



February 1, 2024

Social Time

Thanks to those who brought Treats!

Bible Study Business

Music – Led by Lisa Scholterback

- ELW 526 - *God Is Here*
- ELW 606 - *Our Father, We Have Wandered*
- ELW 807 - *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

Prayer Requests and Update Prayer List

Opening Prayer

Discussion – Chapter 1 - What's So Amazing About Grace? By Philip Yancey

1. What are some ways that Jesus showed grace to people?
2. On pages 4 & 5 Yancey lists many variations of the word grace. Which of these resonates most closely with you? and why?
3. Yancy describes a prostitute whose life was very difficult. When asked if she had ever thought about going to a church for help, her response was, "Church! Why would I ever go there? I was already feeling terrible about myself. They'd just make me feel worse." (p. 3) Is she right? Would going to church make her feel worse? How would you respond to her?
4. Is the church a "haven of grace in the world of ungrace"? (p. 6)
5. How does Lutheran understanding of grace differ from the understanding of other denominations?
6. To what extent does our notion of being "saved by grace by faith affect" our actions?
7. How would you respond to the criticism of David Seamands on p. 7?
8. There are many ways to offer help to those in need – but secular social service agencies may specialize in these things. The thing the church is uniquely positioned to do is offer grace. How are we living into this calling?

A few more discussion topics from the Preface...

1. Yancy quotes the apostle John saying, "Perfect love casts out fear"... It occurs to me that the converse of John's statement is also true: *perfect fear casts out love*. The more Christians are characterized by fear, the less we can communicate good news." (p. xiii)
How do you see the relationship between love and fear, and what does that have to do with grace?
2. "Martin Luther King Jr. used to say that justice and moral issues are certainly worth fighting for. But he called on Jesus followers to use different weapons, 'the weapon of love.'" Yancy goes on to say, "Jesus followers can lead the way in helping to restore civility to a deeply divided nation." (p. xiii)
How might we as Christians help restore civility?
3. Yancy says "Grace like water, always flows to the low places." (p. xiv) He goes on to explain that morally upright people tended to view Jesus with suspicion and morally outcast people were most attracted to Jesus – like the "good Samaritan" compared with the religious leaders who walked on by the injured man. He adds that the world rewards worthy individuals but grace has nothing to do with worthiness. "Like water, it flows downward; like a gift, it needs only to be received with open hands."
So how are we to receive grace?

For Next Time – Reach Chapters 2 & 3

Birthdays

Closing Prayer – Lord's Prayer