

WONDERS

Title: **THE WONDER CALLED GOD'S GRACE**

Date: **April 28, 2024**

Leader's Tips:

- S** - Sensitivity with others. No one should feel left out.
- P** - Participation is encouraged during discussion.
- A** - Acknowledge guests. Make them feel welcome.
- C** - Confidentiality is key. What is shared stays in the group.
- E** - Encourage the group to pray for one another.

WORSHIP: (15 mins)

Venue Option 1: Home gatherings

Sing one or two songs or play a song from You Tube.

Venue Option 2: Public place (school, café, park, etc.) or Via Online, ask, "What is your "high" or "your "low" this past week?"

WELCOME:(15 mins): Remember I.W.C.

I - Introduce yourself.

W - Welcome guests/first-time visitors.

C - Cheer up (say a word of encouragement) someone within the group.

Memory Verse for the week: 2 Corinthians 5:21 (NIV)

Ice-breaker: Question: "Who do you think is most unhappy when the Prodigal Son came home?"

Answer: "The fatted calf."

Main Text: Luke 15:11-24 (NLT)

WORD (30-45 mins)

Q: In your own words, what does "grace" mean to you?

Grace - Unmerited or undeserved favor.

This parable is called the greatest short story in the world. In this parable, the younger son requested his inheritance while his father was still alive, a gesture that was highly disrespectful in Middle Eastern culture and even today. This younger son distanced himself from his father by moving to a very far place and squandering his wealth in reckless living.

Lesson proper:

1. The Father's Response to Returning Prodigals:

The Father ran to meet his son – He didn't wait passively for his son to approach, nor did he merely walk toward him when he spotted him from a distance. This speaks of the father's forgiving act even before his son returned.

In this story, Jesus emphasizes the welcome the father gave his unworthy son to reveal God's great love for sinners and the welcome that awaits every returning prodigals.

Q: Growing up, were you an obedient or a rebellious child?

2. The Father warmly embraced and kissed him –

Despite the prodigal son's dirt and odor, the father embraced and kissed him without hesitation. This is a symbol of love and acceptance. The father showed his love to his son by embracing and kissing him wholeheartedly. The father didn't care of the filth and stench of his son and in the same way, no sin can stop God from loving us. **Q: Was there a time when you hesitated to come to God in prayer?**

3. The Father adorned him with the finest robe placed and a ring on his finger -

The Father quickly asked his servants to prepare items that showed his favor toward his son. The robe represented honor and the ring - authority, signified that the son was reinstated to his esteemed position within his father's household. The father restored the lost honor and authority of his son. Similarly, our Heavenly Father (in Christ) clothes us with robe of righteousness and regards us as His beloved sons and daughters.

Q: What does it mean to you personally to be a son/daughter of God?

4. The Father provided sandals for his feet - The father reinstated his sonship by providing him with sandals.

5. The father killed a fattened calf to celebrate his return

A fattened calf is an animal carefully looked after for some special occasion. The father thought of his return as a special occasion fitting for a fattened calf to be killed. In the same way, Jesus is the Lamb of God who took away our sins.

Q: In what way can we express our gratitude for the sacrifice of Jesus as the Lamb of God in our everyday lives?

Conclusion:

As far as our Heavenly Father is concerned, we sinners are worthy of the Lamb of God to be slain for the penalty of our sins. Jesus came to seek and save the lost. The son was not deserving of the father's love. The father lavished his son with honor, authority, respect, restored dignity as a son. **Q: What is your take-away from the discussion?** Partner with someone in the group.

WORK: The Challenge (15 mins.)

P- Pray for one another. Ask "what can I pray for you?" (7mins.)

R- Remind to invite a friend on the next gathering.

A- Apply the message during the week.

Y- Yearn to share your faith with some one during the week.