



MEETING GUIDE

Session 6: God's Way Is Full of Mercy and Good Deeds

October 28 - November 3, 2018

Hangout (30 Minutes)

1. If you haven't don't so already, leaders inform the group whether you will continue meeting after this study. Discuss if necessary (Leaders: reference the "What's Next" document you received from your coach.) Make plans for a social time together after this meeting to celebrate completing this series.
2. What was a high and low from this past week?
3. Use the book The Complete Book of Questions. Have one person pick a number 801 - 900.

Watch the Video (24 Minutes)

Watch the video if necessary. If everyone viewed the sermon before the meeting, add this time to your discussion.

Discuss (30 Minutes)

It's okay if you don't get to every question. Hosts can pick the questions they believe would be best for their group.

1. How do you describe God's grace?
2. Have someone read Ephesians 2:1-10.

As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, ² in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. ³ All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. ⁴ But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, ⁵ made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved. ⁶ And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, ⁷ in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - ⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

- What jumps out to you in this passage?
- Remembering what Pastor Steve taught about the theological use of the Law and the Gospel, what helps you to better understand the Law in this passage? What helps you to better understand the Gospel?
- What do you learn from verse 10?

Now have someone read The Message paraphrase of this passage.

¹⁻⁶ It wasn't so long ago that you were mired in that old stagnant life of sin. You let the world, which doesn't know the first thing about living, tell you how to live. You filled your lungs with polluted unbelief, and then exhaled disobedience. We all did it, all of us doing what we felt like doing, when we felt like doing it, all of us in the same boat. It's a wonder God didn't lose his temper and do away

with the whole lot of us. Instead, immense in mercy and with an incredible love, he embraced us. He took our sin-dead lives and made us alive in Christ. He did all this on his own, with no help from us! Then he picked us up and set us down in highest heaven in company with Jesus, our Messiah.

⁷⁻¹⁰ Now God has us where he wants us, with all the time in this world and the next to shower grace and kindness upon us in Christ Jesus. Saving is all his idea, and all his work. All we do is trust him enough to let him do it. It's God's gift from start to finish! We don't play the major role. If we did, we'd probably go around bragging that we'd done the whole thing! No, we neither make nor save ourselves. God does both the making and saving. He creates each of us by Christ Jesus to join him in the work he does, the good work he has gotten ready for us to do, work we had better be doing.

- What do you like in this version?
- What new insights does this version give you?
- Is there any part of this paraphrase that you think does not convey the accurate meaning of the passage? If so, explain.

3. At this time in your life do you think you need to hear more of the Law or the Gospel? Explain your answer.
4. Read together out loud the focusing Bible verse for this series: ***The wisdom that comes from heaven is first of all pure; then peace-loving, considerate, submissive, full of mercy and good fruit, impartial and sincere.*** - James 3:17

Which one of these ways of God do you most want to grow in your relationships with others?

5. Remembering that you are allowed to pass, share if you took a step of personal reformation during worship on Sunday and what that meant to you. *The group may want to pray after each person has shared, praying for each person and the step he/she took.*

Summary

God's Way in relationships full of mercy and good deeds. At the origin of the Reformation was a theological movement and at the heart of that theological movement was the proper distinction between the theological use of the Law and the Gospel. The Law puts an end to our schemes to be good enough and leaves us with no hope. The Gospel frees us from having to be good enough and fills us with the assurance of eternal life. The Gospel is God's way of mercy in his relationship with us and is really good news for us. In response to God's mercy given to us freely through the work of Jesus, we seek to treat others with mercy and good deeds. To get what you want most in relationships, show the same mercy to others that God shows to you in Jesus and do what is good and right in your relationships.

Pray (10 Minutes)

Remembering that anyone can pass, go around the circle and have everyone share one next step he/she would like to take in following Jesus. Listen carefully to the person to your right, taking notes if it will help you remember. After everyone has shared, go around the circle again to pray for those steps by having the person to everyone's right briefly pray for that person's next step. This could be a simple, one-sentence prayer like: "Dear Lord, please help _____ to take this step in following Jesus, _____." The leader begins and ends the prayer.