

Confirmation Theology Year, Week Four
October 6: Grace and Justification

- Roll/What's going on in your life that we can pray for?
- What is Grace?
- Nathan videos
- Sleeping at Last "You Are Enough"
- "You Are Enough"
By Sleeping at Last

When we woke up
The world was figured out
Beyond the beauty we've dreamt about.
This brilliant light is brighter than we've known,
Without our darkness to prove it so.
Still, we can't help but to examine it,
To add our question marks to periods.
At the foot of our bed, we found an envelope...

"You are enough."
These little words, somehow they're changing us.
"You are enough."
So we let our shadows fall away like dust.

When we grew up,
Our shadows grew up too.
But they're just old ghosts
That we grow attached to.
The tragic flaw is that they hide the truth

That you're enough you're enough, you're enough.
I promise you're enough, you're enough, you're enough.
I promise you're enough, you're enough, you're enough, I promise you.

You're enough, you're enough, "You are enough."
These little words, somehow they're changing us.
You're enough, you're enough, "You are enough."

So we let our shadows fall away like dust.
You're enough, you're enough, "You are enough."
These little words, somehow they're changing us.
Let it go, let it go, "You are enough."
So we let our shadows fall away like dust.

- Questions:
 - What causes you to feel like you aren't "_____ enough"? About what do you feel that way?
 - What are the "shadows" the singer is talking about?
 - God says that we are enough and we don't have to prove ourselves. Why is that hard to believe?
- Grace activity:
 - Perfection axioms; people raise their hands if they were "perfect" in various ways today.
 - Raise your hand if you ate all health food today.
 - Raise your hand if your grades are perfect.
 - Raise your hand if you are the best athlete on your team.
 - Raise your hand if you do everything right.
 - Raise your hand if you are the smartest person you know.
 - Raise your hand if you were nice to everyone you saw today.
 - Raise your hand if you were perfectly patient and compassionate today.
- Questions about perfection and fairness:
- Grace-Based relationship: have people raise hands for grace-based identity of God questions.
 - I have people in my life who love me even when I struggle.
 - I can laugh at mistakes without getting embarrassed sometimes.
 - I am not afraid to ask questions.
 - I have felt forgiven even when I regretted an action.
 - I continued to try even though I failed at the beginning.
 - I feel okay about changing interests when I feel I just didn't like or didn't excel at what I was doing before.
 - I don't have to win as long as I feel good about myself.
 - I don't feel like I need to compare myself to others.
 - Raise your hand if you are alive.
 - Raise your hand if you are a child of God.
 - Raise your hand if God loves you.
 - Raise your hand if the Holy Spirit dwells in you.

- Raise your hand if Jesus died and rose, to free you from the power of perfectionism.
 - Grace is based on God's character, not ours.
- In my life I get evaluated for...
- American Idol judges video
 - How are these people being evaluated?
- Romans 5:6-11
- Large Group Questions:
 - So, what does this mean?
 - How does God evaluate us?
 - Do we have to work to prove ourselves, like the people on American Idol?
- Romans 3:21-31 (Message Translation)
- Small Group Questions:
 - If the point is all about what God does, why do we do "good" at all?
 - What is not "fair" about grace?
- Good Works
 - Good works don't earn us anything with God.
 - We follow Jesus because the Holy Spirit lives in us and compels us to follow God.
 - This isn't about morality; this is about following God's dream and working for the Kingdom of God (the reality when all is whole, well, and healed).
 - How do we know what God hopes?
 - So, if God loves us and forgives us, and we aren't rewarded or punished based on our work, why do we follow Jesus?
- Romans 6:1-11
- Questions:
 - LG: What does Paul say about this?
 - SG: What does it mean to be dead to sin and alive to God?
- What did Marty think?
 - Freedom of a Christian
 - I am perfectly free and perfectly bound.
 - "Sin Boldly, believe more boldly"
 - Does not mean do whatever you want.
 - Grace is not just about being forgiven for stuff; it is about God's character and shapes our ethics.
 - Neighbor love is risky.

- We make choices in this process, sometimes have unintended consequences. This is where the belief comes in. We try, we fail, we hope, but we trust God's Got this.
 - This is not like math; it's a risky, messy, grace-filled mixture.
- Augsburg Confession Article IV
 - "It is taught that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God through our merit, work, or satisfactions, but that we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God out of grace for Christ's sake through faith when we believe that Christ suffered for us and that for his sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us. For God will regard and reckon this faith as righteousness in God's sight, as St. Paul says in Romans 3 and 4."
 - So, can you earn your way into Heaven?
 - Is there a hierarchy of grace?
- Jesus and grace...
- John 8:1-11
- Small Group Questions:
 - By the standards of her society, what did this woman "deserve"?
 - What do you imagine Jesus might have been writing on the ground?
 - Why would he write on the ground?
 - What does Jesus do that is "gracious"?
- What do you think Jesus would say to a person on death row?
- Grace as "enough"
 - God says we are Good (at creation, baptism, each day).
 - We are enough. As we are. We do not need to be perfect in order for God to love us.
 - Grace is not about fairness.
 - Goodness and "good works" are our response to God's grace.
- Summing it Up:
- Grace is about God's action toward us. We don't earn it.
- Grace is God's way of saying we are good enough as we are.
- We are called to respond to God's grace, but not as a means of earning a reward.
- Lord's Prayer