

Grace Downtown CG Discussion Guide

Sept 24-27, 2018

Series: Promises of God

John 16:31-33; Hebrews 12:7-11; Philippians 1:29



Announcements:

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.

Cultural Intelligence (CO) Interest Meeting: Are you saddened by the racial division and inequality in our country? Want to be part of the solution? Learn more about our church's Cultural Intelligence ministry, contribute your ideas, and consider becoming more involved. **Sun Sept 30, 6:30 pm**, Fellowship Hall. Dinner provided. RSVP on our website. Contact Nathan Favero at nate.favero@gmail.com.

Kingdom Prayer: Join us at 4 pm on the first Sunday of each month to pray for our church, our city and our world. We will meet in the Fellowship Hall in the classroom on the right.

Habitat for Humanity Build Day: Fifteen volunteers are needed to form a team from Grace Downtown to participate in a Habitat for Humanity build day to build a new home for families in need of safe and affordable housing. Contact Joe Iwaskiw at joeiwaskiw@gmail.com for details or to RSVP.

It's Partner Ministry Month!

This week's highlight:

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

Introduction:

As we continue our study in the promises of God, we come to a promise that may make us somewhat uncomfortable. Namely, we are promised that in this world, we will have suffering. Tonight, we'll be looking at what that suffering means, and how we should respond.

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Read and Discuss:

John 16:31-33; Hebrews 12:7-11; Philippians 1:29

Discussion Questions:

John 16

1. What's your initial reaction to Christ's promise, found in John 16:33, that "[i]n the world you will have tribulation"?
2. In John 16, Jesus says that he is telling the disciples "these things" that they "may have peace." How can a promise that they "will be scattered, each to his own home" and suffer "tribulation" bring peace?
3. How should Jesus' statement "I am not alone, for the Father is with me" comfort us in suffering?

Hebrews 12

4. Why does God discipline his children? How should this purpose empower us to endure discipline?
5. Based on this passage, if we suffer trials or hardships, does that mean that we are being punished for sin? What else could it mean? (Note that the Greek word for discipline here was a common term for childrearing through instruction, training, and correction. How does that impact your answer?)
6. How can our earthly relationships with parents who disciplined us inform our relationship with God (v. 9)? What are the limits of that analogy?

Philippians 1

7. What two things does Philippians 1:29 say have been "granted" to us? What is the relationship between those two gifts?

Application:

1. Do you feel loved by God when you suffer? Why or why not?
2. How do we reconcile Christ's statement that he has "overcome" the world with the trials and tribulations of life in the world?
3. What do we typically see suffering as a sign of? What does Hebrews 12:7-11 suggest it can signify (vv. 7-8)? Should we be worried if we aren't experiencing discipline?
4. Have you ever thought of suffering as something "granted" to you? How might that change your outlook next time you encounter trials (Hint: see Acts 5:41; Matt. 5:10-11)?

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 the grace, mercy, and love of God for the helpless: those whose lives, hopes, and dreams were overtaken by Hurricane Florence; and also those in our community, especially the homeless. Let us pray for God to protect, save, and grant them hope that they may find God's ever present Spirit of peace and comfort. May God provide them lifelines--food, clothing, shelter, and his salvation.

...for those who are called to respond and rescue: that God will assist and strengthen their efforts. And may God's character be reflected in the deeds of his people far and near as they care, assist and provide for those in distress.

..."God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear...though its waters roar and foam..." (Psalm 46:1-3)