

Grace Group Discussion Guide

For the week of September 9 - 15, 2018

Main Thought and Passages:

God created us to fulfill a unique purpose on Earth. None of us are accidents. To become all that we were made to be, we need to progressively grow in knowing God personally, continue to follow Him, discover our purpose, and begin making a difference in the lives of others.

*"...I ask—ask the God of our Master, Jesus Christ, the God of glory—to make you intelligent and discerning in **knowing him personally**, your eyes focused and clear, so that you can see exactly **what it is he is calling you to do**, grasp the immensity of this glorious way of life he has for his followers..." (Ephesians 1:17-18 MSG)*

- Our first and most important step is to truly know God personally.
- Sin separates us from God, but Jesus came to enable us to have a real relationship with Him.

"Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God..." (John 1:12 NIV)

- Religion teaches us that we need to earn or deserve this, but the gospel teaches us that it is something we receive by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

*"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. ²²Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' ²³Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never **knew** you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" (Matthew 7:21-23 NIV)*

- To "know" in this passage refers to the intimacy that a husband and wife have together.
- Our salvation is based on knowing Him intimately and continually like in a healthy marriage.

"As Jesus walked beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the lake, for they were fishermen. ¹⁷'Come, follow me,' Jesus said, 'and I will send you out to fish for people.' ¹⁸At once they left their nets and followed him." (Mark 1:16-18 NIV)

- Jesus' first disciples were willing to leave everything to follow Him. Knowing God requires leaving things that will hinder our relationship with Him.

Reflection:

- What stands out to you from the main thought and passages above?
- Has there been anything that has challenged your previous notions of what it means to "know God?"

Application:

- What are some things that you had to "leave" in the past to better follow Jesus? Is there anything that God may be calling you to "leave" now in order to know Him better?

Prayer:

- Pray for one another to "leave" the things that hinder our relationships with God.
- Pray for one friend or loved one, that God would give us an opportunity to share our testimonies with them this week.
- Pray for our students back in school, that they would share their faith with their classmates and that we will see a harvest of young people on the campuses.