



## Study H: Understanding God's Grace and Love

*"For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.  
But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while  
we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*

Rom. 5:6,8 NASB

### **Why: Reasons for the study**

- Because one's view of their earthly father often influences their Heavenly Father, many people today have a distorted view of God - especially His grace and love.
- By grace alone, we are saved. By grace alone, we are given the ability to obey God.
- Because many churches and groups are "religious" in that they model a performance oriented approach to the Christian life, your disciples may believe they must "perform" in acceptable ways to be loved by God and earn His favor.
- Some disciples believe they will not suffer if they are obedient.

### **What: Principles to grasp**

- We will not understand the riches of God's grace until we realize the depth of our sin.
- God loves us unconditionally and there is nothing we can do to cause Him to love us more or love us any less.
- God's unearned love and grace are freely given because of His character as the Giver, not because of our character.
- God's love has freed you from His judgment and condemnation for all time.
- God provides all you need for godliness and every good work.
- Anger at God may stem from belief that He has failed us and/or doesn't love us because our good works should secure a happy life.

### **How: Path to a changed life**

- To correct their wrong view of God and become anchored in His grace and love.
- To understand that they do not have to "perform" to earn God's grace and love.
- To recognize ways they are trying to "earn" God's grace and love and confess it.
- To see that obedience is the only response to God's grace and love.
- To understand God's grace is sufficient for all that they need.
- To see that God's discipline is an act of love (Heb. 12:5-11) and God's pruning of the obedient Christian is for further personal growth and service (John 15:2).

### **Helpful ideas:**

- Many disciples will be unaware that they have a "distorted" view of God - you will need to point out areas and ways their view of God is not biblical.
- Many disciples are still trying to "earn" God's favor by what they do - caution them against believing that because they are going through these studies that somehow God will love them more and/or that their obedience will bring greater favor.
- Identify their specific wrong beliefs about the character of God and how that affects their decisions.

**Tools and additional resources:** *The Discipline of Grace* by Jerry Bridges; *Gripped by the Greatness of God* by James MacDonald