

INTRO

Looking back, what are you thankful for in 2019?
Do you have any goals for 2020?

READ

Romans 5:17

Qu: How would you define grace?

Qu: Why do we need grace?

REFLECT

1. GRACE COVERS (our sin)

Mark 2 tells the story of a lame man who was brought to Jesus for healing. Instead of just healing him, Jesus first pronounced to the man that his sins were forgiven. Jesus was making a strong point that even greater than our physical needs being met, we have a deeper desperate need to be forgiven.

Qu: The concept of sin is not popular in our culture. Why is that?

What is sin? It is our rebellion against God, desiring to be our own Saviour and Lord. One form of sin is known as the sin of self-protection as Christian author Larry Crabb states:

“The sin of self-protection to which I refer occurs when our legitimate thirst for receiving love creates a demand to not be hurt that overrides a commitment to lovingly involve ourselves with others.”

Qu: Have you ever heard of the sin of self-protection? How can protecting ourselves be sinful?

2. GRACE RENEWS (our strength)

Read Isaiah 40:31

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

(Great Is Thy Faithfulness, 3rd stanza)

There are always new challenges to face in life. If we stay the same, we lose ground. Grace helps us to discern the moment, receive fresh perspective and energizes us to move forward.

Qu: Are there any challenges facing you now that you need understanding, a fresh perspective on or energy to move forward?

3. GRACE EMPOWERS (our purpose)

Read 1 Corinthians 15:9-10

God not only saves us by forgiving us (and regenerating us), but then calls us to be divine agents to extend the kingdom of God on earth.

God's grace as divine influence is the energy that propels us forward through different seasons of our lives. When grace for a season runs out, it can be a sign from God that He has something else for us.

Qu: Can you recall a time when God gave you fresh grace for a new season?

Qu: Can you recall a time when grace ran out on a job, a place, a relationship?

RESPOND

Although we don't work for grace (or it wouldn't be grace!) there are means of grace that allow us to grow in God's grace. Praying, meditating on God's word, corporate worship are means that often first come to mind. But spiritual friendship is another key aspect to growing in grace.

Qu: How would you define a spiritual friend?

PRAY

Qu: What are some answers to prayer?

Pray for one another.