

Grace: God's proclamation to us: I love you first, I love you best, I have only the best planned for you.

Adam and Eve's Question: What is God keeping from us?
Confusing trust and obedience. Genesis 2:5-17

Guardrails: a loving father protects his kids from harm.
Ephesians 5:15-18; Proverbs 4:20-23; Philippians 4:6-9

- Direct and protect.
- Inside the limits before real damage can happen.
- A standard of behavior that becomes a matter of conscience.
- Inside and outside guardrails.

The "yeah but" question: I followed the rules and they didn't and we are treated the same. "**It's not fair**".
Luke 15:11-32

- ◆ Both boys thought the father's response should reflect what they deserved. Past performance should be considered.
- ◆ Father- Relationship first. God celebrates, first and foremost, restored relationships.
 - He loves you no matter what you've done.
 - He doesn't love you because of what you've done.
 - He could not love you more and he will never love you less.
 - It's true.
 - It's grace.
 - The grace of God!

Welcome, to prepare for this week's meeting, take some time to focus on the questions below and be prepared to share your answers with the group. Have a great meeting as you come together to connect, encourage one another to grow and to see God change your lives from the inside out!

Getting to know you

Have you ever bumped (hit) a guardrail?

Have you ever been on a road that you felt was unsafe and needed guardrails?

Going Deeper

Read Genesis 3:1-6

How does the enemy seek to turn trusting God into questioning God?

What are the consequences?

Read Ephesians 5:15-17. Which phrases from those two verses resonate with you the most?

Read Ephesians 5:18. The apostle Paul uses alcohol to illustrate his point about debauchery. (Debauchery: Extreme indulgence that results in the loss of control. That can be alcohol, lust, greed, anger, stuff, food, etc.) What are some internal and external guardrails that could help?

Read Proverbs 4:20-23. Why is guarding our hearts so important?

Read Philippians 4:6-9. How can God's peace Guard our hearts (emotions) and mind (thoughts)?

What instructions are we given in this passage?

The story of the prodigal son is in response to "the good people " not understanding why Jesus was spending so much time with "the not-so-good people" without first requiring them to change their ways. *"This man welcomes sinners and eats with them," they grumbled. (Luke 15:2).*

Read Luke 15:11-32

What do you do with a rebellious son?

What do you do with a rule-following son?

What do you do with a father's extravagant love?

Read Titus 3:3-7 what does it tell us about God's great love?

THE PURPOSE OF LIFE GROUPS

Life Groups exist to promote spiritual maturity and personal growth through meaningful Christian relationships and the study of God's Word. (Romans 8:29 & Hebrews 10:24-25). Here's how it will happen.

SHARE

Each week we'll take time to share what is happening in our lives. At first this sharing will include planned "sharing questions." But after the first few weeks, it will become more informal and personal, as we feel more comfortable.

STUDY

Each week we'll study a section from God's Word that relates to the previous weekend's sermon or an appropriate personal growth topic. Our goal is to learn how to live out our Christianity in everyday life.

SUPPORT

Each week we'll learn how to take care of one another as Christ commanded (John 15:9-13). This care can take many forms, such as prayer, encouragement, listening, challenging one another and meeting real needs.

SERVE

Spiritual growth is fostered not only by what we gain through the support and input of others, but also through service to others. The role each of us fills is important to the health of the church and for us to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the community in which we live (Ephesians 4:11-16).

Best Year Ever Prayer

Lord Jesus,

I pray that you would work in me that I might reflect you more.

I pray that you work for me that I may be blessed by you.

I pray that you work through me that I may be an instrument of your love and grace.

I give you permission to work in me, for me and through me according to your purpose

Amen.