

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Grace & Generosity | Pastor Mike McKinney

Monday, Oct. 20 - Sunday, Oct. 26 (Week 6)

Emphasis for the Month: **Creating a Culture of Honesty and Grace**

With several weeks of community under your belt, your group is ready to begin sharing more personally. True discipleship grows in environments where people can be honest about struggles and know they will be met with grace. This month, lead the way in vulnerability. Maybe share your own story, ask good follow-up questions, and remind your group that the gospel gives us freedom to be known and loved at the same time. Vulnerability today builds the soil for transformation tomorrow.

ICE BREAKER: If you could describe your current mood or state of mind as a weather pattern, what would it be and why?

CAB ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. We hope you will join us every Tuesday at 6:30 PM for our weekly prayer gathering.

PRAYER FOR DISCUSSION: Leader or Co-Leader prays for the discussion time. Pray that The Holy Spirit would assist in the conversing, processing, and listening of the discussion.

SERMON DISCUSSION TIME: Have someone read this week's scripture from 2 Corinthians 8:1-7, and then this sermon summary to jog everyone's memory:

In this sermon, Pastor Mike explores the theme of "grace & generosity" through the lens of 2 Corinthians chapter 8:1-7, focusing on the grace of God as the driving force behind true generosity. The sermon begins by highlighting the context of the Macedonian churches, who, despite experiencing severe affliction and extreme poverty, overflowed with an abundance of joy that led to a wealth of generosity. This generosity was not coerced but was a natural outpouring of the grace of God in their lives.

Pastor Mike emphasizes that the Macedonians' joy and generosity were not rooted in their circumstances but in the empowering grace of God, which provided them with strength and joy beyond earthly understanding. He distinguishes between saving grace, which brings us to faith in Christ, and empowering grace, which sustains and strengthens believers in their daily walk.

The sermon challenges us to consider how God's grace can transform our own lives, leading us to experience joy and generosity even in difficult times. Pastor Mike encourages us to seek more of Christ's presence, as true joy is found in Him, and to detach from worldly attachments, reattaching our hearts to the ultimate reality of Christ.



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In closing, the sermon invites us to pray for an outpouring of God's joy in our lives and to support one another in our spiritual journeys, trusting in the sufficiency of God's grace.

QUESTION #1 - The sermon distinguishes between "saving grace" and "empowering grace."

How would you describe the difference between these two types of grace in your own words?

- **Saving Grace:** This is the grace that brings us to faith in Jesus Christ. It is the unmerited favor of God that leads to our salvation, forgiving our sins and reconciling us to God. It is the grace that opens our eyes to the truth of the Gospel and allows us to accept Jesus as our Savior. Ephesians 2:8-9 speaks to this, emphasizing that it is by grace we have been saved through faith, and this is not from ourselves; it is the gift of God.
- **Empowering Grace:** This is the grace that sustains and strengthens us in our daily Christian walk. It is the ongoing, unmerited power and support that God provides to help us live out our faith, endure trials, and grow in holiness. Empowering grace enables us to experience joy and strength in difficult circumstances, as seen in the Macedonian church's response to their trials. It is the grace that Paul refers to in 2 Corinthians 12:9, where Jesus tells him, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

QUESTION #2 - Can you share a personal experience where you felt you received and experienced empowering grace in your life? How did that experience impact you?

QUESTION #3 - The Macedonian church gave out of their extreme poverty. What does this teach us about the nature of true generosity?

- The Macedonian church's example teaches us that true generosity is not dependent on material wealth or abundance. Instead, it is a reflection of the heart and a response to God's grace. Their giving was characterized by an abundance of joy and a willingness to give beyond their means, demonstrating that generosity is an act of faith and trust in God's provision. It shows that true generosity is sacrificial and stems from a deep sense of gratitude and love for God and others. This kind of generosity is a powerful testimony to the transformative work of God's grace in a believer's life, as it prioritizes the needs of others and the advancement of God's kingdom over personal comfort or security.

QUESTION #4 - What are some "severe tests of affliction" you are currently facing, and how do they impact your sense of joy?

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QUESTION #5 - In what areas of your life do you find it challenging to trust in God's empowering grace?

QUESTION #6 - How can you give yourself "first to the Lord" in your daily life, as the Macedonians did, and what might that look like for you in practical terms?

PRAY TOGETHER: Spend time taking **and recording** prayer requests and then pray together as a group (*I strongly encourage you to send out the prayer requests weekly to your group to keep everyone informed and in the loop on how to pray for one another throughout the week. This also makes it easier to check-in with people who have shared requests to see how the Lord has been working in their lives*).



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