


3 WEEKS

# ~~UN~~DESERVING





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# I Deserved To Be Counted Out But He Gave Me Another Chance

## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### Kicking it off:

When is the first time you remember feeling shame?

### Big Idea:

Like Peter, even when we fail God, He will still use us.

## KEY SCRIPTURES:

### Luke 22:54-62

*"Then seizing [Jesus], they led him away and took him into the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. And when some there had kindled a fire in the middle of the courtyard and had sat down together, Peter sat down with them. A servant girl saw him seated there in the firelight. She looked closely at him and said, "This man was with him." But he denied it. "Woman, I don't know him," he said. A little later someone else saw him and said, "You also are one of them." "Man, I am not!" Peter replied. About an hour later another asserted, "Certainly this fellow was with him, for he is a Galilean." Peter replied, "Man, I don't know what you're talking about! Just as he was speaking, the rooster crowed. The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." And [Peter] went outside and wept bitterly."*

### 2 Corinthians 12:9

*"But he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weaknesses, so that Christ's power may rest on me."*



## Discussion:

1. Read 22:54-62. Share a story of a time you failed to live up to a commitment like the one Peter made to Jesus. How has this impacted you?
2. How often does shame impact your decisions? Often? Not too often? All the time? What parts of your life are affected?
3. Read 2 Corinthians 12:9. What weaknesses do you underestimate? How can you get more honest when you blow it?
4. What are some parts of your life you often find yourself defending to others? Is there a weakness there you may be underestimating?
5. Peter denied Jesus three times, but went on to kick off Christianity as we know it. Have you run from a failure where God would prefer a comma instead of a period?
6. How difficult is it for you to accept God's grace? What can you do this week to accept a second chance for your mistakes?

## Wrapping It Up:

Has someone failed you? Use Christ's example with Peter and reach out to forgive them this week.

## MEMORY VERSE:

*"But he said to me,  
"My grace is  
sufficient for you,  
for my power  
is made perfect  
in weakness."  
Therefore  
I will boast  
all the more gladly  
about my weaknesses,  
so that Christ's power  
may rest on me."*

**2 Corinthians 12:9**

# I Deserved Rejection But He Gave Me Acceptance

## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### Kicking it off:

What one word would describe how you'd feel about Jesus dropping by your home today?

### Big Idea:

Even if I'm rejected by people, I'm accepted by God.

## KEY SCRIPTURES:

### Luke 19:1-10

*"Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. [Zacchaeus] wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way. When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today." So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly. All the people saw this and began to mutter, "He has gone to be the guest of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, "Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount." Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."*



## Discussion:

1. Read Luke 19:1-10. What modern groups of people might experience rejection similar to Zacchaeus the tax collector?
2. What kinds of rejection bother you most?
3. Share a quick story of spiritual rejection you may have faced. How did that affect your relationship with God?
4. What's the one rejection from your past that you think affects your present the most?
5. Share an example of when someone's acceptance made a difference in your life.
6. Just like Zacchaeus, Jesus knows you by name, too. How does that make you feel?
7. What's so hard about accepting God's acceptance? How difficult is this for you?

## Wrapping It Up:

Jesus said He came for the lost. What can our group do this week to offer acceptance to those who may have been rejected by Jesus or His Church?

## MEMORY VERSE:

*"For the  
Son of Man  
came to seek  
and to save the lost."*

**Luke 19:10**

# I Deserved Death But He Gave Me Life

## SMALL GROUP STUDY

### Kicking it off:

Tell your best “getting caught” story that wasn’t so funny when it happened.

### Big Idea:

We are all guilty of breaking God’s laws which is punishable by death, but Jesus offers us life.

## KEY SCRIPTURES:

### James 2:10

*“For the person who keeps all of the laws except one is as guilty as a person who has broken all of God’s laws.”*

### Romans 6:23

*“For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus.”*

### Luke 23:32-33

*“Two other men, both criminals, were also led out with [Jesus] to be executed. When they came to the place called the Skull, they crucified him there, along with the criminals—one on his right, the other on his left.”*

### Luke 23:39-43

*“One of the criminals who hung there hurled insults at [Jesus]: ‘Aren’t you the Messiah? Save yourself and us!’ But the other criminal rebuked him. ‘Don’t you fear God,’ he said, ‘since you are under the same sentence? We are punished justly, for we are getting what our deeds deserve. But this man has done nothing wrong.’ Then he said, ‘Jesus, remember me when you come into your kingdom. Jesus answered him, ‘Truly I tell you, today you will be with me in paradise.’”*

### Psalms 103:10-12

*“[God] does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.”*

### 1 Peter 1:3

*“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.”*





## Discussion:

Read the Scriptures, then discuss the following:

1. Read Romans 6:23. Is it difficult or easy for you to comprehend that because of your sin(s), you deserve death? Why or why not?
2. Share about the moment you first realized you needed Jesus' forgiveness.
3. In Sunday's message, we were reminded that we are all one of two thieves. In what ways do you live like the first thief, as if you don't need a Savior? Ask Jesus to bring His life to these areas.
4. The second thief was self aware of his sin and repented before Jesus. What role does repentance play in your life?
5. Pastor Jeff talked about how the second thief had to be saved by grace through faith, not works. Do you live like you're saved by your belief in Jesus or by your accomplishments for Jesus?
6. Pastor Jeff made this statement in this week's message: "We don't have eternal life because we're good. We have it because

God is good." Discuss how that impacts your behavior and the motivation behind your behavior.

7. What is one thing you're facing that desperately needs the saving power of what Jesus has already done?

## Wrapping It Up:

Pray together to thank Jesus for the specific ways He already gave and continues to give you what you don't deserve.

## MEMORY VERSE:

*"For the wages  
of sin is death,  
but  
the gift of God  
is eternal life  
in Christ Jesus."*

**Romans 6:23**

# Top 10 Tips for Leading a Small Group

1. Establish a welcoming, accepting, and safe environment.
  - Take time to prepare.
  - Make sure to give a warm enthusiastic greeting to each person.
  - Verbally communicate the environment that you hope to create.
  - Ephesians 4:1-3
2. On the opening night of your group you need to have some intentional discussions centered around these questions:
  - What is the purpose of our group?
  - What is the vision for our group?
  - What are your expectations?
  - What do you hope to gain from this group experience?
  - What are some things we value as a group?
  - What are some healthy guidelines we need to have in place?Review and sign a group agreement.
3. Be authentic. Spend time sharing your life stories in order to get to know each other on a deeper level.
4. Find a good balance between:
  - Truth and grace/Bible study and life
  - Encouraging and challenging one another
  - Giving and receiving feedback from each other
5. Ask good questions to stimulate good discussion. Use open ended questions and follow up questions.
6. Hang out together, do things socially, eat together and have fun together!
7. Develop a missional lifestyle, find a service project to do together in the community.
8. Raise up new leadership by rotating facilitation of the group.
9. Share the responsibilities in order to increase individual commitment and ownership of the group.
10. Pray for your group and for each other!

Find ways to celebrate what God is doing in your group! Who else could you invite to join you in order that their life may be impacted by what God is doing in your group?

# Group Agreement

## OUR PURPOSE

To transform our spiritual lives by cultivating our spiritual health in a healthy small group community. In addition, we: \_\_\_\_\_

## OUR VALUES

**Group Attendance:** To give priority to the group meeting. We will call or email if we will be late or absent.

**Safe Environment:** To help create a safe place where people can be heard and feel loved. (Please, no quick answers, snap judgments, or simple fixes.)

**Respect Differences:** To be gentle and gracious to people with different spiritual maturity, personal opinions, temperaments, or imperfections. We are all works in progress.

**Confidentiality:** To keep anything that is shared strictly confidential and within the group, and to avoid sharing improper information about those outside the group.

**Encouragement for Growth:** To be not just takers but givers of life. We want to spiritually multiply our life by serving others with our God-given gifts.

**Welcome for Newcomers:** To keep an open chair and share Jesus' dream of finding a shepherd for every sheep.

**Shared Ownership:** To remember that every member is a minister and to ensure that each attender will share a small team role or responsibility over time.

**Rotating Hosts/Leaders and Homes:** To encourage different people to host the group in their homes, and to rotate the responsibility of facilitating each meeting.

## OUR EXPECTATIONS

- Refreshments/mealtimes \_\_\_\_\_
- Childcare \_\_\_\_\_
- When we will meet (day of week) \_\_\_\_\_
- Where we will meet (place) \_\_\_\_\_
- We will begin at (time) \_\_\_\_\_ and end at \_\_\_\_\_
- We will do our best to have some or all of us attend a worship service together.
- Our primary worship service time will be \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of this agreement \_\_\_\_\_
- Date we will review this agreement again \_\_\_\_\_
- Who (other than the leader) will review this agreement at the end of this study \_\_\_\_\_



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