

GOD DOES NOT GIVE HIS PEOPLE WHAT THEY DESERVE

FOUNDATION: GOD IS GRACIOUS - GOD GIVES FORGIVENESS

BIG TRUTH: GOD DOES NOT GIVE HIS PEOPLE WHAT THEY DESERVE

Deuteronomy 6:7-11; 9:6-7; Romans 3:21-24; 5:6-8; 6:23; 8:1; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Ephesians 1:3-9; 2:1-6

BIBLE VERSE: ROMANS 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

BIG IDEAS

- God is full of grace.
- God shows grace to His enemies.
- God shows us grace through Jesus.
- God's grace changes our hearts.

BIBLE STORY: LUKE 19:1-10

God is a gracious God. He extends grace to us when we do not deserve His grace. Luke shares the story of a man who was undeserving of God's grace, but God sought him out. Zacchaeus thought he wanted to get a better look at Jesus, but really God was drawing Zacchaeus to Him for salvation. God's grace changes our lives.

FOUNDATION: GOD IS GRACIOUS - GOD GIVES FORGIVENESS

Every person who has ever lived has chosen to reject God, and we deserve to be punished. We deserve complete separation from God because we have willfully chosen to disobey God's law and run from Him. However, God is gracious in that He gives us exactly the opposite of what we deserve. Instead of punishment, He provides a way of salvation by sending Jesus to take the punishment we deserve. We deserve punishment, but instead, we receive grace. Grace is getting a gift that we do not deserve. The way that we receive grace is through forgiveness. When we confess our sins the Bible tells us that He is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins because of His redeeming grace.

BIG AIMS



Every child should know:

- That God is gracious
- That grace is when God gives us what we do not deserve and cannot earn



Every child should feel:

- Thankful for the gifts of grace that they have received



Every child should be able to:

- Recognize things that they have as gifts of grace from God



Every child should want to:

- To know about God's gift of grace through salvation and forgiveness of our sins

FAMILY DEVOTION: HEART-CHANGING GRACE

When God extends His grace to us, it changes us. We are no longer the same person. His grace changes our hearts and makes us new creations. God is gracious and offers us forgiveness for our sins.

GOD DOES NOT GIVE HIS PEOPLE WHAT THEY DESERVE

ROMANS 6:23

For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We are all sinners.

- Every person is born sinful. We have a sinful nature.
- We naturally disobey God.
- We naturally look out for our own good.
- We naturally do what we think is right and we don't want anyone else to tell us what to do.
- We naturally want to be the lord of our own lives.

We deserve death because of our sin.

- Because of our sin, we are separated from God.
- We deserve death as the punishment for our sin and rebellion against God.
- God is ultimately holy and perfect, and when we sin we cannot be with Him, because there is no sin in Him.
- Death is the just punishment for sin.

God does not give his people what they deserve, but rather he gives life in Jesus.

- Even though we deserve death, God in His mercy decided not to give His people what they deserve.
- Instead of sending His people to die, God sent Jesus to die in our place.
- Jesus lived a perfect life without sinning.
- Jesus died on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins.
- Jesus rose again from the grave to conquer the power of sin and death in the world.
- Through Jesus, God gives us life instead of death.

GOD DOES NOT GIVE HIS
PEOPLE WHAT THEY DESERVE**BIBLE STORY: LUKE 19:1-10***Zacchaeus Meets Jesus*

Supporting Scripture: Psalm 18:30; John 1:14; Ephesians 2:5

Teacher Introduction:

Jesus' life on this earth reveals God's grace to all of mankind. God is gracious to those who least deserve it. One example of this is the story of Zacchaeus. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector. He was a thief, taking more of the people's money than he needed to take. He was wealthy, profiting from the extra money he collected. He was a hated man among the people because of his position. When he heard that Jesus was coming by, he wanted to get a better look at Jesus.

God's grace is evident in Zacchaeus' desire to see Jesus. No one seeks God first. God draws people to Himself and He drew Zacchaeus to Jesus. When Zacchaeus climbed a tree to get a better look at Jesus, Jesus called him by name and went to his house to eat. Zacchaeus received salvation that day all because of God's grace. God is gracious to all people and His grace gives forgiveness for our sins and provides salvation to those who believe.

Teaching Guide:

The guide below is provided to help you teach the narrative: *Zacchaeus Meets Jesus*. The four points are the Big Ideas that should guide your lesson as you share from Luke 19:1-10 and teach the narrative: *Zacchaeus Meets Jesus*. Footnotes are provided for further study of the text and God's interaction with His people. Throughout the lesson, questions are placed to help you guide the preschoolers to think about and process the narrative: *Zacchaeus Meets Jesus*.

Opening Illustration:

Bring in a pair of children's sunglasses. Allow the children to take turns wearing the sunglasses. When they are wearing the glasses, ask the children to describe how the room and their classmates look with the glasses on. Once everyone has had a chance to wear the glasses, lead them in a conversation about how we see things better without the glasses.

- When the glasses are on, things look darker and they aren't as clear.
- When the glasses are off, we can see things better.
- Zacchaeus wanted to get a better look at Jesus, so he climbed a tree.
- When he climbed the tree, he not only got to see Jesus, he got to receive salvation from Jesus, too.
- God's grace allows us to see Him clearly and to have saving faith in Him.

GOD DOES NOT GIVE HIS
PEOPLE WHAT THEY DESERVE**BIG IDEA: GOD IS FULL OF GRACE.****God seeks out those who are lost.¹**

- God is gracious because He seeks out lost people.
- No one seeks God by themselves. No one desires to know God on their own.
- God pursues His people and offers salvation through His grace to them.
- Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector in Jericho.
- He wanted to see Jesus because God had pursued Zacchaeus' heart.
- God had drawn Zacchaeus to Himself.

God's grace is perfect because He is perfect.

- Zacchaeus was not a well-liked person.
- He was a tax collector and tax collectors were known to be thieves.
- Jesus showed grace to Zacchaeus regardless.
- God shows grace perfectly because He is perfect.
- God's love for His people compels Him to show grace.

God is a perfectly gracious God.²

- God is grace itself.
- We know what grace is only because God showed grace to the world.
- God shows grace perfectly.
- He showed grace to Zacchaeus by having Jesus pass through Jericho.

How do we know God is gracious? (He seeks out lost people and gives forgiveness.)

How did God show Zacchaeus grace? (Jesus passed through Jericho and called Zacchaeus by name.)



Give each child a chance to pretend to be Zacchaeus by having he or she stand in a chair. Have the rest of the children call out to "Zacchaeus" as they pass by, saying, "Zacchaeus! Come down!". Tell them that God showed Zacchaeus grace when He directed Jesus to pass through Jericho.

1. Luke 19:10: Jesus came to seek out the lost and to offer salvation.

2. Psalm 18:30: All that God does is perfect. Everything He does is right and good. His grace is perfect.

GOD DOES NOT GIVE HIS
PEOPLE WHAT THEY DESERVE**BIG IDEA: GOD SHOWS GRACE TO HIS ENEMIES.****No one is worthy of God's grace, yet God still shows grace.³**

- Every person is a sinner and doesn't deserve God's grace.
- God still shows grace to us even though we are sinful.
- Zacchaeus was not worthy of God's grace, but God still sought Zacchaeus out.
- Zacchaeus was known as a dishonest tax collector. He was a thief and not deserving of God's grace.

We are all enemies of God because of our sinful hearts.

- Every person has a sinful nature inherited from Adam and Eve.
- This sinful nature is why we continue to sin and our sin separates us from God.
- God still shows grace to us even though we are His enemies.
- Jesus didn't hesitate to call out to Zacchaeus even though Zacchaeus was a dishonest man.

God shows much grace to all people.

- When Jesus ate at Zacchaeus' house, people didn't like it.
- God does not show grace only to people who seem to deserve it.
- He shows grace to all people.
- No one is good enough or does enough good to deserve God's grace.
- We are all like Zacchaeus in need of salvation.

Who is worthy to receive God's grace? (No one is worthy.)

Who are the enemies of God? (All people are God's enemies because all people have sinned.)



Help the children make a list of the ways they have disobeyed their parents. Tell them that we have all sinned against God. When we disobey our parents, we are sinning against God and that makes us God's enemy. God shows grace to His enemies.

3. John 1:14: God's greatest grace to us was to send His Son to bring us salvation.

GOD DOES NOT GIVE HIS
PEOPLE WHAT THEY DESERVE**BIG IDEA: GOD SHOWS US GRACE THROUGH JESUS.****God showed every person grace by sending Jesus.**

- Jesus paid man's sin debt and provided salvation for all people.
- Jesus' life and death on earth are God's gracious gift to the world.
- Zacchaeus was a corrupt man who had become wealthy robbing others.
- Jesus still sought Zacchaeus out and still went to his house.
- No one is deserving of Jesus' salvation, yet Jesus still gives us salvation.



Sing "Zacchaeus was a Wee Little Man" with the children. Tell them that God showed Zacchaeus grace when He called him down from the tree.

Jesus was without sin, yet He took on sin to show us grace.⁴

- Jesus lived a sinless life on this earth, yet He took on sin for all people.
- God's greatest grace to us is the gift of His Son.
- Zacchaeus received God's grace when Jesus called out to him and went to his house.
- God was gracious to Zacchaeus, a man undeserving of grace, just as He's gracious to us.

God's gift of Jesus is a grace we do not deserve.

- No one seeks God on his or her own.
- Every heart is set on sinning, yet God intercepts our lives and shows grace.
- Zacchaeus' life was set on his own way and he did not seek to glorify God.
- Jesus intercepted Zacchaeus' life and showed him grace.
- No one thought Zacchaeus was worthy to eat with Jesus, yet Jesus showed him grace.
- Jesus shows all people the same grace by offering salvation through Him.

How did God show us grace? (He showed us grace by sending His Son, Jesus.)

Do we deserve God's gracious gift of Jesus? (No, we don't deserve Jesus.)

4. Ephesians 2:5: It is only by God's grace that anyone is saved.

GOD DOES NOT GIVE HIS
PEOPLE WHAT THEY DESERVE

BIG IDEA: GOD'S GRACE CHANGES OUR HEARTS.

Every person has a heart set on sin.⁵

- There is no person who seeks to please God in their own power.
- Our hearts are set on sin because of our sin nature.
- God draws people to Him to show them grace.
- God drew Zacchaeus to Him by placing a curiosity about Jesus in his heart.
- Jesus called out to Zacchaeus to draw him to Jesus to show him grace.

Our hearts are changed when we receive God's grace.

- Zacchaeus was changed after his encounter with Jesus.
- Our hearts are changed after we place saving faith in Jesus.
- Zacchaeus no longer sought to take money from people.
- Instead, Zacchaeus sought to right the wrongs he had committed.
- Our hearts are made new by God's grace.
- We no longer are set on our sin.
- We seek to glorify God in His power.
- God's grace makes us new by transforming our hearts.



Give each child a black heart-shaped piece of paper. Tell them the heart is what our hearts look like because of our sin. Show them a white heart-shaped piece of paper. Allow them to take turns placing the white heart over their black heart. Tell them that God's grace makes our hearts new. They are no longer sinful once we encounter Jesus.

How was Zacchaeus changed? (He experienced God's grace through Jesus. He no longer sought to steal money from people.)

How are we changed by God's grace? (We have our sins forgiven.)

5. Ephesians 7:20: No one seeks to do good. No one is righteous. We are all sinful.

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HOOKS

**God's Grace Appeared**

Bring in a Color Wonder coloring book. Show the children the seemingly blank piece of paper. Next, color the page with the special marker that causes the picture to appear. Lead them in a discussion about how God's grace appeared through Jesus.



- We are all sinful and separated from God.
- God's grace appeared through Jesus when Jesus died on the cross for us.
- We are changed after we experience God's grace.

**God's Grace Is A Gift**

Bring in a box wrapped in wrapping paper. Before you wrap the box, place a piece of paper with the words "God's Grace" written on it inside of the box. Tell the children that there is a special gift inside of the box. Allow them to open the gift. Lead them in a discussion about God's many gifts to us and how they are His grace to us.



- Everything that we have is a gift from God and shows us God's grace.
- God is very gracious and gives us the greatest gift, His Son.

God Is Gracious To His Enemies

Gather the children together in a circle. Ask them to describe their favorite toy. Ask them if they would give their toy away to someone who wanted it. Lead them in a conversation about how God gave us the gift of His Son even while we were still His enemies.

- We are all enemies of God, yet God still loves us and shows us grace.
- God's greatest gift of grace is His Son, Jesus.
- God showed us grace by sending His Son to die for us.