
Basics of Christianity

- Week ❶: *The Blood of Jesus Part I*
- Week ❷: *The Blood of Jesus Part II*
- Week ❸: *How to Conquer Unforgiveness*
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**PASTOR JOHN FICHTNER
OF LIBERTY CHURCH**

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Key	
	Unit or Week
	Take Notes
	Discussion
	Answers

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS

One of the Top Ten Scriptures in the Old Testament

Leviticus 17:11

"For the life of a creature is in the _____".

Examples

- Frankenstein
- Sharp Knife Cutting a Major Artery

Have you ever known anyone who got woozy or passed out at the sight of a glass of milk? Coca-Cola? Quaker State Motor Oil? No, but they're all liquids just like blood, right? Why is it that just looking at blood causes some people to pass out? Something in you shudders because you know that _____ is being poured out.

In Matthew, three times Jesus called Satan "Beelzebub", which means "Lord of the _____". When you pour blood on the ground, what does it attract? Flies! In the same way, whenever human blood is poured out I believe you'll find demonic activity.

Examples

- Gladiators
- Violent movies
- Women's cycle



Take Notes:

Rest of Leviticus 17:11

"...and I have given it to you to make atonement for yourselves on the altar."

God says "I gave you the concept of blood sacrifice to make atonement for yourselves on the altar". The altar is the place where you meet God. It is the blood that makes atonement for one's life.

Hebrews 9:22

"Without the _____, there is no forgiveness of sins."

God's Twofold Message

1. When you sin, you deserve to _____. I am a Holy God, and no sin or sinner can come in my presence.
2. But, _____ may be poured out in your place (_____).

Examples

- Garden of Eden
- Cain and Abel
- Noah
- Moses



Take Notes:

The Book of Leviticus

- One of the least understood books in the Bible, yet it's one of the most powerful books in the Bible
- It carries the message "You've gotta have _____".
- (Examples from the Book of Leviticus)
- **Leviticus 1:3** - the Tent of Meeting is man meeting God. If you want to come into God's presence, you must deal with the sin.
- He says "Go to your herd and get your best male bull. Find the animal that in your simple mind _____ to die."
- **Verse 4** - God says, "I don't want people giving mental assent to the blood of Jesus Christ, I want them to _____ the blood of Jesus." You didn't just turn the animal over to the priest, you had to do it yourself. You _____, "God this animal is about to die in my place."
- **Verse 5** - you had to take a knife and kill it. You couldn't kill it and run away. God says, "I want you to experience just a little bit of what one day I will experience."
- This went on for **thousands** of years (Examples).

Hebrews 10:1-4

- **Background** - the writer of Hebrews looks back over thousands of years of these innocent animals being slain. Just one man in his lifetime would have to kill hundreds of lambs over and over again.
- God had a purpose for that. God wanted them to become _____. God wanted people to get to the place where they cried out, "God! So many beautiful lambs! So many have died for this sinner! God, could there never be one sacrifice for all?"

The DIFFERENCE Between The Blood of Jesus Christ And The Blood of Bulls and Goats

When God created beings, He established _____. He established man as a _____ order than the animals. Animals have souls and bodies, but when He created man He said, "Let's make this one in our image." He gave them a spirit.

Because man is a higher order than animals, man has higher rights, higher responsibilities, and when man sins it has higher ramifications than animals. Though God was the first one to shed the blood of an animal for a man, the blood of an animal (because it's a lower order) can never cover the sin of a man. (Example of Gaping Hole in Living Room)

But the Blood of Jesus Christ was not the blood of animals. He was a perfect, sinless man. He wasn't just a man. In the blood of Jesus flowed the life of _____. He was fully man and fully God. When His blood was poured out, it was the very blood of God poured out.

It was no longer a blood offering from an order below us, it wasn't a blood offering of someone equal to us, it was a blood offering of one above us. Because of that, every sin that could ever be committed has been cleansed and paid for forever because of who it was that shed His blood!

Hebrews 10:11-12, 14 - "...because by one sacrifice He has made _____ those who are being made holy."

The _____ of Christianity

- Story of Man Examining Christianity



Take Notes:

- Christianity is the only religion in the world that provides a _____ by which a sinful man could be called holy, pure, righteous and perfect.
- That legal basis is that an innocent life blood substitute _____.
- **Ephesians 1:7, 2:13, Hebrews 10:19**

Never again let Satan say, "Have you been a good boy lately?", "You haven't been very nice lately".

Say, "It's by the blood!"

Discussion Questions

1. Summarize the purpose of the blood of Jesus in your own words. _____

2. What is the difference between the blood of Jesus and blood of animals? _____

3. What new things did you learn about the blood of Jesus in this teaching? _____

4. CHALLENGE QUESTION: Spend time this week meditating on the blood that Jesus shed for your sins. Express your gratefulness and thanks to the Lord. _____

ANSWERS:

¹ blood ² life ³ Flies ⁴ shedding of blood ⁵ die ⁶ innocent life blood ⁷ substitute
⁸ blood ⁹ least deserves ¹⁰ experience ¹¹ identify ¹² frustrated ¹³ orders
¹⁴ higher ¹⁵ God ¹⁶ perfect forever ¹⁷ Logic ¹⁸ legal basis ¹⁹ took your place

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO LEARN HOW TO ACTIVATE THE POWER OF THE BLOOD OF JESUS

Last Week - we looked at how the Blood of Jesus Christ satisfies the _____ of God. (Review of points made last week)

This Week - not only does the Blood of Jesus Christ guarantee you a place in heaven for eternity, but the Blood of Jesus has a dynamic effect on your _____. I want to talk to you about how to _____ the power of the blood of Jesus in your everyday lives. What I shared last week - most of you already knew that, but there are very few Christians who understand how to activate the power of the blood for everyday living.

LIFE - there's a part of your physical body that carries life: the blood. The Bible also says that there is another part of your body that carries that mystical force called life.

- **Proverbs 18:21** - the _____ has the power of life.
- **Hebrews 12:24** - the Bible says that blood can _____! The power of the blood and the power of the tongue are somehow intimately linked together!
- **Revelation 12:11** - "They overcame him by the blood of the lamb and the word of their testimony."
- **Personal Paraphrase:** "They overcame him by the word of their testimony _____ the blood of the Lamb." Who overcomes Satan? Who does God use? Us! God lays out, "Here's how you're going to beat the enemy." You could say God is laying out two tools, but I don't think that's what it means. It's two parts of one tool. You bring them together and take your tongue and testify about the power of the blood. That is what releases the power to defeat the enemy!

Most powerful phrase in the universe

“ _____ ”

Satan is terrified at the concept of you as a Christian understanding the power that could be released through that phrase. But the power's not released before you take your tongue and _____ that phrase. I'm not talking about magical chants, because the power that's released is through the understanding and the faith that's released when you speak out. The thing that most Christians are missing is you've got to take the power of that phrase and speak it out!

How to Activate the Power of the Blood

“ _____ ”

Two Areas

1. Over _____.
 - What happens when you pray the blood of Jesus over someone?
 - **1 Corinthians 5:7** - Christ is our Passover lamb.
 - **Exodus 12:23** - God, when He saw the blood over a house, He passed over as in “ _____ ” over that house. He would not permit the destroyer to enter the house (Satan).
 - When the blood of Jesus covers something, God says, “I'll come down and camp right on top of that place where the blood is. I'm going to sit there and say, 'Destroyer, you may not come near this house.'”
 - What happened in Passover: each one was supposed to get a lamb, kill the lamb, and drain the blood into a bowl. What if they had left the blood in the bowl? Would it have done them any good? No. They were to take a hyssop branch and apply the blood.
 - When they got the blood in the bowl, where did they apply it? On spiritual things? Over their _____. God wants you to apply the blood _____.

Over Daily Activities (Continued)

- **Leviticus 8:23** - in the process of ordaining Aaron, He says, "Take the blood and dip in and put some on Aaron's right earlobe". Then God said, "Then take the blood and stick it on his right thumb. Then stick some on his big toe of his right foot." You ask - what's the significance? God is saying, "I want you to apply the blood to everything you _____, everything you _____, and everywhere you _____."
 - Examples of Praying the Blood of Jesus over different areas
2. Cleansing from _____
- **Hebrews 10:14** - "...because by one sacrifice He has made perfect forever those who are being made holy."
 - In one sense, you are before God cleansed and perfect forever.
 - On the other hand, you have a soul and body that's going to sin, and in that part there's a process of being made holy.
 - **John 13:10** - Jesus says, "Yes, you're going to sin, but _____ you're cleansed."
 - **1 John 1:7, 9** - "...the blood of Jesus his son purifies us from all sin." "If we confess (activate) our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and will purify us from all unrighteousness".
 - (Examples of Sins)

Three Sentences

1. "Father, I ask your forgiveness by the blood of Jesus."
2. "Father, I _____ your forgiveness by the blood of Jesus."
3. "I forgive _____ by the blood of Jesus."

One of the most important things: **Keep Short Accounts** with God.



Take Notes:

Discussion Questions

1. To what degree do you regularly activate the power of the blood of Jesus by speaking it out? _____

2. How can you apply the blood of Jesus over your current daily activities? _____

3. How can using the phrase "the blood of Jesus" make a difference in your life when you are asking God for forgiveness? _____

4. CHALLENGE QUESTION: Begin the habit of asking for forgiveness "by the blood of Jesus" this week, and take note of any changes that take place in your emotions.

ANSWERS:

¹ justice ² everyday lives ³ activate ⁴ tongue ⁵ talk ⁶ about ⁷ The Blood of Jesus
⁸ speak out ⁹ Speak It Out ¹⁰ Daily Activities ¹¹ hovered ¹² home
¹³ where you live ¹⁴ hear ¹⁵ do ¹⁶ go ¹⁷ Specific Sins ¹⁸ overall ¹⁹ receive ²⁰ myself

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO LEARN HOW TO CONQUER UNFORGIVENESS

*** Introductory Comments ***

Definition of Unforgiveness - it may surprise you. This definition is rather _____. The reason is that the more I examined what the Bible says about unforgiveness, forgiveness and unforgiveness expose themselves through the emotions.

- **Matt 18:35** - "Forgive your brother from your _____." The heart is the seat of the emotions. Let your forgiveness show up in your emotions.
- **Ephesians 4:32** - "Be kind and compassionate toward one another, forgiving each other." A repetition of the same thought. If you want to define forgiveness, define it with emotional words.
- I am not saying that forgiveness is not an _____.

Word Picture - forgiveness is like the thermostat in your house. You turn it up or down, like forgiveness - it's something you choose to do. But your emotions will be parallel to the temperature or the climate in the room.

- When you turn the thermostat up, that act should eventually result in a warming of the climate in the room.
- In the same way, when you choose the act of forgiveness, it should eventually show in a warming and a tenderizing of your emotions toward that person. If they don't rise up in your emotions, then something was wrong in the original act.

Definition of Unforgiveness

When you hear this person's _____,

Do you _____?

**** Examples of Names ****

Is there any name, that if the name is spoken, your automatic emotional reaction is tension? If that's the case, I believe there's a good possibility you have unforgiveness in your heart toward that person.

10 Points About How to Conquer Unforgiveness

Overriding Message - the subject of conquering unforgiveness is a very _____ challenge. You can't go away absorbing or remembering them all.

1. **Hebrews 4:16** - pray for the _____ of God.
 - Many people think God says, "I command you to want to forgive them."
 - Grace is coming before God and saying, "I don't want to forgive them, but I want to _____ forgive them."
2. **Matt 18:21** - remember that forgiveness is most needed with those _____.
 - Those very relationships that we want to thrive and survive and prosper, those are the very people that can irritate us the most!
 - The reason they irritate us is they have let us down so many times.
 - The reason we're so let down is because we came into this relationship with this glossy picture of what a wife ought to be, or a boss, etc.
 - We have a picture perfect standard. Every time they don't meet our standard we feel let down.
 - What really causes you the pain is that you cling to this hope that they'll change and not let me down! That hope that you cling to is a foolish hope.
 - It's not until you understand that they're not going to change and you can't make them change, and they may never fit your picture perfect image, and they're going to let you down again and again, that forgiveness will begin to flow out of your heart.

3. The **strongest point** the Bible makes about unforgiveness - remember how _____ I was / how much _____ God's forgiveness.
- You can remove the word forgiveness and put the word _____ - _____.
 - The reason you're so offended if you say, "I would never do that!"
 - **Matt 18:21-35** - Jesus tells an emotional story. The worst wrong any human being could ever do to you is about a \$3 debt compared to millions of dollars that we owe God.
 - **Ephesians 2:11-13**
 - **Ephesians 4:32**
 - **Colossians 3:13**
4. Remember that they _____ what they're doing.
- **Luke 23:34**
 - Some of you have been deeply wronged. The person who wronged you knew they were hurting you. No matter how vicious or how intentional, remind yourself that there's a blindness there. If they saw how much they were being used by Satan, do you think they'd do that thing?
 - **Compassion** begins to be released out of you.
5. Remember what happens to _____ if I _____ forgive.
- **Matt 7:2**
 - **James 2:13**
 - I wonder if we realized how much we're covered by the mercy of God.
 - God says, "I would rather cover you with mercy, but if you won't forgive, if you spend your life critical, if you pick them apart ... if you walk in that, that's how I treat you. If you walk in mercy toward others, I'll cover you with mercy."
 - **Matthew 6:12-15**
 - **Mark 11:25**

- **BACKGROUND TO POINT #6** - this point is the most missing in the body of Christ. Many times God will not give you the grace to forgive until you _____ face to face with that person.
6. _____.
- **Luke 17:3**
 - **Ephesians 4:25-27**
 - **Two Subpoints**
 - a. Be ready to _____ forgiveness. The test of whether you're really ready to deal straight with people is if your heart attitude is, "I'm going to be honest, but then I'm going to _____."
 - b. The importance of having a _____ (Matt 18:15-17). If everyone has covering, this whole system of speaking the truth works. It's a safeguard. You can call in someone that you trust.
7. **Thank** the Lord for how He can use the _____ that happen to me (I Thes 5:18).
- If someone wrongs you, that wasn't God's plan. But God is so powerful and so full of grace that He can take anything and use it.
 - Example of critical mom
8. Remember that the more I _____ towards someone, the more I _____ toward that person.
- Some of you do not know the will of God in this area. You have been told that you are led around by the nose by your emotions. That is not what the Bible says.
 - The Bible says that your emotions follow whatever you give of yourself to.
 - What is the first way you should give toward someone who's wronged you? _____. Give of yourself toward that person until your emotions begin to fall in line and you feel compassion.
 - Examples of children that were murdered
9. Remember that "to forgive" and "to _____" are two different things.
- Forgiveness is to be given freely
 - But trust when it's lost has to be re-earned (I Cor 4:2)
 - Some are afraid to forgive because you think you have to trust them also
 - Trust needs to be able to be re-earned

10. Remember that the pain you feel has _____ with the _____.

- **1 John 1:9** - what does the word "confess" mean? In the Greek it means to "_____".
- What does God say? Does He say, "I promise you joy that is so deep and rich and powerful that no person or circumstance can ever take it away?" Yes.
- Does God also say, "I promise you peace and fulfillment that is so rich and flowing that no person or circumstance can ever take it away from you?" Yes.
- When we come to God and say, "God, the reason I'm hurting is because of what this person did to me", does God agree with that statement?
- The reason you're hurting is not because of what they did, but because of what they did compared to what you expected them to do. They didn't meet your expectations, and that's why you're hurt.
- When a person first hurts you, you're going to hurt. But if you release forgiveness the pain will go away. So if the pain stays, the reason the pain stays is not because of what they did but because you won't let it go because you won't turn to God and confess your sin.
- When you say, "God, I confess the sin of unforgiveness", you're saying, "God the reason this pain is staying is not because of them, but it's because I've not tapped into you and your joy in my life."
- That's what it means to confess the sin of unforgiveness.
- If you'll do that, if you'll face that, the grace of God will come up through the vents of your heart. You'll find yourself feeling compassion and love that you never felt possible, because of the grace of our God.



Discussion Questions

1. What was your reaction to the definition of unforgiveness? How did it affect your thinking on the subject? _____

2. Which one or two of the ten points about unforgiveness impacted you the most, and how did they impact you? _____

3. CHALLENGE QUESTION: Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to your mind people that you need to forgive, and apply the teaching you have heard and begin to walk in forgiveness toward them. Ask God for ways to give to those who've hurt you, and write them down.

ANSWERS:
¹ emotional ² heart ³ act of the will ⁴ name ⁵ tense up ⁶ complex ⁷ grace
⁸ want to ⁹ closest to you ¹⁰ wretched ¹¹ I needed ¹² self-righteousness
¹³ don't know ¹⁴ me ¹⁵ don't ¹⁶ hash it out ¹⁷ Speak The Truth ¹⁸ ask ¹⁹ listen
²⁰ covering ²¹ negative things ²² give ²³ feel good emotions ²⁴ pray ²⁵ trust
²⁶ nothing to do ²⁷ other person's actions ²⁸ say the same thing

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO LEARN THE FIRST TECHNIQUE FOR FINDING GOD'S WILL

One of the all time big questions:
"How do you find the will of God?"

*** Examples ***

In some way, for Christians, our whole life revolves around the question, "How do you find the will of God?" When we gave our lives to Jesus Christ, we committed that the single thrust of our lives would be, "Lord, I want to follow your will in everything."

The Bible says in **Romans 8:6** that the person who finds the mind of God, the person who's mind is in tune with the will of God and the Spirit of God, that person's mind is filled with life and peace.

John 15:10 says that those who stay in His will are covered in His love. We know we have a God who cares and has specific answers. When you hear Him give you specific directions in the tiniest things you think, "I'm loved." In verse 11, it says that when you stay in His will, He makes our joy _____.

For a Christian it's very exciting. Finding the will of God is not a duty. When we find His will the automatic byproduct is life and peace and love and joy!

One More Thing

The Will of God is very _____ to find

Don't let the enemy trip you up that the will of God is some vague, hard, rough thing where you really never know if you heard from God. The will of God is meant to be easy, easily understood, easily found, and easily received.

BIBLE CHECKLIST

for Finding the Will of God

First Point - _____

* Examples of Finding God's Will through the Scriptures *

I realize that this is an obvious point. Because it's such an obvious point, there's a real temptation to see what's on the rest of the list. But I want to take a little time on this first point.

It's good to be reminded that the Bible is more than just a warm your heart devotional book. The Bible is the most concrete, practical, down to earth book that's ever been written, but you only get answers from the Bible when you _____ the Bible. (Examples of Bible studies)

Personal Question

How many of you have a plan of study for the Bible?

I'm not asking if you *read* the Bible. I'm asking if you have a systematic plan by which you study the Bible.

A Simple and Effective Plan For Studying the Bible

(5 Year Plan)

Materials You'll Need

- Bible
- Concordance
- Notebook

A Simple and Effective Plan for Studying the Bible, *Continued*

The Plan

1. For five years, read one chapter in _____ and one chapter in the _____ every day.
 - **Proverbs** is the book of the Bible that was written more than any other book to help you find the will of God.
 - The first four verses say to you, if you want to find the will of God, this book was written for you.
 - Read it according to the day of the month. If you miss a couple of days, just pick up whatever day of the month it is.
 - In the **New Testament**, take a pen or pencil and you read systematically through the New Testament.
 - Put a slash mark by each chapter. If you get distracted and miss a few times, just look at where your last slash mark was.
 - Over the course of 5 years you will read through the New Testament 7 times.
2. Determine to _____.
 - I made it my goal to have every day one thing to _____.
 - Sometimes you'll just get a cross-reference or a sentence. Sometimes the Lord wants you to go deeper, and you forget your plan and spend time studying a word or topic (Example: Compassion).
 - Eventually you'll get tired of it and you go back to your regular plan.
 - Some days I'd do it for a few minutes, some days an hour, some days I'd do one or the other but not both, and some days not at all. But most days I did. Why? Because every day I learned something.

We're not going on to points 2, 3, and 4
Until we remind ourselves that
When you want to know the will of God
You've got to study the Word of God!

Bible Checklist on Finding the Will of God

1. The Scriptures
2. _____ From the Lord
 - **5 Clarifying / Confirming Points** - five Bible truths that everyone ought to use to check the _____ of what you think God is saying to you. Sometimes you'll hear God, other times you'll miss it, and most of the time we'll get a fragment of the will of God and God will give us other fragments from other sources.
 - a. Are you _____ / _____
_____?
 - b. Agreement with your _____ / Blessing of _____
 - c. Counsel of _____
 - d. Good _____
 - e. _____ / _____ in your _____
 - It's not often that you have all five. You have to have all five before you know you've heard from God, but most of the time you don't know. You begin to step forward and say, "I don't know this is God, we'll find out as we go." You're very cautious to say 'know' and very free to say 'think'.
3. Multitude of _____
4. _____ / _____ - bottom line: if God blesses it, it was God!

Discussion Questions

1. To what degree have you struggled with finding God's will for your life? What did you learn in this teaching that might help? _____

2. What methods of Bible Study have you tried in the past? What are you using now?

What did you learn about Bible Study techniques through this teaching? _____

3. CHALLENGE QUESTION: Ask the Holy Spirit to give you a clear and systematic Bible study plan, and write it out and apply it. _____

ANSWERS:

¹ complete ² easy ³ The Scriptures ⁴ study ⁵ Proverbs ⁶ New Testament
⁷ learn something everyday ⁸ write down ⁹ Personal word ¹⁰ authenticity
¹¹ cheerfully willing ¹² emotionally neutral ¹³ mate ¹⁴ parents ¹⁵ spiritual
¹⁶ overseers ¹⁷ track record ¹⁸ peace ¹⁹ strong ²⁰ spirit ²¹ counselors ²² fruit

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO ASSESS THE VALIDITY OF A PERSONAL WORD FROM THE LORD

Review of Last Week

If you work down the Bible Checklist, 99% of the time you will get a clear answer of what God is saying to you. I'm not saying God will tell you everything you want to know. There are some things God holds back until the right timing. The real issue is, "God what do you want me to do _____?"

First Confirming/Clarifying Point

The Bible truth that you can't know that you've heard from God unless you were first _____ / _____ to do anything God asks. Half the battle is getting to the point where you are truly willing to do whatever He asks.

Scriptures

- **Psalm 37:4** - "Delight yourself in the Lord, and he will give you the desires of your heart." One of the most misunderstood and misquoted verses in the Bible.
 - The verse starts off with "delight yourself in the Lord". When you come to God, you take all your things and lay them down and come empty handed. God says, "I want you to be so fulfilled in me, that you automatically let go of anything else."
 - "...and he will give you ...". I always thought 'give' meant 'grant'. In the Hebrew it means _____.
 - "Delight yourself in the Lord, and I will **place in you** the desires I want you to have."

- **Matthew 26:41** - the Garden of Gethsemane.
 - Peter has failed him and is about to again. Jesus says to him, "The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."
 - Usually you hear this verse as negative, but there's a sense that it's encouraging. Peter made it. Even in the midst of failing, God was saying 'You have a heart to do what's right.'
 - It's good to know that even when I mess up and do the wrong thing, if I can honestly say, "God I _____ to do your will", God says, "Son, then I'm pleased with you."
 - That one point is the only thing that God ever looks at.
- **John 7:17** - Jesus said the whole key to finding the will of God is this point. If you want discernment, it starts with a choice in your heart to say, "Whatever you want, that's what I want."
- **Matthew 26:39** - Jesus Christ was not emotionally neutral about the cross. He was horrified. But he chose whatever He wanted.

Examples

- **John and Beth Starting the Church** - should this have devastated us? No, because we knew we weren't emotionally neutral. Some new Christians miss God and get so torn up. You'll miss God a lot! You'll learn more from missing Him than hearing from Him.
- **Who Am I Going to Marry** - if you want to really know that you've heard from God, you have to first be cheerfully willing to _____ get married. On a real practical level, we never get to that place. The way this works out in everyday life is you say, "I have to lesson or remove what I'm feeling as a major factor in what God is saying because I'm not neutral and I don't know that I can be neutral." Take other factors and give them a lot of weight.



Take Notes:

Willing to _____

Wise Man's Statement - "If ever in your life you find something that you _____ right now, it will never be God."

- Proverbs 19:2
- Proverbs 21:5
- Proverbs 29:20

Two Examples

- Wanting a New _____
 - There is an epidemic of lack of character in the marketplace that shows itself with a major character weakness of people who are not willing to stick to the same place of employment for a long period of time. The reason is there's this impatience to get money.
 - There's a godliness that carries inherent deep words like "Loyalty", "Perseverance". Those are things that the Bible commends. That can mean the wife working.
- _____ Things
 - It is impossible for Satan to put you under financial pressure if you are _____.
 - You can't know God is saying to buy a new car/house until you're willing to drive the old car or wait until you're 50 to buy a house.

Second Confirming/Clarifying Point

I want to talk to you about **Marriage** and finding the will of God.

- When you get **out** of the will of God (not sin), the first place it shows up is in the _____ of your marriage. (Examples).
- Saddest of all, when you get out of the will of God you lose the ability of husband and wife to _____.
- Amos 3:3
- God's warning bell that you're getting out of His will is the atmosphere in your marriage.

- A husband and wife begins to fulfill **Ephesians 5:31**
 - The two shall become one. This verse doesn't just mean physically.
 - One of the areas it means the most is the soul? The soul is where you feel, think, and choose.
 - A husband and wife begin to agree over their _____
 - A husband and wife begin to agree in their _____. Do you know what it does in a woman when her husband understands what she _____? Women, for everything you feel deeply there's a counterpart thing that a man feels deeply.
 - A husband and wife begin to agree in their _____.
- **Definition of Agreement** - if your mate is _____ this choice is my _____.
- When you think and feel and choose the same way, there's a joy and power that is released. You can handle anything when you are one!
- You'll never do that if the only reason you're doing it is that you love each other so much.
- The only way you'll come to that place is if you understand that your relationship with Christ is reflected in your marriage.
- The degree of peace and joy and rest I can have with Jesus Christ is directly correlated with the degree of peace and joy and rest I can have with my mate.
- You can never know you've heard from God until you have agreement.
- There's a priority God places on this.
- Something beautiful happens - "Willing"! You get willing to cut out anything in your life that comes between you and your mate.
- I crave for you to fight for your marriage (Example of Tony/Tina).
- It all starts with a vision - not of my marriage, but of my walk with God!

Discussion Questions

1. To what degree are you emotionally neutral and cheerfully willing to do the will of God, usually? _____

2. (For MARRIED Couples) How much do you walk in agreement with your mate? What is the current atmosphere of your marriage? _____

3. CHALLENGE QUESTION: If you're SINGLE, ask God to give you a heart that's willing to remain single. If you're MARRIED, ask God to show you ways to walk in greater agreement with your mate. _____

ANSWERS:

¹ today ² cheerfully willing ³ emotionally neutral ⁴ place in you ⁵ wanted ⁶ never
⁷ wait ⁸ have to do ⁹ Job ¹⁰ Material ¹¹ willing to wait ¹² atmosphere ¹³ agree
¹⁴ thoughts ¹⁵ emotions ¹⁶ feels ¹⁷ wills ¹⁸ neutral ¹⁹ preference

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO COMPLETE AN UNDERSTANDING OF HOW TO KNOW GOD'S WILL

Excerpts from Articles About Spiritual Abuse



Take Notes:

We are completing "How to Find the Will of God". We are coming today to the sticky, touchy point of ...

The Counsel of Spiritual Overseers

We believe in the concept of spiritual oversight. We believe that it is a great thing, a Biblical idea. We believe that having spiritual overseers is a major ingredient in anyone's life who wants to grow in the Lord. We believe that the reason that the subject has been so abused and twisted is that when it is in Biblical balance, it's an incredible force in people's lives.

Two Extremes

1. The _____ Extreme - you have to check with your spiritual overseer to get permission for everything; everything they say is the will of God.
2. The _____ Extreme - just as dangerous and unhealthy. This person says, "I can find the will of God for myself. I don't need covering or counsel."

Neither one of those is the goodness of God. In the middle is this beautiful balance on a very sticky subject.

Four Bible Limits on Spiritual Overseers

- I. **The _____** - in all the stories I read, I wondered - do those people know the Word of God? The more you know the Bible, the less likely you are for any person to sway you into a ridiculous extreme.
- II. **The _____** - the church of Jesus Christ, no matter what denomination they're in. I believe there are a lot of people who call themselves Christians that aren't. But what I mean by the Body of Christ is - "The Bible-believing, fruit-producing body of Christ" (Examples).
- What we forget sometimes is that one of the limits on our individual authority is what the _____ is doing.
 - All the stories sounded a bit unusual, because they are! They're not the norm.
 - The Body of Christ is a limiter when it's going on across the whole body (Examples).
 - **I Corinthians 11:16** - in grey areas, check out what the whole body of Christ is doing.
- III. **You've Got to Hear From God _____**
- **II Corinthians 1:24** - the triple star verse for the subject of Bible limits on authority. Paul is talking about his authority.
 - **"Not that we lord it over your faith..."** - the word 'lord' means captive, master, or boss. One of the best red flags for when someone is abusive of authority is when everything that comes out of their mouth is about their _____.
 - **"...faith..."** - one part of the word faith is that you personally hear from God. He said, "We do not ever try to extend our authority over your ability to hear God for yourself."
 - **"...but we work with you..."** - two peers trying to mutually accomplish a project. If someone's your spiritual overseer, it's a mutual choice. Lets say you're in a home group and they're in a position of oversight. That does not mean that they tell you what to do. It means you give their words weight.

- Notice I. is Scripture and II. is Personal Word from God, and that Counsel of Spiritual Overseers is one of five confirming points for II. It's not above Personal Word from God, and it's not the only confirming point.
- You're not always going to know. Sometimes you'll get 3/5 or 4/5. Sometimes one of those 5 you don't have is your overseer.
- At the same time I want you to notice though that it's not at the bottom. They aren't one of twelve people. You do give them a weighty place in your life.
- "...working with you for your joy..." - when someone comes for counseling, they're saying, "Help me seek God". It's someone to help you provide a fresh perspective. I've had so many times that I've given advice that sounded slick but wasn't right. What keeps me from getting burned is: no matter how right my idea sounds, until that person is filled with _____, we haven't heard from God.
- "...because it is by faith you stand firm." - it's not by your spiritual overseers' great advice, it's by you knowing Jesus Christ that you will stand firm.
- Two Comments
 - ✓ You should never seek the counsel of your spiritual overseer until _____.
 - ✓ There should be a large amount of time when you seek your overseer's counsel and they have _____.

IV. Give People _____

- _____, **Not** _____ - what happens if a couple has sought their overseer's counsel on something and they give good counsel, and the people don't receive it and do the opposite? What should happen?
 - ✓ The test of whether you're giving suggestions or orders is how they respond when they _____ your advice.
 - ✓ Eventually they will fail, but if you released them, how much more will they learn?

- **Wait until they _____ for help**
 - ✓ **Exodus 18** - Moses trying to counsel two million people by himself. God and his father in law both spoke to him. Moses appoints overseers with a structure.
 - ✓ **Key Phrase** - I handle these situations as the people _____.
 - ✓ You can _____ help anytime. It's okay to say, "If you want to talk, we're available".
 - ✓ Say it once, and then drop it.

The reason I want us to understand safe Bible limits is because Biblical spiritual overseers is a neat thing. I don't want you to be afraid of it. I think if you see how safe it is, you'll dive into the water. (Examples)

Premarital Counseling - the first thing I check is, are these people sincerely born again, and the second thing is, do they understand _____? What I mean by covering is someone that you both trust, know, love and respect and that either one of you (without the permission of the other) may bring that person in to your personal life. (Examples)

Fourth Confirming/Clarifying Point

Good Track Record

2 Scriptures

1. **Proverbs 11:3**
2. **II Samuel 22:26**

Fifth Confirming/Clarifying Point

Peace/Strong in Your Spirit

3 Scriptures

1. **Colossians 3:15**
2. **Proverbs 3:17**
3. **Isaiah 26:3** - story of praying for peace.

Third Point - Multitude of Counselors

- Proverbs 15:22
- 3 Things We Look For
 - ✓ People who are spiritually _____
 - ✓ People who _____ - two of the greatest groups of advisors are that are untapped resources?
 - 1) _____ of Adults
 - 2) _____
 - ✓ _____ in that area

Fourth Point - Circumstances/Fruit

- Matthew 7:16 - "By their _____ you shall know them".
- Galatians 5:22

There's such a **joy** in knowing that the God of the universe **cares** about things in your life. He wants it to be **easy** for you to hear His voice and get to know Him.

Discussion Questions

1. Have you personally experienced spiritual abuse or seen it happen to someone close to you? If so, how did this affect you? _____

2. Are you closer to the Dependence or Independence extreme, and why? _____

3. What are the benefits of balanced spiritual covering? _____

4. CHALLENGE QUESTION: Take an area that you are trying to discern God's will in, and apply the principles you've learned from this series. _____

ANSWERS:

¹ Dependence ² Independence ³ Bible ⁴ Body of Christ ⁵ whole body of Christ
⁶ For Yourself ⁷ position ⁸ joy ⁹ you've sought God ¹⁰ nothing to say ¹¹ Freedom
to Fail ¹² Suggestions ¹³ Orders ¹⁴ don't' take ¹⁵ Ask ¹⁶ come to me ¹⁷ offer
¹⁸ covering ¹⁹ discerning ²⁰ know us well ²¹ Parents ²² Teenage Children
²² Knowledge ²³ fruit

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO UNDERSTAND THE TRUE MEANING OF GRACE

This series is going to examine the different aspects of one incredibly powerful, interesting word. This special word opens (or opens and closes) . . .

... the book of Romans
... the book of 1st and 2nd Corinthians
... the book of Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians
... the books of 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, 1st and 2nd Timothy, Titus, Philemon

In fact, the apostle Paul was so enraptured with this word that every letter in the Bible he signed his name to opens and closes and in many cases is filled with this word!

The Apostle Peter in his two letters,

... 1st and 2nd Peter ...

opens and closes with this word.

The Book of Revelation, the last book in the Bible, opens with this word. The last verse in the entire Bible closes with this word as the highlight.

The Bible ends with these words:

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with God's people. Amen.

So we're going to take the next 3 - 4 weeks and look at this little word:

GRACE

PERSONAL REFLECTIVE QUESTION:

Do I really _____ grace?

I'm not asking if you can define the word grace. (Examples of impressive sounding words). I could memorize a definition and still not really understand grace. What I'm really asking is,

Has the subject of grace _____?

Have you _____ grace and understood it?

HOW DO YOU REACT WHEN YOU HEAR THE WORD GRACE?

» Negative Reaction - *I've heard that word abused and taken to extremes*

» Neutral Reaction

» Some of You felt lightheaded ... like all the tension in your body drops about five notches ... a smile eases on your face and you feel like hugging someone

If that was your reaction, just hearing the word with no teaching, I think maybe you have some understanding and have grasped some of the depths of what that word means. That's not a very scientific way of gauging your level of understanding, but I think there's a lot of truth in that. If you didn't react that way, listen very carefully because I'm going to blow your mind!

You will leave either higher than a kite or you'll leave thinking I'm the greatest heretic and I've gone off my rocker. The life changing message of Grace is that powerful!

What the Bible Says About Grace

8 Scriptures That Talk About Grace

(Listen to these verses. All of these verses together carry the same single message that tells us about grace.)

1. John 1:17
2. Romans 4:15-16
3. Romans 5:20
4. Romans 6:14
5. Romans 6:15
6. Galatians 2:21
7. Galatians 3:18
8. Galatians 5:4

What is the one word that the Bible strongly, forcefully, and constantly sets as an opposite or a contrast to Grace?

If you want to understand *Grace*, the main way to understand is to see how it is _____ from Law. *Grace* is a big, abstract word. You wish the Bible would define it, but the Bible says you have to understand it in opposition to the Law.

Definition of One Aspect of the Law

Law is what you " _____ " to do

Definition of One Aspect of Grace

Law is the " _____ " to do right

GRACE is
the Promise of God
that He will so _____ you internally
that Everything He ever would ask you to do,
you would do not because you _____ to
but because you _____ to!
He says, "I will make it a joy!
I will make it the delight of your heart!"

That's the promise of Grace!

*** FIVE SITUATIONS ***

- # 1 - Witnessing
- # 2 - Prayer Time
- # 3 - Husband/Wife Conflict
- #4 - Eating
- #5 - Finances

"Law Mentality"

Every one of those situations was filled with a "law mentality". If you think thoughts often like those thoughts, then you don't understand grace.

Two Phrases: " _____ ", " _____ "

"Grace Mentality"



Take Notes:

Hebrews 8:8-9 - "... The time is coming, declares the Lord, when I will make a _____ covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their forefathers ..."

- The covenant He made with their forefathers was the Law, and He says this new covenant is not going to be like the Law. The Law is, "You have to do this." Some of you, your whole mentality of Christianity is, "I have to do this." God says, "I'm going to make a new deal that's not like that."

Verse 10 - "This is the covenant I will make with the house of Israel after that time, declares the Lord. I will put my laws in their _____ and write them on their _____."

- What does it mean to have God write laws on your heart? The heart is the seat of your _____, your cravings, your urgings, your emotions.
- God says, I'm trashing the old way and I'm going to make a new way, where everything I ask them to do, they will want to do when grace comes down!
- Some of you are excited and you're thinking, "Can it really be like that?" Satan will come to you and tell you it can't be that easy and enjoyable.

One More Bit Of Information

Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words Definition of Grace

Charis (Grace)

To _____ on someone or cause in them
_____ and _____.

The word Charis comes from the word Chiro which simply means "Happy". It takes the root word and adds on some parts and it means "To bestow happiness". Take the Bible and substitute that phrase!

Begin to believe that maybe this can be true!
Each of you have wings -- stretch them out a little bit!

Discussion Questions

1. What new things about *Grace* did you learn in this teaching? _____

2. How do you react when you hear the word *Grace*? _____

3. Where would you place your mindset on the following scale? (Circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Law

Grace

4. Which of the five stories did you identify most with and why? _____

5. CHALLENGE QUESTION: Identify an area of your life that you have a "law mentality" in that you can begin having a "grace mentality" in. _____

ANSWERS:

¹ understand ² changed your life ³ experienced ⁴ Law ⁵ different ⁶ Have
⁷ Want To ⁸ have ⁹ want ¹⁰ Ought To ¹¹ Should ¹² new ¹³ minds ¹⁴ hearts ¹⁵ desires
¹⁶ bestow ¹⁷ pleasure ¹⁸ delight

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO EXPAND YOUR CONCEPT OF WHAT GRACE IS

INTRODUCTION

Hebrews 12:15 - See to it that no one misses the grace of God.

Definition of Grace - To bestow on someone or cause in them pleasure or delight.

Verses on Grace (Substitute the word for the definition)

- Hebrews 12:15
- Hebrews 13:9
- I Peter 1:2
- I Peter 1:13
- I Peter 5:12

Story of Grace Experience in the Fichtner Home

Grace is not God saying, "Buck up, hang in there and tough it out!". Grace is God saying, "I desire to cause in you pleasure and delight!"

Response to Last Week's Sermon

It takes a little bit to grasp the magnitude of this word. We need to dissect and analyze this word, but I don't think it's time for that. We're going to take one more week and try to expand our concept of what Grace is. One more week for us to realize the magnitude of what this word promises us.

GRACE STATEMENT

"Everything in Jesus is meant to _____
be _____,
and _____"

✓ "Everything in Jesus"

- Everything in the kingdom of God
- Everything in your Christian life
- Everything that God would ever ask you to do
- Everything that would ever encompass the will of God.

✓ "Is Meant to Eventually" - with this word in this sentence, you have a totally rock solid biblical statement. If you remove that word, you have lost all biblical foundation.

- That word encompasses suffering, hardships, trials, fires.
- However, hardships, trials, and fires are not the _____
_____.
- Christianity was never meant to be thought of as the essence of suffering and misery and hardships.
- Hardships, trials, and fires are meant to be _____
_____ that you walk _____.
- You walk through that fire to the place where your life is easy, enjoyable, and effective.

✓ "EASY"

- Matthew 11:28-30 - Jesus speaking to people who have not met grace. How many times does Jesus say everything in Jesus is meant to be easy? _____ times! Rest is to be at a state of ease.
- Set the word "easy" aside and lets return to the word "grace". We take words like "grace" and say "theological nothingness", but we take words like "graceful" and attach a lot of meaning. What do you think of when you hear the word "graceful"?
- Definition of Graceful: "The ability to do _____
_____." Ultimate in graceful: ice skaters.

✓ "EASY" Continued

- When you are full of grace, you have received the ability from the living God to take what would normally be a hard thing and you do it _____!
- Example of Corrie Ten Boom
- Easy is a vague, abstract word - it doesn't mean "no responsibility". He said "take my yoke" ... "take my responsibility" ... but it's going to be easy! No matter what all that means, we know it when it's easy!
- Jesus Christ said everything in Him is meant to eventually be easy.

✓ "ENJOYABLE"

- "En" simply means "in". To "enjoy" something is to have "joy inside".
- "Enjoyable" is the "able" or "ability" to have "joy inside".
- **The Book of Galatians** - deals forcefully and directly with grace. Romans is a long thought out treatise, and Galatians is a father trying to rescue his children because they've fallen away from grace.
- **Galatians 4:15** - "What has happened to all your _____?"
- Example of friend who doesn't understand grace
- If you don't have grace, you'll _____
- The very word 'charis' comes from the root word 'chairō' which means _____.
- In any area of your life where you don't have _____, you don't have _____.

✓ "EFFECTIVE"

- We have a mission, a calling, a goal - to see Jesus Christ change people's lives through us.
- It's okay to have fun in the process! In fact it's more than that, it's His plan.

CONCLUSION

One Last Question

"Do You _____ This?"

Examples

- Witnessing
- Submitting to Authority
- Prayer
- Parenting
- Marriage
- Money
- Eating Habits
- Thought Life
- Being Single

Do you have a burning conviction that each of these are meant to be **Easy**, **Enjoyable**, and **Effective**? The reason I teach is that I believe that is true in every area of our lives.

One Last Thing

If you've not met Jesus Christ, or maybe you do know Him but there's a lot of holding back, then you haven't met Grace.

Discussion Questions

1. What is your response to the statement "Everything in Jesus is meant to eventually be easy, enjoyable and effective?" Do you agree or disagree? Do you believe it's possible?

2. How do you view trials as it relates to the Christian life? What new things did you learn in this teaching? _____

3. On a scale of 1 to 10, how much joy do you have in your life? (Circle one)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

No Joy

Abundant Joy

4. Which of the examples at the end did you identify most with, and why? Do you believe that area in your life can eventually become easy, enjoyable, and effective? _____

5. CHALLENGE QUESTION: Take the area you wrote down in the last question and begin asking God for grace in that area. _____

ANSWERS:

¹ eventually ² easy ³ enjoyable ⁴ effective ⁵ normal Christian diet ⁶ short-term
⁷ happenings ⁸ through ⁹ ⁴ ¹⁰ hard things easily ¹¹ easily ¹² joy ¹³ quit ¹⁴ rejoice
¹⁵ joy ¹⁶ grace ¹⁷ believe

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO REVEAL THE FIRST STEP TO ACTIVATING GRACE

REVIEW OF FIRST TWO WEEKS

- **Charis** - to bestow on someone or cause in them pleasure or delight
- Grace gives us the **want to** to do whatever God asks

HOW TO ACTIVATE GRACE

Three real clear Bible points, things that you can do that will take Grace off the page and make it a fire in your heart.

The first point comes out of . . .

James 4:1-5

- What is your emotional reaction to those words? They are harsh words.
- You can feel like you're being rebuked and don't know why.
- The reason it's so hard is people stop at verse 4 and 5.
- If you leave out verse 6 you lose the entire meaning of this passage.

Verse 6 - "But He gives us more grace. That is why the scripture says God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."

Verse 1 - "*What causes fights and quarrels among you? Don't they come from your _____ that battle within you?*"

- The introduction is about desires. Drift to the conclusion. What's the key word in verse 6? *Grace*.
- Remember that Grace gives you the 'want to' to do right. What's a synonym for 'want to'? _____
- Notice the whole phrase: "desires that battle within you". Verse 1 says that the subject of this passage is the Christian who has desires that battle within him.

Verse 1 Continued

- The subject of James 4:1-6 is a _____. To have a battle you must have two opposing sides. Most people would say James 4:1-6 is about the flesh, and that is not the subject. The subject is a battle between the flesh and the spirit. This is about two sets of desires that war against each other.
- The passage goes on and tells us about the first side of the battle. Verses 2 and 3 are a description of the first opponent.

Verses 2-3 - *"You want something but don't get it. You kill and covet, but you cannot have what you want. You quarrel and fight. You do not have because you do not ask God. When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures."*

- That is a summation of the desires of the flesh. If the word flesh is too spiritual, put down the word _____. (Examples of wanting to be selfish)
- In verse 4, Paul gives a commentary on a Christian who gives in to those desires.

Verse 4 - *"You adulterous people, don't you know that friendship with the world is hatred toward God? Anyone who chooses to be a friend of the world becomes an enemy of God."*

- Sometimes we get so caught up under that verse that we can't step out and look at it.
- The issue here is that this is a battle, and in a battle there is no middle ground people. This is an intense separation of two sets of desires.
- Verse 5 begins the transition over to the subject of being led by the Spirit.

Verse 5 - "Or do you think Scripture says without reason that the spirit he caused to live in us envies intensely?"

- Is "spirit" our spirit or the Holy Spirit? It doesn't matter. When you're born again, you're given a spirit nature that is so one with the Spirit of God that everything the Spirit of God thinks your spirit thinks, etc.
- God causes this spirit to dwell in you. Then it says that this spirit _____ . Strong emotion! What does that mean?
- "Envy" means to "want something very badly that you currently don't have." There's something that the Holy Spirit and your spirit does not have that it wants very bad. What is that?
- Remember the context - the Christian who has chosen to follow the desires of the flesh. What the Holy Spirit envies, yearns for, and misses is _____ .
- Look back at verse 4 at the stuff about 'friends'. It says real clearly that you're either a friend of the world or a friend of God.
- If you as a Christian choose to follow the flesh, the Spirit in you says, "Ohh! I want to go that way! I want to walk after God!"
- Verse 5 is a promise that a Christian is ruined for sin forever. If you as a Christian choose to follow the flesh, you will be absolutely _____. You'll never enjoy sin again!
- This description of the Spirit nature intensely seeking to follow God, what does that description sound like? Grace - the 'want to' to do right. Guess what word shows up in the very next verse?

Verse 6 - *"But he gives us more grace. This is why the Scripture says: 'God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble.'"*

- "More grace" - what is that talking about?
- If you back up and look at the overall picture, the picture is: there's this battle going on in some Christians. The battle is between two opposing sets of desires. Then he describes the first set of desires, then he begins to transition to the other set of desires, and now he's fully on this set of desires.
- His first comment is going to be how powerful grace is in relationship to this battle.
- "He gives us more grace" - this battle is not between two desires of _____ . This is not an even contest, and in fact it's no contest. The power of grace to cause you to desire the things of God is thousands of times more powerful than that wimpy thing called the desires of the flesh!
- The truth is when you activate grace, it's like a platoon of marines on this side and a sickly kid on the other side!
- There's so much more power in grace for you to want to follow Him that the Christian life would eventually be easy, enjoyable, that following Him would be a pleasure and delight!
- The Christian life is meant to be _____!

*** **

How to Activate Grace

Point # 1

Point # 1 - Ask For It

- Last Half of Verse 6 - "God opposes the proud but gives grace to the humble."
- Proud is "I can do it _____, without God's help." If you said "Is that all?", that reaction came from pride.
- Humility says "_____" and it just stops right there. You'd be amazed at what happened if you just asked for it. (Examples).
- James 4:2 - "You do not have because you do not _____!"
- 2 Other Factors - but even though there are other factors, this one is **BIG**. Are you beginning to grasp how many times we don't ask, and what would happen if we did.
- James 4:6 - the more you ask for grace, the more you get.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the main one or two principles you learned from the study of James 4:1-6.

2. In the battle between flesh and spirit, which do you see as the more powerful force and why? _____

3. What is your reaction to the idea that the first step in activating grace is simply to "Ask for It"? _____

4. CHALLENGE QUESTION: What areas of your life do you need to ask God for grace in? Make a commitment to ask God for grace in these areas during the next week. _____

ANSWERS:

¹ desires ² desires ³ battle ⁴ selfishness ⁵ envies intensely ⁶ friendship with God ⁷ miserable ⁸ equal strength ⁹ easy ¹⁰ Ask For It ¹¹ by myself ¹² Help ¹³ ask

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO REVEAL TWO ADDITIONAL WAYS TO ACTIVATE GRACE

Two Verses

- **Acts 4:33** - "And much grace was upon them all"
- **Acts 13:42** - "Paul and Barnabas urged them to continue in the grace of God."

REVIEW OF FIRST TWO WEEKS

- We explained that Grace is something that works from the inside out to give you the 'want to' to do right, vs the law which says you have to do it
- Grace and law will sometimes do the _____, but law does it because they have to, and grace does it because they want to
- We said that the word grace means God's plan to bestow on someone or cause in them pleasure or delight
- We explained scripturally that for every area of your life where you activate grace, that area of your life will eventually be easy, enjoyable, and effective.

REVIEW OF LAST WEEK

- We began to get into "how-to's". How do you take that concept and make it real and alive?
- The **first way to activate grace** was "Ask For It".
- The reason I took a whole sermon was that these three little words are so often brushed over and seem so obvious that people miss them.
- People say, "I know I need to ask for grace" and never do.
- When you ask for grace, three things happen:
 1. _____ is expressed
 2. _____ is taken
 3. _____ is released

HOW TO ACTIVATE GRACE

Hebrews 4:16 - "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

- The very throne God sits on is not made of wood, ivory, gold, or silver. It's not a throne of judgment or righteousness. It's a throne of grace!
- This verse tells us that if we want to appropriate grace, you've got to _____.

How to Activate Grace

Point # 2

Spend Time in _____

The first point is a quick response of the heart, but here I'm talking about an extended time in God's presence.

* Illustration of Marriage Counseling *



Take Notes:

If you spent an hour a day in the presence of God, of those 50 things that irritate you each day, 40 of them would be gone. They wouldn't bother you! Of those 70 battles you fight with the flesh, 60 of them wouldn't even be there! Your spirit nature is so powerful! That really does happen ever day that you spend an hour with God!

Jonah 2:8 - "Those who _____ to _____
_____ the grace that could be theirs."

How to Activate Grace

Point # 3

Let Go of any _____ You are _____ To

- In 90 - 95% of the small daily problems that you face, asking for grace and spending time in God's presence will dissolve them.
- Sometimes you run into _____ problems that won't be resolved in one day. Some carry on for weeks, months, and years. These big problems are hard. The worst part is the longer you're in it, the harder it is. There's no joy. The worst part is when you have no hope that it'll get better.
- A lot of times in big problems you can ask for grace and spend time in God's presence and that problem won't go away.
- But there is grace available for that problem. There is always the plan of God to cause in you pleasure and delight. There is always a way that it can be easy, enjoyable and effective. That's where it really tests if you believe that or not.
- In situations like that, grace _____ . The path of grace is sometimes painful at first.
- There is a Bible precedent that for God to pour out His grace, He first has to expose and remove an idol you are clinging to. (Examples)



Take Notes:

- Why am I so willing to do anything God asks? Because I believe that anything God asks me to cut out or do is meant to make my life easy, enjoyable, and effective eventually. Do you know the heart of God? _____

Discussion Questions

1. How can spending time in God's presence release grace in your life? _____

2. How much time do you spend daily in God's presence? How does spending time in God's presence affect your day? _____

3. (Married Couples) How can spending time in God's presence improve the health of your marriage? _____

4. What idols are you clinging to that are forfeiting grace in your life? _____

5. CHALLENGE QUESTION: During time in God's presence this week, give up any idols you are clinging to and ask for grace in those areas. _____

ANSWERS:

¹ same actions ² humility ³ initiative ⁴ faith ⁵ approach that throne ⁶ God's presence ⁷ cling ⁸ worthless ⁹ idols ¹⁰ forfeit ¹¹ idols ¹² clinging ¹³ big ¹⁴ digs deeper

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO COMPARE HOW WE SEE GOD WITH WHAT GOD REALLY IS

Help Me Define the Word:



Take Notes:

- **Gracious** - is _____ and _____ normal help.
- **Isaiah 30:18** - Yet the Lord longs to be _____ to you.
- **Verse 19** - how gracious he will be when you cry to help.
- Is the word "Gracious" incorporated into your _____ of God?

What we're really wrestling with is
Your _____ of God

The word *Gracious* comes from the word *Grace*.
To be *Gracious* simply means to treat people with *Grace*.

Two Facets of the Heart of God

1. _____ - holy, horrible terror and wrath. If you don't know Jesus Christ and you died tonight, the _____ side of God you will ever see is the horrible wrath of God for all eternity. There is a real hell.
2. When you come under the blood, every ounce of God's wrath has been _____. You move from the wrath and terror of God to the _____ of God. The only side of God you will ever see is His _____. There is zero of the wrath of God on you. Even when God disciplines you, it is God's desire to make your life easy, enjoyable, and effective.

If you don't know Jesus Christ, I pray that you catch a glimpse of the wrath of God first. If you do know Jesus Christ, I pray that you would know what you have now.

Review

- Grace ('Charis') means to bestow on someone or cause in them pleasure and delight.
- Grace gives us the 'want to' to do right.
- Everything in Jesus Christ is meant to eventually be easy, enjoyable and effective.
- 4 Ways to Activate Grace
 1. James 4:2-6 - Ask For It
 2. Hebrews 4:16 - Spend Time in God's Presence
 3. Jonah 2:8 - Let Go Of Any Idols You Are Clinging To

When Does Grace Become Presumption

Lets define the extreme of Grace. (Story of confused person).

Two Phrases

"Grace is the 'Want To' to Do Right"

"Grace is what I Want to Do"

- What's the one word they added to their sentence? _____.
- What's the one word they dropped that I did have in there? _____.
- In that one contrast, that person summed up the difference in true grace and presumption.

Romans 6

- The entire chapter deals with the question, "When is grace out of balance or used as a cover up for sin?"
- Verse 1 - "Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase?" What do we do with people who sin and call it grace.
- Verse 2 - "By no means! We died to sin. How can we live in it any longer?"
- Salvation = _____
- People hear teaching on grace and they get excited but they say, "This is too good and I better tone this down". They put limits on grace.
- Paul comes face to face with this question. He says the issue of grace is never are there less promises than there are, the only issue is whether you understand _____ or not.
- If you can stand here and say you will willfully and cheerfully follow Jesus, for you there are _____ on grace!

How to Activate Grace

Point # 4

Seek _____ and

- John 1:14, 17
- Colossians 1:6
- In every area of your life where you want to activate grace, there are _____ you have to learn. The final step in grace is when you understand something. (Story)



Take Notes:

- The first three points come quickly. This last step is where the rubber meets the road. You've done everything you could and it's still hard.
- If you understand grace, you dig in your heels and say "There must be something I don't _____". (Stories)
- Proverbs 2:1-7
- One More Story (John's Battle over Thought Life)

Everything in Jesus is meant to eventually be
Easy, Enjoyable, and Effective

Discussion Questions

1. How would you describe your picture of God? What did you learn about God in this teaching? _____

2. Based on this teaching, how would you define the difference between grace and presumption in your own words? _____

3. What are some difficult areas in your life where you might need understanding for grace to be released? _____

4. CHALLENGE QUESTION: Who can you seek counsel from this week that might be able to assist you in the area you referred to in question #3? _____

ANSWERS:

¹ gracious ² above ³ beyond ⁴ gracious ⁵ image ⁶ Picture ⁷ Judgment ⁸ only ⁹ satisfied ¹⁰ love ¹¹ love ¹² I ¹³ right ¹⁴ death ¹⁵ salvation ¹⁶ no limits ¹⁷ understanding ¹⁸ creativity ¹⁹ truths ²⁰ understand

SESSION OBJECTIVE:

TO UNDERSTAND THE TRUE MEANING OF WATER BAPTISM

Story about Beth and Water Baptism

For those who grew up where baptism by believers only was what you heard and were taught - learn a lesson from my mistake. For you, baptism is no big deal. For other people it's not that easy. For other people it's a big deal. I want to ask you to be sensitive to those around you.

Two Main Points

1. Baptism is for _____ - if it is, then there's no such thing as an _____ baptism.
 - a. **Acts 2:37-38** - what's the order? _____ and then baptism.
 - b. **Acts 8:12** - when were they baptized? When they _____.
 - c. **Acts 10:46-47** - what is the thing that could keep you from being baptized with water? Not being _____.
 - d. **Acts 16:13-15**
 - e. **Acts 16:29-33**
 - f. **Acts 18:7-8**
 - g. **Acts 22:12-26**
 - ✓ There's a question he really gives to everyone. To everyone who's given their lives to Jesus Christ, the Bible says, "What are you waiting for?"
 - ✓ Another thing is, if you flip that verse around, you're not ready to get baptized until you've been saved.
 - h. **I Peter 3:21** - there's nothing special in the act of being sprinkled or dunked or washed. What's special is the _____ of the _____ that this act is a _____ of. This is one of the strongest verses that says an infant cannot make a pledge of a good conscience toward God. Just so we understand that we aren't pledging to impress God, it's by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

- ✓ In some areas the Bible is gray or I'm gray. But this is not a gray area in the Bible.
- ✓ There is not a single instance of an infant being baptized in the Bible. The Bible is very strong that the essence of baptism is for believers only.
- ✓ For some of you that goes down with splinters. When you understand the meaning of water baptism, you will be glad that that's the truth. I think it will be easy to receive.

2. What's the _____ of Baptism

(**Scriptures** - Colossians 2:12, Romans 6:3-4)

a. A _____ of what's happened _____ you.

- ✓ If you saw a guy with his hand on a kid's head who shoves the kid underwater, what would you think? He's trying to kill him!
- ✓ Romans 6:3 - All of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death.
- ✓ If you saw that, that little boy would be struggling and resisting.
- ✓ But the picture of baptism is so beautiful. The person sits there and releases the control of their body into your hands.
- ✓ They say, "I willingly _____".
- ✓ That's what it means to go under that water.
- ✓ We don't take a strong stance on immersion, but we baptize by immersion because the Greek word means 'to _____', 'to fill inside and outside'.
- ✓ This living picture is so important that this is the reason I am hesitant to baptize children.
- ✓ Rest of **Romans 6:4** - the living picture is you go under but then come back up. I too am going to live a new life!

b. Public _____

- ✓ Story about Hindus and Muslims and water baptism
- ✓ A lot of people don't have thrilling baptisms.
- ✓ It's not a self centered experience. It's not between you and God. It's a proclamation of your life.
- ✓ Even as watered down and diluted as the word 'Christian' is in this country, there's still something powerful about a water baptism.

One More Point

- ✓ If you were baptized as an infant, let me give you a suggestion of how to respond. You don't have to reject your parents or their motives to be baptized as a believer.
- ✓ You just say, "God I thank you for more light now than I had before. I thank you for more understanding."
- ✓ A lot of these parents were doing in their hearts a baby dedication.

Questions

1. When you were first baptized, if you didn't understand the meaning, is it necessary to be baptized again? Let me answer that two ways.
 - a. If you think, "I was saved but I didn't understand the meaning" then you can be rebaptized but I don't see the need to.
 - b. If you think, "I got dunked once and I don't know if I was saved at all", if you're not sure then go ahead and be rebaptized.
2. If you are saved but don't get baptized and you die, will you still go to heaven? There's a cult that says that if you are not baptized in the name of Jesus you will not go to heaven. That is a demonic doctrine, it is works, it is not at all true. Baptism is a beautiful symbol but not a prerequisite for salvation.


Discussion Questions

1. Have you ever been baptized, and was it an infant or water baptism? _____

2. If you were baptized, what did it mean to you? Did you fully understand the meaning?

3. What truths did you learn about baptism through this teaching? _____

4. CHALLENGE QUESTION: If you aren't baptized and are born again, schedule an appointment to be baptized. If you've been baptized, reflect on your baptism based on the new understanding you've gained. _____

 **ANSWERS:**
¹ believers only ² infant ³ repentance ⁴ believed ⁵ saved ⁶ inward decision
⁷ heart ⁸ symbol ⁹ meaning ¹⁰ living picture ¹¹ inside ¹² die ¹³ immerse
¹⁴ Testimony