



FINDING HEALTHY BALANCE

GOODINTENSION

IN A CULTURE OF EXTREMES

Good in Tension: Grace vs. Truth

Small Group Discussion Guide

Icebreaker

- **The "Fishbowl" Feeling:** Have you ever had genuinely good intentions in a situation, but somehow managed to create tension instead? What happened?
- **Everyday Tension:** In your day-to-day life (at work, parenting, or with friends), where do you feel the strongest "role strain"—feeling pulled between being supportive and holding the line?

Look: Unpacking Our Culture

- Read together: **John 1:14** and **Exodus 34:6**
- The sermon pointed out two common cultural traps:
 - **Truth without Grace is Cruelty** (turns faith into a weapon, creates hypocrisy).
 - **Grace without Truth is Deception** (turns love into indifference, offers comfort without freedom).
- Which of these two extremes do you naturally default to when a tough conversation or situation comes up? Why do you think that is?
- How does the idea of compassion or "tethered empathy" (stepping into someone's pain while staying anchored to truth) differ from how our culture usually practices empathy?

Book: Looking at Jesus

- Read together: **John 8:2-11** (The woman caught in adultery)
- Jesus didn't give 50% Grace and 50% Truth—He gave 100% of both. How do you see both attributes fully present in how He handles the crowd and the woman?
- Notice the sequence: "*Neither do I condemn you*" (Grace), followed by "*Go and sin no more*" (Truth). Why does the sequence matter so much when ministering to people?
- Jesus literally got down in the dust with the woman. Why is physical or emotional **presence** required if we want to extend grace and truth to someone?

Took: Living It Out

- Like a guitar string, tension is where the "music" is made—but both ends have to be anchored. The Cross is where God's absolute Truth about sin and His absolute Grace toward the sinner meet.
- Is there a relationship in your life right now where you've been delivering truth with an edge, or withholding truth out of fear? What is one practical step you can take this week to stand in the tension with that person?

Prayer Focus

Pray for one another to have the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to know how to navigate tense relationships this week. Ask God to strip away self-righteousness, give you courage to hold to truth, and overflow with His grace toward others.