

WEEK 2 - NOVEMBER 21

FULL of GRACE

EXTENDING GRACE

INTRODUCTION

As we head into Thanksgiving week and the upcoming Christmas season, Pastor Jesse brings us the second of a two-part series on grace. Pausing for a moment before diving into crazy schedules, high expectations and time with family and friends, we are reminded to both receive and offer grace.

DISCUSSION

1. Get a pulse on your heart. Do the holidays fill you with anticipation? Excitement? Worry? Resentment? Take a moment - not to fuel any feelings but honestly assess your heart and attitude.
2. Showing grace doesn't necessarily come naturally to us; it's something that must be learned and practiced. It's an act of the will... a decision, not a feeling. In John 13, Jesus washed the feet of both Peter and Judas with the same love and care. Discuss any tried-and-true habits you've learned to show grace (even when you don't want to).
3. Often, relationships crumble when an expectation isn't met. We hold people to standards or expectations (often unspoken), and when they fail, we fall apart. What are some unhealthy responses you have when your expectations aren't met? Do you get angry? Passive aggressive? Do you avoid? Get resentful? Try to take control?
4. Looking at question #3, what are some healthy responses you could practice when your expectations or standards aren't met?

TAKE ACTION

1. Make a list of what you're processing as you prepare for the holidays. Be careful to examine any expectations you might have about others or how a situation "should" go.
2. If anything comes to the surface, take it to God in prayer. Ask Him to prepare your heart and for wisdom on how to give grace.
3. Seek out accountability. With a trusted friend, share the struggles on your heart - not as a bashing session in which you rant about the failures of others but as an opportunity to be held accountable in your desire to offer the same grace God has offered you.

RESOURCES

1. *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality* by Peter Scazzero
2. *Hurt People Hurt People* by Dr. Sandra D. Wilson
3. *Undeserved: Six Biblical Portraits of God's Amazing Grace* by Matthew Everhard and Julie Mihaljevic