



#1 - WHY GRACE MATTERS

Have someone read this short story aloud to the whole group.

SOMETHING WONDERFULLY IMPORTANT

He was caught in the act—a great little boy with a tender heart. He meant well, but he kept messing up. Now he was in trouble, BIG time!

“I can’t let you do this,” his mommy said. “You are meant to grow to be strong and brave and true—a friend to God and to other people.”

“I will never be good enough,” the little boy wailed. “I do bad things. I am not good enough; God won’t take me to heaven.”

Wrapping the sobbing child in her arms, the mother laughed and cried at the same time. The sound was so unexpected that the boy forgot his tears and sat up, his eyes level with his mother’s.

“Are you laughing at me?” he asked. Then noticing the tears streaking her face, he knew she was not.

“You just said something wonderfully important,” she whispered. “You said that you aren’t good enough. And God says when you know you aren’t good enough, that’s when God can help you most. If you think you can be good on your own, you can’t. I can’t. Nobody can.”

“But the good news is that Jesus is good enough,” she added, hugging the child again. “He has made heaven for you. And if you choose Jesus—to be on God’s side—you are God’s child. And Jesus has a place in heaven for you.”

“He has?” the boy beamed. As mother and child celebrated together the gift of grace extended to one little boy many years before he needed it, the whole world seemed to change color. And the thought warmed their hearts.

Such is the gift of grace—a gift of lasting life beginning now—that, in the glow of the moment a little boy, with the help of his mother, set about righting wrongs that had been bothering him for days, maybe weeks.

YOUR NOTES ▲

Handwritten notes in a cursive script, partially obscured by a vertical line.



DISCUSSION

1. If that mother and child were asked “What Color is Grace?” what colors do you think they might have named? Explain your response.

Note: There is no right or wrong answer to this question. Accept any reasonable response. For instance: Red for the shed blood of Jesus. Blue for the ocean that covers my sins or for infinity because that's how far grace separates my guilt from me. Green for the newness of life that grace brings. Purple for the King of my life who died for me. Yellow for the sunny feeling that fills me inside. Gold for this most valuable gift, etc.

2. What color is grace for the children in your class or in your church?

If grace is not a brilliant color for you, pray that God will use this study to help you find His grace for your life. The study of grace we are starting today has the potential to change the way we teach children at church, changing the colors that they and we assign to God, ourselves and our church. This is why grace matters so much.

3. Why does grace matter to you? (Think about this for a minute and then share your response with a partner. Make a list of reasons why grace matters to you)

SONG CYCLE ACTIVITY—5-6 MINUTES

Try this if you are studying grace with a group of people. Or try it for family worship or when driving a long distance. Divide the group into two teams. Give yourself a 15-20 minute time limit. Teams take turns singing a hymn about grace. Once a team begins the song, everyone joins in. See which runs out first—the clock or the hymn ideas.



PRAYER TIME

Divide into groups of 2-3 to tell God how you feel about grace, what you want to know about grace, or just asking God to extend the kingdom of grace to include the children of your church.

BIBLE STUDY:

WHAT THE BIBLE SAYS ABOUT GRACE

The Old Testament is full of grace, although it does not use the word very often. The New Testament has scores of references to grace—maybe hundreds, the apostle Paul being its biggest proponent.

1. Look up “grace” in a concordance and find a sampling of texts in the Bible. Or read the following texts to find out what each says about grace:

- ___ Isaiah 26:10
- ___ Jonah 2:8
- ___ John 1:14
- ___ John 1:17
- ___ Acts 20:24
- ___ Romans 3:24
- ___ Romans 5:15,20
- ___ 2 Corinthians 8:7
- ___ 2 Corinthians 12:9
- ___ Ephesians 2:8
- ___ Titus 2:11
- ___ Hebrews 12:15

YOUR NOTES ▲

WELCOME TO THE GRACE IS FOR KIDS... 7



- d. Grace is from God; it is a gift of the Father as well as the Son. (John 3:16, 2 Cor. 5:19)
- e. Grace is a gift of forgiveness.
- f. God's grace saves me. (Eph. 2:8) He is victorious. I can share the victory—it can be mine, too.
- g. There is more than enough grace to go around. (Romans 5:17,20)

EXPERIENCING GRACE

A climber experiences the reality of the great height she has achieved when she stands at the summit and looks down at the valley where she started. To experience the height and breadth of grace, read the following Bible verses for each point.

- 1. GOD'S LOVE. God loves you very much. Romans 5:8
- 2. YOUR NEED. You have a life-threatening problem—you are doomed to eternal death. Romans 3:23 and 6:23.
- 3. Jesus is the WAY OUT of the sin problem. Christ died a death He did not deserve so that you can enjoy what is not deserved—life forever. John 14:6 and I Cor. 15:22
- 4. You can RECEIVE JESUS and His gift of salvation by praying the sinner's prayer—tell Him your need and invite Him into your life. John 3:16
- 5. Rejoice in the ASSURANCE that you are God's child! John 1:12 As God's child, you belong in His house. John 14:1-3 Grace is the name we give to the love and acceptance that prompted God to save us. He doesn't punish us or ask us to pay a penalty for our sin. He simply accepts us as we are, like the father in the biblical story of the lost boy.

CELEBRATING GRACE ACTIVITY

Make a poster, write a poem or letter, compose a song or tell an original parable to describe how you feel about this gift of grace that God has given you.

Or describe the poster or song you wish you could you could create.