



GRACE GROUP LEADER'S MESSAGE GUIDE

Leader note: This Message Guide is intended to help you facilitate discussion with your Grace Group. You can use the guide exactly as it is, ignore some of it, or add to it. We hope you view this guide as a flexible teaching tool, and not a rigid teaching task.

WEEK OF JANUARY 15TH

Please review the group leader announcements on the group resources page (www.gracefellowship.cc/groupresources).

ICEBREAKER QUESTION

What is one quality that you value in a leader and why?

WORDS THAT WILL CHANGE YOUR LIFE - WOW (Scripture: Colossians 1:15-22)

1. What things in your life are mundane?
2. What things in your life are you impressed with?
3. What's the most wonderful, wow factor, awe inspiring thing you've ever seen?
4. Read Colossians 1:15-25. What does it mean that "all things were created through him and for him?" (*because He is both agent and goal of creation, Christ is Lord of all that is, even of the angelic hierarchy which the Colossians think they must revere. The Colossians had some false teachings promoting the worship of angels.*)
5. Explain in vs 19 & 20 what Paul means that "God was pleased to dwell in the fulness of Christ." (*God was pleased that his fullness, the entirety of God's being, would dwell in the Son. Thus Jesus was fully divine as well as fully human. God took pleasure in this because, through Christ, God would reconcile (reestablish a right relationship) all things to himself on the cross (compare Romans 5:11; 2 Corinthians 5:19). Andreas J. Köstenberger, "Colossians," in CSB Study Bible: Notes, ed. Edwin A. Blum and Trevin Wax (Nashville, TN: Holman Bible Publishers, 2017), 1895.*)
6. Describe the contrast between the wow factor, awesomeness, otherness of God versus Psalm 139:1-5.
7. Read Ephesians 2:11-16. How have you been reconciled to God through Christ?
8. Knowing amazingness (is that a word?) of God, what should we do with that knowledge?

ACTION STEP

The action step out of the weekend message was to say "wow" once per day this week.

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURES (related to the wow, awesomeness, or otherness of God)

Luke 1:32

John 1:15

John 1:30

Hebrews 8:6

Isaiah 46:9

Nehemiah 9:6

Psalms 66:3

Isaiah 40:28

Isaiah 57:15

SHEPHERDING / CARE / PRAYER

4 Ways to Incorporate Care into Small Groups

#1 Make it Simple

Caring is all about making the 'other' our focus so caring for group members does not need to be complicated. Sometimes it is the little, simple things which can make a huge difference. Sending a text message or making a phone call just to say hi or to follow-up a prayer request. Organizing to have a catch up during a lunch break with a group member who is struggling.

#2 Plan to Care

It is important to talk about how important 'care' will be when your group first establishes. What will it look like? What are the group member's expectations? An optimum time to discuss this is when you are setting up your ground rules or a group commitments. I have found a group agreement is a very helpful tool for healthy group life.

#3 Create a Role

While general care for group members will happen in 'ad hoc' ways it may be useful to be on the lookout for a group member who exhibits pastoral care gifts. Take them for coffee and talk to them about how you see the potential of their gift being released in the group. Ask them to commit to be the 'carer' for the group. Keep in mind that it is helpful to have a time frame around the role (People are more likely to take on a role if they know that it is not for life!) It is also helpful to be clear about what the role will entail - (I have found it works well to have a simple written role description.)

#4 Be Clear

If you do appoint someone to be the group 'carer' it is important also to be clear with the group about how this will work. Specifically, to let them know that this role does not negate the fact that we are all responsible to show care for one another! Outline how the group 'carer' will take on other specific tasks or may even coordinate some of the aspects of care across the group members I mentioned in the first point of this article.

(Adapted from article on Smallgroupnetwork.com, Tracey Ware is the SGN Country Leader - Australia)