

PART ONE: RESTORE // Experiencing God's Grace

//INTRODUCTION//

Welcome back to Life Groups, we hope you've had a great summer; we are in week one of our brand new series called Restore. Over the next four weeks, as we adventure through the Restore series, we will be focusing on discipleship. This week we are looking at what it means to experience God's grace.

2 Timothy 2:2 says, "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others." As we progress on a discipleship journey, restoration happens when we focus on connecting people with God, which is the main part of our mission here at Newbreak. This series is going to be a major catalyst in connecting us, as the body of believers at Newbreak, to our mission, which in return, gives us the ability to live it out in our communities.

//GETTING TO KNOW YOU//

Since this is week one of your Life group it would be a great idea to get to know each other. Have each person take a couple of minutes to introduce himself or herself by sharing the following:

- What is your name?
- How long have you been at Newbreak?
- Have you been in a life group before?
- Are you single/married/kids/dog?
- Why did you join this Life Group?
- What are you looking to learn/experience from it?

//WEEKEND REWIND//

As you have had time to reflect and think about this past week's message, what are the things that either challenged you or caused you to take action in your own life?

//WEEKLY REVIEW//

Read: Ephesians 2:1-10

Paul wrote these words to the Ephesian churches after he established them on his second missionary journey. This is one of the key teachings in Paul's writings on grace. Later, though, false teachers were coming in and distorting this teaching so Paul left Timothy at Ephesus to address some of those issues and wrote letters to Timothy to encourage him in his ministry.

1. What does Grace mean to you?

Read 2 Timothy 1:8-14

In this passage, Paul is teaching Timothy about grace. He wants Timothy in turn to teach the people in the church at Ephesus about grace and how to experience it. Grace isn't just a one-time thing we receive at the moment of our salvation; it equips and empowers us along the way as we seek to live the God-focused, radical, sold-out-for-Jesus lives we are called to live.

2. Grace is God's "love language" to us. What are the things in our lives that keep us from experiencing God's grace?

//DISCUSSION QUESTIONS//

3. Where are some places and spaces you can practically experience God's grace?

- **SUGGESTED ANSWERS:**

- Physically posture myself for prayer. (Raised hands, palms up, palms down, prayer walks, kneeling).
- Pray aloud.
- Listen to worship music in the car.
- Serve others to tangibly display God's grace.

4. Ephesians 2:8 says, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God..." Discuss a time in your life when you've experienced God's grace and how it strengthened your relationship with Him.

- **SUGGESTED ANSWERS:** Grace is so powerful of a concept that Paul was willing to suffer to make this known to others; without grace, there would have been nothing to redeem Paul's suffering; without grace, we are left to try to work out our own salvation with our good works

5. What are some practical steps you can take to leverage experiencing grace in your life?

- **SUGGESTED ANSWERS:**

- Practice regular confession with God and with others.
- Forgive myself for not meeting my own expectations.
- Learn to live within my own limitations.
- Keep a humble/repentant heart.
- Extend and receive forgiveness in my relationships.
- Meditate on the truth that I can never earn God's grace.

6. What “godly” opportunities do you need to pursue this week to hear the Holy Spirit speak God’s grace into you?

- **SUGGESTED ANSWERS:** While we receive grace freely from God, we have to do some things to guard it. Otherwise, we will quickly find ourselves resorting to our own self-protective, selfish ways of navigating life. Often we will see this when we start adopting a “grace and” view of what we need to do to walk as a disciple; Grace AND:
 - Read my bible enough
 - Pray enough
 - Do enough good

//MOVING FORWARD//

“Whenever you find yourself doubting how far you can go, just remember how far you have come. Remember everything you have faced, all the battles you have won and all the fears you have overcome because of the power that is God’s grace.” Ephesians 2:4-5 says, “because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgression—it is by grace you have been saved.” Your discipleship journey begins with a personal experience of God’s grace. For some there is a distinction between the beginning of our faith journey and the beginning of our actual discipleship; let today be the day your discipleship journey begins.

//CLOSING PRAYER//

Take time this to pray together and for each other as a group about this Life Group quarter and for God to do a mighty work in your group. Pray for those people in your group who are struggling with grace and ask that God would breakdown any barriers and work through any situation that is keeping them from fully experiencing God’s grace.

//CHANGE YOUR MIND//

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God.” **EPHESIANS 2:8** [NIV]