

The Grace of God

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 one of the happiest moments in your life.
2. What is your favorite holiday?

Read the following passage: Matthew 6:9-13.

The presupposition behind the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples is that we are not living in the world we would like to be living in. God's name is not always honored. God's will is often not being done. Our needs often feel like they are not being met. We don't treat each other how we would like to be treated. And there are plenty of opportunities to go in the wrong direction. We are imperfect people living in an imperfect world. For many of us, the gap that we experience between our ideal self and our real self is difficult to handle. But God's grace is sufficient for us. With God's help, we can confess our sins, accept our weaknesses, and extend forgiveness to others.

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

1. Describe some of the weaknesses and failures in the lives of the disciples that are highlighted in the Scriptures. Can you relate to any of their weaknesses? How comfortable are you with allowing others to see your weaknesses? Explain.
2. It is nearly impossible to avoid comparing ourselves to others. What are some healthy ways we can respond to the differences we see between others and ourselves?
3. Read James 5:16. Do you ever confess your sins to another person? Explain. What are some potential benefits of this practice? If you find it difficult to do this, why do you think that is?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 12:1-10. What did Paul learn to do with his experience of weakness? How can we apply this in our own lives?
5. Most of us begin to feel anxious when our values are violated in some way. This can cause us to avoid people with weaknesses or failures that are different than our own. Jesus, on the other hand, was comfortable around everybody. Why do you think this was? How can we become more like this?
6. How do we forgive others without minimizing the reality of their offense against us?

Pray