



# GRACE

## Small Group Guide: Grace Covers Our Unbelief

Series: Grace (Week 2)

Main Scripture: John 20:1-18

Supporting Scripture: Mark 9:14-27

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### Icebreaker

#### Icebreaker Question:

Share your middle name and the story behind it (if you know it). Or share a time when someone calling your full name made you nervous!

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### Key Takeaways

Have someone read these main points aloud:

1. **Grace covers our unbelief** - Even when we doubt, question, or struggle to believe, God's grace is big enough to handle it.
  2. **Grace reminds us we're not alone** - Isolation breeds fear, but grace shows us God is present even when we can't feel Him.
  3. **Grace helps us understand Jesus's desire for us** - Like a GPS that recalculates when we make a wrong turn, grace redirects us without condemnation.
  4. **Grace changes our perspective, not always our circumstances** - Mary's situation hadn't changed, but one encounter with Jesus transformed everything.
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### Discussion Questions

#### Section 1: Doubts and Questions

1. **Dave shared that Mary doubted even though Jesus had told them five times He would rise again.** When have you struggled to believe God's promises even though you "knew" them intellectually? What made it hard to trust in that moment?



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2. **The father in Mark 9 prayed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!"** How does this "bipolar prayer" resonate with your own faith journey? Is it comforting or uncomfortable to know that doubt and belief can coexist?
  3. **Dave mentioned that at 19, he began questioning God's promises after losing his best friend and grandfather.** How have difficult circumstances caused you to doubt God's goodness or presence? How did you (or are you) working through that?
  4. **Why do you think we often feel like we're doing something wrong when we have doubts?** How does understanding that "grace covers our unbelief" change the way you approach your questions?
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## Section 2: Isolation and Fear

5. **Dave talked about how "isolation breeds fear" and shared his own childhood experiences.** How does feeling alone amplify our doubts and fears about God? Can you share a time when isolation made everything feel worse?
  6. **Mary felt unseen and uncared for when Peter and John ran past her and then left her alone at the tomb.** Have you ever felt invisible in your pain, even among other believers? What did that feel like?
  7. **Dave said, "That's the moment right before bad choices happen... right before sin happens."** Why is feeling alone and unseen such a dangerous place spiritually? How can we help each other avoid that trap?
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## Section 3: Encountering Jesus

8. **Mary didn't recognize Jesus at first because "she wasn't looking for him."** How do our circumstances sometimes blind us to where Jesus actually is? What helps you shift from asking "Why?" to asking "Where can I see You in this?"
9. **Jesus simply said "Mary" - not her formal name, not a scolding, just her name.** What does this tell you about how Jesus responds to our doubts and struggles? How is this different from how we might expect Him to respond?
10. **After one encounter with Jesus, Mary's life was recalculated and she was given a new mission.** Have you experienced a moment where Jesus "recalculated" your life? What happened?



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## Section 4: Grace in Action

11. **Dave shared the story of baby Hallie Kate born at 24 weeks.** How do stories like this (where God shows up miraculously) AND stories where circumstances don't change both demonstrate grace? How do we hold both realities?
  12. **"Those tests become our testimony. Those seasons become our story."** What test in your life has become (or is becoming) a testimony? How might God want to use your story to help others experience grace?
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## Practical Application

### This Week's Challenge:

Choose one of the following to practice this week:

#### Option 1: The Honest Prayer

Like the father in Mark 9, pray an honest "bipolar prayer" this week. Tell God what you believe AND what you're struggling to believe. Journal about the experience.

#### Option 2: Shift Your Question

When you face a difficult circumstance this week, instead of asking "Why?" try asking "Where can I see You in this, God?" Write down what you discover.

#### Option 3: Share Your Story

Reach out to someone who might be struggling and share a time when God's grace met you in your doubt or difficult circumstances. Be vulnerable about your own journey.

#### Option 4: Combat Isolation

If you're feeling alone or unseen, reach out to someone in this group or another trusted believer. Don't let isolation breed fear. If someone in your life seems isolated, reach out to them.

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## Group Discussion: Creating Safe Space (5 minutes)

- How can we as a group become a safer place for people to share their doubts and questions without fear of judgment?
- What would it look like for us to "walk with each other" through difficult seasons the way Dave described?



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## Prayer Time

### Suggested Prayer Format:

1. **Praise:** Thank God that His grace is big enough to cover even our unbelief.
  2. **Confession:** Share (as comfortable) areas where you're struggling with doubt or feeling alone. Remember - this is a safe space.
  3. **Petition:** Pray for each other's specific struggles, that Jesus would open eyes to see Him in circumstances.
  4. **Commission:** Ask God to help each person become a vessel of grace for others who are struggling.
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## Before You Go

- **Connect:** Exchange contact info if you haven't already. Commit to checking in on at least one person this week.
  - **Next Week:** Week 3 of the Grace series - don't miss it!
  - **Reminder:** Response time isn't about judgment; it's about experiencing grace together.
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## Leader Notes

- **Create Safety:** Emphasize multiple times that doubt and questions are welcome in this space.
- **Share First:** As the leader, consider sharing your own doubts or struggles first to model vulnerability.
- **Don't Fix:** Resist the urge to immediately "fix" people's doubts with Bible verses. Sometimes people just need to be heard.
- **Follow Up:** If someone shares something particularly heavy, follow up with them during the week.
- **Celebrate Stories:** Make space for people to share testimonies of how grace has met them in their unbelief.