

THE MAGNIFICENT

grace

OF GOD

SESSION FIVE: SERVING BY GRACE

AS each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God. Whoever speaks, is to do so as one who is speaking the utterances of God; whoever serves is to do so as one who is serving by the strength which God supplies; so that in all things God may be glorified through Jesus Christ, to whom belongs the glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. 1 Peter 4:10-11

connect Open your group time by creating an environment in which you may begin to develop a community of connection. Get to know one another through sharing prayer requests and experiences that provide members with an opportunity to engage.

CONNECTING IN PRAYER: Begin your time together with prayer and praise.

CONNECTING WITH ONE ANOTHER: Discuss a time when someone gave you an unexpected or surprise gift and how it affected your relationship with them.

grow Watch the DVD for Session 5 now. Use the space below to record your thoughts, key points and questions you would like to either remember or discuss.

GROWTH THROUGH UNDERSTANDING: In *Serving By Grace*, Dr. Evans explains that the way we express our gratitude for grace is by being dispensers of grace. Our role as believers is to serve, sharing the gift of grace we have received with others. Our inability to share what we've been given means we don't truly understand grace. It is only when we are willing to give grace can we become dynamic forces for the work of God.

Ephesians 2:10 shows us how we have been saved for good works that were uniquely created for us. Good works are things we do that benefit others in the name of God. All of us have been given unique gifts, personalities, and talents. These are to be used to build up the body of Christ and serve humanity. We have been blessed so that we can be a blessing. The more grace we receive the more grace we should share because we have hearts that overflow with love and gratitude for the grace giver.

Our inability to share what we've been given means we don't truly understand grace

NOTES

GROWTH THROUGH DISCUSSION: As you dive into the heart of Dr. Evans' teaching, utilize the following questions to generate discussion among your group.

1. Dr. Evans talked about worship selfish vs. worship service. Why is it so easy for us to think that church is just a building where we come to receive something and not a community of believers we are supposed to serve?
2. What are some things that hold us back from serving?
3. How have you experienced grace from someone else? How did that experience affect you?
4. What impact could the church in our culture have if we were characterized by a spirit of gratitude and service?

serve Now is the time to apply the wisdom of what you have learned to your life, as you express the depth of your relationship with God through service to Him and others.

SERVING GOD: Now that you have a greater understanding of how we need to respond to the gift of grace with hearts of service, what spiritual gifts do you think God has given you to use? (Romans 12:11-14, 2 Corinthians 12:1-13, Ephesians 4:4-13)

SERVING OTHERS: What is one way you can use your spiritual gifts this week to serve someone else? Reach out to one friend outside your small group and hold each other accountable to do one act of service this week.

THE DAILY

Grace Guide

Live out God's Kingdom principles here on earth by putting feet to your faith. Over the next 5 days, utilize the Daily Grace Guide to help you meditate on God's word.

DAY ONE

MEDITATE: Read 1 Peter 4:10

"As each one has received a special gift, employ it in serving one another as good stewards of the manifold grace of God"

MOVE: We have received grace to be a giver of grace. Our gratitude for God's gift in our life should overflow into a life that is characterized by service. Place this verse on three index cards and put them in areas of high visibility. Recite the verse every day this week until you can recite it from memory.

DAY THREE

MEDITATE: Read Romans 12:9-13

"Let love be without hypocrisy. Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; not lagging behind in diligence, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord; rejoicing in hope, persevering in tribulation, devoted to prayer, contributing to the needs of the saints, practicing hospitality"

MOVE: Our faith should be accompanied by a spiritual fervor and steadfastness. As we walk in faithfulness, joy, and patience we should seek opportunities to share with those in need. Pray for the Lord to give you eyes to see those in your community who might be in need and for Him to provide you with a unique opportunity to serve them.

DAY TWO

MEDITATE: Read Philippians 2:1-11

"Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father"

MOVE: The life of Jesus exemplifies what it means to be a servant. In humility He lived His life for the sake of others, an example that should motivate us to do the same. Commit in prayer to the Lord one way in which you can intentionally seek the interests of others today above your own.

DAY FOUR

MEDITATE: Read 2 Corinthians 4:5

"For we do not preach ourselves but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your bond-servants for Jesus' sake"

MOVE: The goal of our service is to proclaim the name of Christ. As thankful grace recipients, we have to resist the temptation to use our good works to bring glory to ourselves; the glory only belongs to God. When was the last time you shared the gospel with an unbeliever? Pray for the Lord to provide an opportunity this week to share the Good News!

DAY FIVE

MEDITATE: Read Matthew 20:26-28

"It is not this way among you, but whoever wishes to become great among you shall be your servant, and whoever wishes to be first among you shall be your slave; just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

MOVE: Unlike our current world system, in God's kingdom those who put others before themselves are people who will hold a place of honor in eternity. Sometimes being "last" in our culture can be difficult and discouraging. Write down a few verses in scripture you can use to encourage yourself when operating as a biblical servant becomes hard (e.g. Colossians 3:23-24).