

“Grace and Truth over Time” A Personal and Small group Experience”

For a long time I have equated grace with—unconditional acceptance and forgiveness. Those are aspects of grace—realities of grace perhaps—but not the full definition of it. I am growing more and more fond of a definition I recently read of grace as “unmerited favor”. Unmerited favor would certainly include “unmerited acceptance” of any person as someone of worth and value as well as “unmerited forgiveness” no matter what— but I am coming to believe it is so much more. “Unmerited favor” leaves open the possibility of me receiving gifts that I desperately need, don’t deserve, and can’t supply myself.

Sometimes “grace to me” is just time, attention or a listening ear. Sometimes “grace to me” is someone’s willingness to come alongside me and help rather than stand on the sidelines and “hold me accountable for my mistakes”. Many times “grace to me” has been a significant word of forgiveness and unconditional acceptance but then has also included an affirming “Hey, I’ll give you a call later to see how you are doing” or “Can we get together for coffee and talk more...” or “Here is this book I thought of you when I saw it!” These are all unmerited favors—all of them gifts of grace to me that are affirming and not condemning!

Growth also take truth doesn’t it. Truth is reality from God’s perspective! We need God’s perspective on life—every aspect of it! Given enough grace, most of us can handle the “truth” even when it hurts. Remember God’s goal is to grow us—transform us! This ‘Grace and Truth’ environment in a loving community over a period of Time will result in growth and maturity. It’s God’s way!

As you read over the following accounts where Jesus is interacting with people or telling stories—notice what aspects of the “Grace and Truth over Time” equation are alluded to. Listen and watch! What is He doing? Read between the lines! Get a feel for being there with Him. How would you feel? How did they all feel? What is His goal? What do you admire about Him? What confuses you about Jesus? Do you see unmerited favor—painful truth—patience? As you work through these stories notice what the Spirit is stirring up in you own spirit—share and grace each other!

Luke 15:11-32

John 4:1-38

Luke 18:18-30



Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the LORD rises upon you.

Isaiah 60:1

“Connecting With God” Weekly Guide

This booklet is a resource to help you “Connect with God” this week. He deeply desires ongoing personal connection with you. You are that important to Him.

This Page has some scripture verses for you to meditate on each day this week. Notice the helpful hints section – these are great things to consider when personally engaging with God through His Word.

The Center Pages contain the notes and outline for the message given on Sunday. The message is also available as an audio download from www.pointofgracechurch.org

The Back Page has a study written specifically for a small group of people (or an individual) to drill down deeper into a particular aspect of the week’s theme. Small groups can review memorable points of the week’s message and then work through the study concluding with a time of prayer.

Scripture & Meditation Guide - October 25-30

Helpful Hints:

- 1) Find a quiet place along with 15-20 minutes!
- 2) Focus on God for a few moments asking His Spirit to speak to your heart!
- 3) Listen to Him by reading a section of scripture then rereading it several times, dwelling on “words and phrases” which grab your heart’s attention.
Ask God, “What do You want me to hear?” “Why this word at this time?”
“How are You inviting me to respond?”

- 4) Pray everything that is on your heart and mind as you are ready!

Worship Him, Bless Him, Thank Him, Ask Him, Trust Him

Monday: Matthew 5:1-12

Tuesday: Psalm 51

Wednesday: Psalm 27

Thursday: Psalm 62

Friday: Luke 15:1-10

Saturday: Luke 15:11-32