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bigIdea small group discussion

What happens when you realize you have allowed some bad art to be tattooed on you? There's always laser removal as an option, but it's expensive, it's very painful, it takes quite a few sessions, it may not be totally effective, and it may leave scarring.

Most people don't endure the pain of tattoo removal. Tattoo artists recommend that it is much easier and cheaper to cover an old, undesired tattoo with new art.

When someone is reinking and getting a cover-up, here's one thing most tattoo artists agree on—when you are doing a cover-up, you can count on double the size of the original tattoo. It's going to take double the space, double the work, and a tattoo artist with double the talent to cover-up a mistake with something that is good.

All of us have made mistakes. We have all made choices that weren't wise. Yet our Artist—God—can cover up our worst mistakes with a double helping of His love and grace.



BIG IDEA: God makes us alive through Jesus' death.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Try to get some conversation started by playing out the following scenario: Has anyone ever been lost in the woods? If you have, what was the first thing that came to your mind once you realized that you were actually lost? Did you have a life line in place in the event that you did get lost? How long was it before you actually used the life line if you had one? How did the feeling of being lost make you feel? What was the outcome?
2. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Philippians 1:6.* Share how the Lord is working in your life at this present time.
3. If Paul was preaching Ephesians 2:1-10, what tone of voice would he use in verses 1-3? Verses 4-10?
4. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Ephesians 2:1-3.* Paul says, "...you were Dead in your transgressions and sins," Paul also clarifies for us that we were Deceived, Disobedient and Doomed. When we realize this, what initial response does it solicit in you mind?
5. What does Paul mean by describing people without Jesus as dead?
6. When you think about how much God Loves us as defined in Romans 6:23 (have someone read this for clarity), how does that change your thought process about question #2?
7. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Ephesians 2:4-9.* In this passage of encouragement, what specific part stands out as a promise of undeniable significance?
8. From the way *grace* is used in verses 5, 7, and 8, how would you define what it means?
9. What other terms does Paul use to describe God's new relationship with us? (verses 4, 7-8)
10. In verse 8, Paul states "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith, and this is not of yourself, it is the gift from God" What should our response be when we realize that this tremendous gift from God is not something we have a role in or deserve?
11. *With your Bible or YouVersion, read Ephesians 2:10.* Knowing that God has created each of us with unique gifts and talents, what are you doing and where are you going that will bring honor to God in light of these gifts and talents?

THINK ABOUT IT

The ink people put on you could cause you to miss God's plan for you. *Who have you allowed to ink you and to define who you are?* Maybe it's time to allow God to cover that old ink and begin seeing yourself the way your Creator, Savior, and Redeemer sees you.

WHAT WILL YOU DO?

As the members of the group how they are doing when it comes to using the gifts and talents that God has entrusted to us. Specifically pray for those in the group that may be struggling. Encourage each other through this next week to seek a deeper understanding of God's Love through the gifting He has for every one of us.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Once you were dead, doomed forever because of your many sins. 2 You used to live just like the rest of the world, full of sin, obeying Satan, the mighty prince of the power of the air. He is the spirit at work in the hearts of those who refuse to obey God. 3 All of us used to live that way, following the passions and desires of our evil nature. We were born with an evil nature, and we were under God's anger just like everyone else. 4 But God is so rich in mercy, and he loved us so very much, 5 that even while we were dead because of our sins, he gave us life when he raised Christ from the dead. (It is only by God's special favor that you have been saved!) 6 For he raised us from the dead along with Christ, and we are seated with him in the heavenly realms - all because we are one with Christ Jesus. 7 And so God can always point to us as examples of the incredible wealth of his favor and kindness toward us, as shown in all he has done for us through Christ Jesus. 8 God saved you by his special favor when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. 9 Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. Ephesians 2:1-9