Faith and Grace

Working and Balancing Two Aspects of Christianity

Note:

This series will focus on the aspects of faith and grace. These outlines should provide a strong foundation for teaching how faith and grace work together in the Christian life, with a balanced approach that’s practical, inspiring, and grounded in Scripture.

Each Lesson will consist of the following:

- Lesson Illustration
- Key Scriptures
- The Focus of the Lesson
- Key Points
- Three Discussion Questions
- Notes section for teachers

The student will be able to do the following:

- Read the key scriptures and ask what stands out.
- Spend 5 minutes on each key point.
- Spend 5 minutes on each discussion question.

Weekly Lessons

1. Introduction to Faith and Grace
2. Faith as a Response to Grace
3. The Role of Grace in Salvation
4. Grace that Empowers Growth
5. Faith During Difficulties
6. Gift of Grace for a Changed Life
7. Grace and Forgiveness
8. Faith and Obedience
9. Faith that Leads to Action
10. Grace that Heals Relationships
11. Faith and Grace in Worship
12. Living in Faith and Grace Every Day

Week 1
Introduction to Faith and Grace

Lesson Illustration:
Imagine standing on one side of a wide, deep canyon, looking across at the other side where God is standing. The canyon is too wide to jump across and too deep to climb down and back up. This gap represents the separation between us and God due to sin. Our own efforts—good deeds, moral living, or trying to be "good enough"—are like trying to jump across on our own strength, which will never reach the other side.Now picture a bridge spanning the canyon. This bridge is the cross, symbolizing God's grace extended to us through Jesus Christ. Grace is the bridge God built for us to cross over. We don't earn it; it's a gift freely given, even though we don't deserve it. Faith is trusting in that bridge and stepping onto it, knowing it's strong enough to carry us safely to the other side.

Key Scripture:
Romans 5:1-5
1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. **2** Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. **3** Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, **4** and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, **5** and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Ephesians 2:4-10
4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— **6** and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Week 1 cont.

The Focus:
Understanding the concept of faith and the concept of grace and the relationship.

Key Points:

1. Defining Faith: Faith is our confident trust in God and His promises, which enables us to believe and act on His word even when we don't see immediate results.
2. Defining Grace: Grace is God's unearned favor, which provides salvation and blessings as a free gift rather than something we can earn through good deeds.
3. The Relationship Between Faith and Grace: Faith allows us to receive God's grace. Without grace, faith is misplaced; without faith, grace remains unused.

Discussion Questions:

1. How would you describe the difference between faith and grace?
2. Why is it important to understand that grace cannot be earned?
3. In what ways have you experienced both faith and grace in your life?

Notes:

Week 2
Faith as a Response to Grace

Lesson Illustration:
Imagine someone holding out a beautifully wrapped gift just for you. They have bought it, wrapped it, and extended it toward you. The only thing left is for you to reach out and receive it. You didn't earn it or pay for it—it's freely given out of love. But for the gift to be yours, you must accept it. Keeping your hands in your pockets or turning away means the gift, while freely offered, remains unopened. Faith is like opening your hand and taking hold of what's been offered. God's grace is the gift, freely given to us through Jesus' sacrifice. Faith is our open hand, reaching out and receiving what He has lovingly provided.

Key Scripture:
James 2:14-17
14 What good is it, my brothers, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? **15** If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, **16** and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? **17** So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead.

Romans 4:15-17
15 For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression.**16** That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, **17** as it is written, "I have made you the father of many nations"—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist.

Week 2 cont.

The Focus:
Understanding the faith response to the gift of God's grace.

Key Points:

1. Faith Activates Grace: True faith responds to God's grace, not as an attempt to earn it, but as an acknowledgment of its value.
2. Faith Expressed in Actions: Faith that is alive and active will show itself through actions that reflect God's grace and love.
3. Living a Balanced Faith: Balancing faith and grace means understanding that our actions stem from gratitude for grace rather than duty or fear.

Discussion Questions:

1. Why should faith lead us to action, rather than simply believing?
2. How do our actions show that we have received God's grace?
3. How can we avoid thinking of actions as something that earns God's favor?

Notes:

Week 3
The Role of Grace in Salvation

Lesson Illustration:
Imagine you're stranded in the middle of the ocean, with waves crashing around you, struggling to stay afloat. You're exhausted, realizing there's no way you'll make it to safety on your own. But just when all hope seems lost, someone on a rescue boat throws you a life preserver. You don't need to do anything to deserve it or try to earn it. The life preserver isn't something you work for; it's a free gift extended to you because the rescuer values your life.
In this moment, all you have to do is grab hold of it. You don't contribute to the life preserver's ability to save you. You simply accept it and let the rescuer pull you to safety. The life preserver is like God's grace. It's His way of saving us when we couldn't save ourselves.

Key Scripture:
Ephesians 2:4-10
4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— **6** and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Week 3 cont.

Titus 3:4-7
4 But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, **5** he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, **6** whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, **7** so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

The Focus:
Grace is a gift from God and is the foundation of salvation.

Key Points:
1. Salvation as a Gift of Grace: Grace is the foundation of salvation, which we receive not by our works but by God's love and mercy.
2. Faith's Role in Receiving Salvation: Faith is our response to accept salvation by believing and trusting in Jesus' sacrifice and resurrection.
3. Avoiding a "Works-Based" Mentality: Understanding salvation as a gift frees us from striving to earn it, allowing us to rest in God's grace and love.

Discussion Questions:
1. What does it mean to be saved by grace, through faith?
2. How can we remind ourselves that our salvation doesn't depend on our own efforts?
3. Why is it sometimes difficult to accept salvation as a free gift?

Notes:

Week 4
Grace that Empowers Growth

Lesson Illustration:
Imagine a gardener carefully tending a young vine. At first, the vine is small, with only a few leaves, but the gardener has a vision of what it can become. Day after day, the gardener waters it, trims back unhealthy branches, and provides support for it to grow upward. The vine is dependent on the gardener's care; it can't grow on its own, nor can it provide its own water, nutrients, or structure. Over time, the vine begins to flourish, stretching taller and producing healthy fruit. Its strength, beauty, and fruitfulness are the results of the gardener's nurturing hand. Without the gardener's ongoing care, the vine would wither and fail to grow. The gardener's care and provision are like God's grace—grace that not only saves but also sustains and empowers us to grow.

Key Scripture:
2 Corinthians 12:7-10
7 So to keep me from becoming conceited because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, a thorn was given me in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to harass me, to keep me from becoming conceited. **8** Three times I pleaded with the Lord about this, that it should leave me. **9** But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. **10** For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

2 Peter 3:15-18
15 And count the patience of our Lord as salvation, just as our beloved brother Paul also wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, **16** as he does in all his letters when he speaks in them of these matters. There are some things in them that are hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other Scriptures. **17** You therefore, beloved, knowing this beforehand, take care that you are not carried away with the error of lawless people and lose your own stability. **18** But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.

Week 4 cont.

The Focus:
Understanding and embracing the grace of God for spiritual growth.

Key Points:

1. Grace as a Source of Strength: Grace empowers us to grow spiritually, providing strength in times of weakness and challenges.
2. Growing in Grace: We are called to grow in grace by deepening our relationship with God and learning to rely on Him in all areas.
3. Balancing Effort and Dependence: Growth requires our intentionality, but it's grace that enables us to make lasting changes.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does grace empower us to grow spiritually?
2. How can we practice relying on God's grace in our daily struggles?
3. What role do our own efforts play in spiritual growth?

Notes:

Week 5
Faith during Difficulties

Lesson Illustration:
Imagine a ship caught in a fierce storm. The wind howls, waves crash against the hull, and visibility is nearly zero. The crew knows that without an anchor, the storm would drive them off course or even break them apart. So, they drop a heavy anchor, which grips firmly to the ocean floor. Though the ship still rocks and shifts, the anchor holds it steady, preventing it from drifting into danger.
Our faith in God is like that anchor. We may still feel the waves and hear the storm raging around us, but faith gives us a place to hold fast and a reminder that we are not at the mercy of the storm. Our faith keeps us connected to God, who remains steady and unchanging, even when everything else feels uncertain.

Key Scripture:
James 1:2-4
2 Count it all joy, my brothers, when you meet trials of various kinds, **3** for you know that the testing of your faith produces steadfastness. **4** And let steadfastness have its full effect, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking in nothing.

Romans 5:1-5
1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. **2** Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. **3** Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, **4** and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, **5** and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

Week 5 cont.

The Focus:
Recognizing that when difficulties come, we focus on our faith in God.

Key Points:

1. Faith Tested in Trials: Trials provide opportunities for our faith to deepen as we learn to trust God in hard times.
2. God's Grace in Challenges: Grace provides the peace, strength, and comfort we need during difficulties.
3. Growing Stronger Through Balance: Balancing faith in God's promises with reliance on His grace helps us endure and emerge stronger.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can faith help us see difficulties as opportunities to grow?
2. How does God's grace comfort and strengthen us in hard times?
3. In what ways can we apply both faith and grace when facing a challenge?

Notes:

Week 6
The Gift of Grace for a Changed Life

Lesson Illustration:

Imagine someone who has been in prison for many years, weighed down by guilt and regret over their past actions. They've felt hopeless, unable to change their past or imagine a future. But one day, they receive an unexpected gift—a full pardon from the highest authority. The warden hands them a piece of paper that says, "You are free to go."

As they walk out of the prison gates, they don't return to their old life. Instead, they see this pardon as a chance to start over. They realize that someone gave them a fresh start they didn't earn or deserve. Grateful for the gift of freedom, they now dedicate themselves to living a changed life, no longer defined by their past mistakes but by the gift they received.

Key Scripture:

Romans 6:12-14

12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, to make you obey its passions. **13** Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to God as instruments for righteousness. **14** For sin will have no dominion over you, since you are not under law but under grace.

Titus 2:11-14

11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, **12** training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age, **13** waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ, **14** who gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works.

Week 6 cont.

The Focus:
For the Christian to have a changed life, we embrace the grace of God.

Key Points:

1. Grace as Freedom from Sin: God's grace liberates us from sin, empowering us to live in righteousness rather than being bound by our past.
2. Faith's Role in Transformation: Our faith allows us to believe in God's power to change us, making us more like Christ.
3. Avoiding License with Balance: Grace gives freedom, not a license to sin. A balanced view honors grace without taking it for granted.

Discussion Questions:

1. What does it mean to live under grace rather than under law?
2. How does grace empower us to change our lives and leave sin behind?
3. How can we guard against using grace as an excuse to continue in sin?

Notes:

Week 7
Grace and Forgiveness

Lesson Illustration:
Imagine a man who has racked up an enormous debt—one he knows he'll never be able to repay. He lives with constant stress and shame, weighed down by his mistakes and bad decisions. But one day, he's summoned to meet the person to whom he owes everything. He's filled with dread, expecting judgment and punishment. To his astonishment, instead of condemnation, the person looks at him with compassion and says, "I've decided to forgive your debt entirely. You don't owe me a thing." The man is stunned. Not only is his debt erased, but he is also free from any further obligation or punishment. This undeserved gift changes everything for him. He walks away with gratitude and a new outlook, inspired to live differently because of this incredible act of grace.

Key Scripture:
Colossians 3:12-17
12 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, **13** bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. **14** And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. **15** And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. **16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. **17** And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

Matthew 18:21-22
21 Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" **22** Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

Week 7 cont.

The Focus:
Focusing on accepting the grace of God and the gift of forgiveness.

Key Points:

1. God's Grace in Forgiving Us: God's grace forgives us fully, removing our sins and inviting us to walk in freedom and reconciliation.
2. Faith in Extending Forgiveness to Others: By faith, we are called to forgive others as God forgives us, recognizing that we are all recipients of grace.
3. Grace and Accountability: True forgiveness doesn't overlook sin but releases us from bitterness, allowing grace to work in our lives and relationships.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does God's forgiveness help us experience His grace more fully?
2. What challenges do we face in extending grace to others?
3. Why is forgiving others a demonstration of both faith and grace?

Notes:

Week 8
Faith and Obedience

Lesson Illustration:
Years ago, there was a famous tightrope walker who performed incredible stunts. One day, he stretched a tightrope across a wide canyon and invited a large crowd to watch him perform. He asked the crowd, “How many of you believe that I can walk across this tightrope without falling?” The crowd cheered loudly, confident in his skills. He successfully walked across and back, and the crowd erupted in applause. Then he took it up a notch. He got a wheelbarrow and asked, “How many of you believe I can push this wheelbarrow across the tightrope?” Again, the crowd cheered with enthusiasm, affirming their belief in him. He pushed the wheelbarrow across and back with ease.
Finally, he asked, “Now, who believes I can push someone across in the wheelbarrow?” The crowd roared with applause again. But when he invited someone to climb in, the crowd fell silent. Everyone believed he could do it, but when it came to actually stepping in, no one volunteered. They believed in his skill, but only to a point—they weren’t ready to act on that belief by entrusting their safety to him.

Key Scripture:
John 14:12-15
12 “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. **13** Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. **14** If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. **15** “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

Week 8 cont.

Hebrews 11:8-12
8 By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. **9** By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. **10** For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. **11** By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. **12** Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

The Focus:
Faith and obedience work in tandem with one another.

Key Points:
1. Obedience as an Act of Faith: Faith is demonstrated in obedience to God's commands, trusting that He knows what is best for us.
2. Grace as Motivation to Obey: God's grace is not only a gift but a motivation to follow Him, out of gratitude rather than obligation.
3. Maintaining a Healthy Balance: Balancing grace with obedience helps us avoid both legalism and a lack of commitment.

Discussion Questions:
1. How is obeying God an act of faith?
2. How does God's grace inspire us to obey His commands?
3. What are practical ways to balance obedience with an understanding of grace?

Notes:

Week 9
Faith that Leads to Action

Lesson Illustration:
Imagine the scene: The disciples are in a small boat, battling against heavy waves in the middle of a stormy night. Suddenly, they see a figure walking toward them on the water. At first, they're terrified, but then they realize it's Jesus. Peter, filled with faith, calls out, "Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water." Jesus replies, "Come." Now, Peter faces a decision. He has faith in Jesus, but his faith is now calling him to take a step, to leave the security of the boat and enter the stormy waters. Trusting in Jesus, Peter takes action. He steps out of the boat and, incredibly, walks on water toward Him. Only when he takes his eyes off Jesus does he start to sink. But even then, Jesus reaches out to save him. This story shows that faith isn't just about believing; it's about moving, acting on what we believe, even when it's challenging or uncertain.

Key Scripture:
James 2:18-26
18 But someone will say, "You have faith and I have works." Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. **19** You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! **20** Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? **21** Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? **22** You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works; **23** and the Scripture was fulfilled that says, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness"—and he was called a friend of God. **24** You see that a person is justified by works and not by faith alone. **25** And in the same way was not also Rahab the prostitute justified by works when she received the messengers and sent them out by another way? **26** For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.

Week 9 cont.

Galatians 5:2-6
2 Look: I, Paul, say to you that if you accept circumcision, Christ will be of no advantage to you. **3** I testify again to every man who accepts circumcision that he is obligated to keep the whole law. **4** You are severed from Christ, you who would be justified by the law; you have fallen away from grace. **5** For through the Spirit, by faith, we ourselves eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness. **6** For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only faith working through love.

The Focus:
Having a faith that is not just believing but a living faith in action.

Key Points:
1. Active Faith Reflects Grace: Faith in action is the natural response to receiving God's grace, showing His love to others.
2. Grace-Filled Service: We are called to serve others, motivated by the grace we've received, without seeking recognition.
3. A Balanced Heart of Service: Balancing faith-driven action with grace prevents burnout and pride, allowing us to serve humbly.

Discussion Questions:
1. What motivates you to serve others, and how is it connected to grace?
2. Why does faith lead us to action rather than simply belief?
3. How can you serve in a way that reflects God's grace?

Notes:

Week 10
Grace that Heals Relationships

Lesson Illustration:
Consider two lifelong friends, John and Mark, who were once inseparable. They trusted each other completely, sharing business ventures, family gatherings, and years of memories. But one day, due to a financial misunderstanding, Mark feels deeply betrayed by John. Harsh words are exchanged, trust is broken, and their friendship, once so strong, falls apart. Each blames the other and feels justified in their hurt. Years go by, and the wound festers. But then, John comes to a realization: he misses his friend and wants to make things right. He chooses to reach out, taking responsibility and asking for forgiveness. Mark is initially guarded, but over time, he begins to let go of his resentment and chooses to forgive John. They rebuild trust and restore their friendship, not by denying the hurt but by allowing grace to heal it. In our relationships, we often encounter hurt or betrayal, leaving us with a choice. We can hold onto our pain and let it divide us, or we can choose to extend grace.

Key Scripture:
Ephesians 4:25-32
25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. **26** Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, **27** and give no opportunity to the devil. **28** Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. **29** Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. **30** And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. **31** Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. **32** Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Week 10 cont.

Romans 12:14-21
14 Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. **15** Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. **16** Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. **17** Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. **18** If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. **19** Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” **20** To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” **21** Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

The Focus:
Understanding how grace plays a role in healing relationships.

Key Points:
1. Grace as a Healing Force: God’s grace enables us to extend forgiveness, patience, and kindness in our relationships.
2. Faith in Restoring Relationships: Faith believes in the possibility of healing and reconciliation, trusting God to work in strained relationships.
3. Balancing Justice and Mercy: A balanced view of grace and faith in relationships values justice while extending mercy and forgiveness.

Discussion Questions:
1. How can extending grace bring healing to a relationship?
2. How can faith in God help you trust Him with difficult relationships?
3. Why is it important to balance grace with justice in relationships?

Notes:

Week 11
Faith and Grace in Worship

Lesson Illustration:
Imagine a beautiful vase, intricately designed but with a noticeable crack running down its side. This vase was once a treasured piece in a grand gallery, representing beauty and craftsmanship. However, after a fall, it was broken, deemed too flawed to be of value. It sat in the corner, neglected and forgotten.
One day, a skilled potter sees the vase and recognizes its potential despite its imperfection. Instead of discarding it, the potter lovingly repairs the cracks, filling them with a special golden resin that not only holds the vase together but also enhances its beauty. The repaired vase, now a unique work of art, becomes even more valuable because of its story—its journey from brokenness to beauty.
In this analogy, the vase represents us—imperfect, cracked by sin and life's challenges. Our faith, often weak and filled with doubts, may feel insufficient. Yet, when we come before God in worship, we acknowledge our brokenness and our need for His grace. It's in this posture of humility and reliance on His grace that we truly worship. Just as the potter transforms the broken vase, God takes our flawed, broken selves and fills us with His grace, making our worship a beautiful offering.

Key Scripture:
John 4:21-26
21 Jesus said to her, "Woman, believe me, the hour is coming when neither on this mountain nor in Jerusalem will you worship the Father. **22** You worship what you do not know; we worship what we know, for salvation is from the Jews. **23** But the hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshipers will worship the Father in spirit and truth, for the Father is seeking such people to worship him. **24** God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth." **25** The woman said to him, "I know that Messiah is coming (he who is called Christ). When he comes, he will tell us all things." **26** Jesus said to her, "I who speak to you am he."

Week 11 cont.

Hebrews 12:28-29
28 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, **29** for our God is a consuming fire.

The Focus:
Instilling our faith and grace in worship to God.

Key Points:

1. Worship as a Response to Grace: Worship flows from our gratitude for God's grace, honoring Him for His love, mercy, and gifts in our lives.
2. Faith that Engages Our Hearts in Worship: True worship requires faith, leading us to connect with God in spirit and truth, beyond mere outward expressions.
3. Balanced Worship – Reverence and Joy: Balancing grace and faith in worship means experiencing both reverence for God's holiness and joy in His love, creating a sincere and meaningful worship experience.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does understanding God's grace impact the way you approach worship?
2. In what ways can worship deepen your faith?
3. What does it look like to balance reverence and joy in worship?

Notes:

Week 12
Living in Faith and Grace Every Day

Lesson Illustration:

Imagine a family that lives in a remote village. Each day, they wake up to face the same challenges: food, work, and relationships. They have learned to rely on a simple prayer each morning, asking God for their “daily bread.” This isn’t just about physical sustenance; it’s about trusting God for everything they need to sustain their lives. Each morning, the father of the family gathers his children and reminds them of their need for God’s provision. He explains that they can’t live on yesterday’s bread; they need fresh bread for today. This daily reliance teaches them gratitude and strengthens their faith. When the father goes out to gather food, he does so with the faith that God will provide. He might not see a feast waiting for him, but he trusts that enough will be there for the day.

One day, the weather turns bad, and the father struggles to find food. Faced with uncertainty, he gathers his children and reminds them of their prayer. They all pray together, asking God for provision. Shortly after, a neighbor arrives with extra food, sharing from their own abundance. The family is reminded that God’s grace often comes through the hands of others, affirming their faith in God’s daily provision.

Key Scripture:

Galatians 2:20-21

20 I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. **21** I do not nullify the grace of God, for if righteousness were through the law, then Christ died for no purpose.

Week 12 cont.

Colossians 3:14-17
14 And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. **15** And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. **16** Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. **17** And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

The Focus:
Strengthening endurance and faithfulness.

Key Points:

1. A Daily Walk of Faith and Grace: Living in faith and grace daily involves consistently trusting God and receiving His grace in every area of our lives.
2. Extending Grace to Ourselves and Others: We show grace by being patient and forgiving with ourselves and others, understanding we all grow at different paces.
3. Balancing Faith, Grace, and Works: A life balanced in faith and grace demonstrates that our actions are motivated by gratitude and empowered by God, not by self-reliance.

Discussion Questions:

1. How can you make faith and grace a natural part of your daily life?
2. What challenges might arise as you strive to live a balanced life of faith and grace?
3. How does showing grace to others reflect the grace God has shown you?

Notes:

Free Resources

1. Blue Letter Bible (https://www.blueletterbible.org/)
2. Got Questions https://www.gotquestions.org/
3. The Bible Project https://bibleproject.com/