

Grace Downtown CG Discussion Guide

Sept 17-20, 2018

Series: Promises of God

Romans 4:13-16 & 2 Peter 1:3-7



Announcements:

Downtown Parents' Forum: We encourage all parents to join us for this important time with Pastor Mike to discuss what's new for our family ministries in the year ahead, answer any questions you may have, and open the floor for suggestions to help us serve you better. **Sat Sept 22, 10:00 am.** Please RSVP on our website. Coffee and a light breakfast will be provided.

Partner Ministry Fair: Immediately following the service, come to a special coffee hour hosted by the Diaconate to meet representatives from our Partner Ministries and learn about opportunities to serve our city. **Sun Sept 23, 6:30 pm.**

Welcome to DC: If you're new to DC or to Grace, come to a special dinner to connect with others, meet leaders, and learn ways to get plugged in to Grace Downtown. **Fri Sept 28, 7:00 pm.** RSVP to Yan at yanlee@ucla.edu by Sept 24.

G.R.A.C.E Training: The entire Grace DC network is participating in a certification training to create a strong culture of child safety within our church. Please set aside one of the following dates to participate in one of these church-wide trainings. This is required for all members and children's ministry volunteers. **Sun Sept 30, 12:30 pm** at Grace Meridian Hill OR **Sat Oct 6, 9:00 am** at Grace Mosaic.

It's Partner Ministry Month! This week's highlight: DC 127

(see accompanying flyer on the discussion guide page on our website)

Introduction:

With two New Testament scriptures this week, we want to look at the overarching themes of these scriptures and then move into the details during discussion questions.

First the Romans passage. Paul's letter to the Romans up to this point outlines the foundations of the gospel of grace in some of the starker terms found throughout the New Testament. Leading up to this passage in Romans 2:12 – 4:12, Paul goes to great lengths to show the difference between a righteousness through the law (old covenant) and a righteousness that comes by grace through faith (new covenant). Specifically, Romans 3:21-26 marks a declaration of the arrival of the new covenant through Christ where the "righteousness of God" is credited "through faith in Jesus

Christ for all who believe.” Paul goes on to underline our equal need for the Gospel in verse 23 – “for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.”

This context sets up our sermon passage in Romans 4:13-16 where Paul ties together God’s eternal promise to Abraham in the Old Testament with the saving grace of Christ’s death and resurrection in the New Testament. Despite the old covenant, Abraham’s faith was what was credited to him as righteousness.

In the 2 Peter passage, Peter reminds us of the truth and outworking the Gospel of Grace and then focuses on how we should live in response to it. With echoes of Romans 6:1-2 – “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?” – Peter reminds us that we have been granted “all things that pertain to life and godliness” and that through God’s promises we, “may become partakers in the “divine nature.” Peter then goes on to encourage believers in the way they should supplement their faith with virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection and love. Take care not to read these “supplements” as either contrary or separate from the totality of righteousness granted by grace through faith in Christ, but rather as the power through which we are to live in light of the Gospel.

Read and Discuss:
Romans 4:13-16 & 2 Peter 1:3-7

Discussion Questions:

1. Romans 4:16 says that the promise to Abraham depended on faith “in order that the promise may rest on grace.” What is the outworking of a promise that rests on grace versus a promise that rests on obedience to the law? What does that look like?
2. How does the potential for boasting come into play in a promise made based on obedience versus a promise made based on grace? How does that change the spread of the Gospel or evangelism?
3. Wrestle with faith in these two passages. If grace comes through faith, then what is our role in having faith? Do we get all the faith we need from God to believe or do we have some role having greater faith? Where does God’s promise in these passages factor in?
4. In 2 Peter 1:3, what does it mean for us practically in everyday life as believers that “his divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness?” Do we feel like we have divine power?

5. Again in the 2 Peter passage, what does it mean to “supplement your faith?” Is this contrary to the Gospel of grace?

6. Is Peter’s encouragement to supplement our faith with virtue, knowledge, self-control, steadfastness, godliness, brotherly affection and love like a pep talk or a “try hard” message? If not, how are we to pursue these things?

Application:

- 1.) At times, we can be confused by our roles as believers in the Gospel of grace. Especially considering theological issues like predestination and election, are we just to sit back and enjoy the ride? If not, how can we strive toward holiness and godliness while also holding firm to the fact that our righteousness comes by grace through faith? How do we do faith and striving together?
- 2.) Do we truly believe that God’s promises are really promises? What in our life serves as evidence, good or bad, in how we answer that question? How can we rest more on the promises of God in your own life and what would change if we did?

Prayer:

The Grace Downtown Prayer Team creates opportunities for our community to learn more about prayer together for our church family, our city, and our world. Throughout the coming week, the Prayer Team is asking our church community to...

...for our nation and our community as we reflect on the events of September 11, 2001 and the impact they had on our city and country. As we honor those who lost their lives, may we remind each other that God is our ultimate steadfast healer; “Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved, for you are my praise.” (Jeremiah 17:14)

...for all first-time and returning students. We pray for God’s protection over them and for God to guide them with his wisdom and be glorified in their studies.

...for our service to God in our community. We pray for renewed faith in our work and ministry. Everything we do is worship unto God, “you are serving the Lord Christ.” (Colossians 3:24)