

Messy Grace Session 4: Identity Leader Guide

Icebreakers

1. In this series, you have heard a few people sharing their stories. What has touched your heart from their stories?
2. How has listening to the people's stories in this Series changed your views of the LGBT community?

Reflection #3

3. Compare and contrast Carly's and Margaret's stories of identity.

Read Together Galatians 2:19-20 (NIV)

“For through the law I died to the law so that I might live for God. I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through law, Christ died for nothing!”

4. Up until his decision to follow Jesus, Paul's identity was found in being a Jew. How does Paul suggest in verse 19 that he is leaving this old identity in Jesus?
5. What main points does Paul make about a Christian's identity in Christ in verse 20?
6. Restate verse 20 in your own words.

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Read Together Matthew 16:24 (NIV)

Then Jesus said to his disciples, “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.

7. How does this verse support and shed more light on how Galatians 2:20 is lived out?
8. In Galatians, Paul points out that in order to live like Jesus, we must die to ourselves. What things must die in your life in order to have more grace for those who are different than you?

Reflection #2

9. Sam says that having our identity in Jesus is far healthier and more liberating. Why is it better to find our identity in Jesus than anything else?

Read Together John 13:34-35 (NIV)

“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

10. In these verses Jesus declares that the greatest proof of being his follower is the way we love. Unfortunately, many times we can misread “one another” to mean those who support our own positions- people like us. How can we show grace and truth in a way that communicates to all people how Christ has loved us?
11. Why do you think Jesus chose love to be our greatest badge of being one of his followers?

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12. How does this call to love others make everything we have studied in the past four weeks so much more important?
13. What is your greatest takeaway from this series when it comes to the LGBT community?
14. What is the greatest thing you have learned from this series that will help you love people more like Jesus loved people?

Reflection #3

15. Caleb says, “God loves messy people and so should we.” What does it look like to love all people with grace and truth? Why is this important?

Discuss Memory Verse

1 Peter 2:9

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.

Discussion Notes

As we learned in this lesson, in order to live more like Jesus, we must die to ourselves. Often, we struggle with the idea of giving grace to those who are different than us because of our own sin nature, biases and prejudices. Sometimes it’s our own insecurities that keep us from extending grace to others. Think of a few things that keep you from extending grace to everyone.

Read and pray through the verses below. Pray that God would remind you of your new identity in Him. As you pray, ask God to continue to crucify and put to death anything in you that is not from Him.

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2 Corinthians 5:17

Galatians 2:20

Isaiah 43:18-19

Ephesians 2:10

2 Corinthians 3:18

Closing Prayer

Dear Jesus, I believe you are the Son of God, my Lord and Savior. I confess my sins to you and ask for your forgiveness. Fill me with the power of your life-giving Holy Spirit. Come and make your home in me forever. I pray this in the powerful, almighty name of Jesus Christ, my Lord.

Amen.