This week, what are one or two things you need to stop doing, start doing, or do more often?

**Pray**