

Sermon Based Small Group Discussion Guide

Week of September 28, 2025

Icebreaker Questions

- Have you ever been surprised by kindness you didn't expect?
- What small moment this past week turned out to be more meaningful than you expected?
- What's a time when you felt "undeserving" but received a gift or blessing anyway?

Sermon Summary

(If you missed this week's sermon, it's always available by noon on Monday on YouTube at: <https://www.youtube.com/@horizoncommunitychurch>)

Pastor Stan's sermon explores Jacob's dream at Bethel (Genesis 28:11–15) as a powerful picture of God's grace, presence, and promise. Jacob, though fleeing in fear after deceit, receives not judgment but the reaffirmation of God's covenant and personal assurance: "I am with you." The story highlights that God's grace is unearned and freely given, transforming even the most undeserving lives. It also shows that God comes down to meet us, turning ordinary places and moments into sacred encounters. Ultimately, Jesus himself is the true "stairway," the connection between heaven and earth, who invites us into salvation, forgiveness, and blessing.

Opening Prayer

Briefly pray and invite the Lord into your conversations to bring wisdom and insight to His Word. Pray around the theme for the sermon/discussion.

Primary Passage of Scripture

Read Genesis 28:11–15, Ephesians 2:8–9, Matthew 28:20

Discussion Questions

- What does this sermon teach us about the nature of God's grace?
- How does Jacob's story encourage us when we feel undeserving of God's love?
- What do you find most challenging about accepting grace as a free gift?
- Why is it significant that Jesus describes Himself as the connection between heaven and earth?
- What burdens do you most need to bring to Jesus for rest?
- How might you extend the grace you've received from God to others this week?
- Where do you sense God calling you to trust His presence in a new way? How can we pray for you?

Prayer

- Ask: "How can we pray for you this week?"
- Assign each request to a group member to ensure everyone is prayed for during the prayer time.
- Assign someone to open in prayer and someone to close in prayer.

Closing