

THE MAGNIFICENT

grace

OF GOD

SESSION TWO: GROWING BY GRACE

"But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

2 Peter 3:18

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: When you hear the phrase "grow in grace" what comes to mind? Share your thoughts with the group.

grow Watch the DVD for Session 2 now. Use the space below to record your thoughts, key points and questions you would like to either remember or discuss.

GROWTH THROUGH UNDERSTANDING: Growing in grace is directly connected to the depth of our relationship with Jesus Christ. God commands us to grow in grace (2 Peter 3:18) which cannot be accomplished outside of the one who provided the grace for our salvation (Ephesians 2:1-10). This alignment is counter to our culture which repeatedly encourages us to be masters of our own fate and to rely solely on our natural strengths and talents. However, God has called us be counter cultural and to walk in the knowledge and fullness of our purpose as citizens of His Kingdom. This requires us to abide in Christ (John 15:5), submit to His will (Psalm 40:8) and allow our path to be directed by Him (Proverbs 3:5-6).

God commands
us to grow in grace
(2 Peter 3:18)

Dr. Evans refers to grace as an "atmosphere" or "environment." As believers, grace has relocated us to a heavenly environment and we are to conduct our lives from a heavenly perspective, although we still live on earth. This requires us to grow in the understanding of grace, in order for us to naturally operate within and recognize the scope of all that God has freely given and we have freely received.

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. The Bible commands us to “grow in grace.” Why is it so difficult?
2. What is the purpose of growing in grace?
3. Growing in grace requires a connection to the dispenser of grace, Jesus Christ. What are some characteristics of a person living a life in relationship with Jesus?
4. In the tea bag illustration, Dr. Evans refers to two types of relationships: The Dipper and The Abider. Which one represents works? Which one represents grace? Why is this distinction important?
5. Dr. Evans states that “the more you understand grace...the more you utilize grace... the more you benefit from grace... the more you act in grace... it will allow you to grow in grace.” Share with the group what this process would look in your life?

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: Has your growth in grace been stunted by the lack of developing a relationship with Jesus Christ? In prayer, confess those things which have held you back and commit to seeking a deeper, abiding relationship with Him.

SERVING OTHERS: 1 Corinthians 15:10 says “But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me did not prove vain; but I labored even more than all of them, yet not I, but the grace of God with me.” Our service to God is borne out of His grace for us and reflects the love we have for Him. It is not through our own strength or merit that we are able to serve, but as the result of a continual supply of His grace. This week share the importance of growing in grace with at least 1 person who is not a member of your group.

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 Ephesians 2:1-5 "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)"

MOVE: This scripture reminds us that we were once sinners and spiritually dead to God. However, in His great love for us, God reached out with His grace through Jesus Christ providing salvation and spiritual life. Spend the next 5 minutes praising God for His grace which saved you and sustains you.

DAY TWO

MEDITATE: Read 2 Peter 3:18 "but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory, both now and to the day of eternity. Amen."

MOVE: Have you started the journey to grow in grace? Over the next 3 days memorize this scripture and commit to growing in an understanding of grace.

DAY THREE

MEDITATE: Read James 4:4-6 "You adulteresses, do you not know that friendship with the world is hostility toward God? Therefore whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God. Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: "He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us"? But He gives a greater grace. Therefore it says, "God is opposed to the proud, but gives grace to the humble."

MOVE: James reminds us that submitting ourselves to the world's thinking, methods and practices for directing our lives make us an enemy of God. Do you sometimes find yourself behaving as the proud, living life in accordance with your own will and intentions? Confess your actions to the Lord today. Pray for a humble spirit and clean heart which are reflective of God's grace.

DAY FOUR

MEDITATE: Read 2 Peter 1:2-3 "Grace and peace be multiplied to you in the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord; seeing that His divine power has granted to us everything pertaining to life and godliness, through the true knowledge of Him who called us by His own glory and excellence."

MOVE: We are reminded that God has provided us with everything to live a godly life. Grace and peace are multiplied when we develop an intimate relationship with God through the study of His Word and abiding in His will. Do you find it difficult to live a godly life? Pray and ask the Lord to reveal the areas of your life which are preventing you from living in the fullness of His provision. Write down what He reveals to you and turn it over to Him in prayer.

DAY FIVE

MEDITATE: Read 2 Peter 1:5-8 "Now for this very reason also, applying all diligence, in your faith supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge, and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness, and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they render you neither useless nor unfruitful in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

MOVE: We must be diligent in our desire to grow in grace and the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Which of these qualities are reflected in your life? Which of these qualities are not expressed in your life? Pray and ask the Lord to provide opportunities for you to be strengthened in the qualities you find difficult to express and live out.