

# ASKING FOR A FRIEND | WEEK 4: MESSY GRACE

MARCH 10, 2019

## SERMON STUDY

*The content we are covering today can be complex and emotional. We can love each other, but not necessarily agree—that's all part of healthy relationships. As you begin your group discussion, take a moment to pray together, asking God to help each of us give grace-filled responses and always with an attitude that seeks first to understand before being understood.*

It doesn't matter how messy you are; God loves you. God loves messy people! When God's perfect grace intersects with our messy lives, it looks like messy grace. We can learn to love each other as God loves us when we understand that love is the tension of both grace and truth.

**Read John 8:2-11 and Jeremiah 17:13.** The Pharisees' (teachers of the law) philosophy was that following the rules enables a relationship with God. Jesus showed us another way—a relationship with God comes first, and obedience to him follows. Jesus led from both grace and truth, a place that can be awkward or difficult for us. Love is the tension of both grace and truth.

- Do you tend to be heavier on grace or more full of truth? In what way does this impact your relationships?
- How can we love people with whom we disagree, who have different perspectives or have made choices we haven't made?
- The Christian life is full of tension. Jesus is fully God, but also fully human. God inspired the words in the Bible, but it was written by people. God is in control, but we have free will. Why, then, do you think the tension between grace and truth so difficult?
- How can you change your posture and be known more for what you're for than what you're against?

**Read Matthew 5:46 and Romans 12:18.** There is a difference between acceptance and approval. We are called to accept people no matter what, but we don't have to approve of their choices.

- Are you able to distinguish between accepting someone and approving their choices? Why or why not?
- Have you ever made a choice that someone didn't like? How did the rejection make you feel?
- What might it look like for you to show someone you disagree with that you love them without approving of their choice?

**Read Romans 13:8-10.** Empathy is acknowledging a person's reality in order to point them to Jesus' love and grace.

- Do you see empathy as approval? Why or why not?
- What is one way you could show empathy toward others?

## REFLECT

What is God saying to you through his word? How and when will you respond?

## DAILY BIBLE READING

Need a review of what we're reading in Daily Bible Reading? Here's a glance at how we're being challenged this week. (Subscribe at: [tpcc.org/dailybiblereading](http://tpcc.org/dailybiblereading))

Day One: John 1:14 and John 1:17 | The tension between grace and truth.

Day Two: John 8:2-8 | Be known more for what you're FOR.

Day Three: Matthew 5:46 and Romans 12:18 | Acceptance vs. approval.

Day Four: Romans 13:8-10 | Pointing people to Jesus.

Day Five: John 8:9-11 | Messy grace.