



THE Storyteller

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Week 7

Day 1: The God Who Came Close

Reading: Exodus 19:1-25

At Mount Sinai, God's holiness required distance. The people couldn't approach or they would perish. Even the priests had to consecrate themselves. This wasn't rejection—it was reality. Our sin created a chasm between us and perfect holiness.

But here's the beautiful tension: the God who said "don't come close" is the same God who said "you are my treasured possession." He loved them desperately but holiness demanded separation.

This makes Jesus' arrival even more stunning. The unapproachable God became approachable. The glory that required distance chose proximity. Today, reflect on this: you couldn't reach God, so God reached you. That's not just theology—that's love in action.

Reflection Question: Where have you been keeping God at arm's length, thinking you need to "clean up" before approaching Him?

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Day 2: Grace Meets Truth

Reading: John 1:1-18

"Full of grace and truth." These four words revolutionize everything. Jesus didn't come full of power and truth, though He possessed both. He came full of grace and truth—the perfect combination of knowing everything about us and loving us anyway.

Grace without truth becomes permissiveness. Truth without grace becomes cruelty. But Jesus held both in perfect tension. He never minimized sin's reality, but He also never withheld forgiveness from those who sought it.

This is the glory John witnessed—not lightning and thunder like Sinai, but God making His home among broken people. The Word became flesh and moved into the neighborhood. He knows your struggles, your failures, your secret shame. And He's still full of grace toward you.

Reflection Question: Which do you tend to emphasize—grace or truth? How can you better hold both in balance today?

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Day 3: The Debt We Couldn't Pay

Reading: Luke 7:36-50

Simon thought he was better than the woman. His debt seemed smaller, more manageable. But Jesus exposed the flaw in that thinking: neither debtor could pay. The size of the debt was irrelevant when both were equally bankrupt.

We make Simon's mistake constantly. We compare our "small" sins to others' "big" ones. But zoom out—like being dropped in the middle of the ocean, the distance to shore is insurmountable for everyone. Your lead disappears when measured against God's holiness.

The woman understood what Simon missed: she was completely dependent on mercy. That awareness didn't lead to shame—it led to extravagant worship. She loved much because she knew she'd been forgiven much. The question isn't whether you need forgiveness. It's whether you recognize that need deeply enough to respond with gratitude.

Reflection Question: Have you been minimizing your need for grace by comparing yourself to others?

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Day 4: Painted Sculptures

Reading: 2 Corinthians 5:14-21

Ancient sculptures weren't meant to be white marble—they were vibrant, painted, alive with color. But centuries of washing away dirt also washed away the paint, leaving only stone.

We do this to people. We see their past, their failures, their dirt—and we wash them down to nothing but their mistakes. We forget they were created in vibrant color, bearing God's image.

Jesus saw people differently. He didn't view them as projects to fix or problems to solve. He saw them as treasures to redeem. The woman at Simon's table wasn't defined by her profession—she was a daughter responding to grace. Paul wasn't forever "the persecutor"—he became an apostle of reconciliation.

God isn't just changing you—He's revealing who you truly are beneath the dirt of sin. You are a new creation, painted in the colors of grace.

Reflection Question: Who in your life needs you to see them as Jesus sees them—not for what they've done, but for who they are?

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Day 5: Coming to the Table

Reading: Luke 15:11-32

The prodigal son didn't clean up before coming home. He came covered in pig slop, rehearsing an apology, hoping for hired-servant status. But the father ran to him. Embraced him. Threw a party.

The older brother kept his distance. He'd done everything right, yet missed the whole point. His obedience was transactional, not relational. He was at the table physically but distant in heart.

Jesus invites you to the table—not after you've fixed yourself, but right now. The woman didn't wait until she was "worthy." She came weeping, messy, desperate. And Jesus said, "Your faith has saved you; go in peace."

This week, you have two choices: come back to the table yourself, or make room for someone else. Stop creating distance to protect yourself. The grace you've received is meant to overflow toward others. Pull up a chair. There's always room.

Reflection Question: What specific step will you take this week—either toward God or toward someone else—to close the distance you've been maintaining?