

GRACE

“My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.”

2 Cor 12:9



UNDER PRESSURE

 Hazlemere
church

TEACHING OVERVIEW:

In this series ‘Grace Under Pressure’ we will be looking at those ‘pressure points’ in our day to day lives, as individuals, in relationship with others and in relationship with the world we live in. We live complex lives, with highs and lows. Some of the wider issues we face do not have an easy answer - as Christians we don’t want to shy away from them, or offer simple solutions, but rather ask ‘what values and principles in God’s Word can shape our thinking and action?’ Over everything we seek God’s grace to minister in and through us, so we can be a community of hope in the world we live in.

There will be 7 topics: An introduction; the world (environment); health (including mental health); ‘God on mute’; time; relationships; money

LIFE Group Material:

Rather than giving a ‘preformulated’ answer, the goal for these studies is for the Life Groups to discern collectively what principles and values we can ‘mine’ from God’s Word. This is about Biblical interpretation and there will be a variety of responses - what’s important is not that we are given the ‘correct’ view - but that we feel equipped to wrestle deeply with the Bible and allow for differences of opinion.

Each session will have one or more key passages to explore, and in some cases possible pointers for further engagement or support in the specific area.

The usual **IN, UP, OUT** structure will help you to in the usual way. Here is a outline format, with some questions that can be used each time. This guide is designed for you to simply work through some or all of the questions in term – but feel free to vary it, and add your own questions as well.

IN – *Start here. The purpose here is to help everyone to feel included, and to ‘tune in’ to each other.*

Questions to use:

- Share one thing about your week? (Ideally something that helps to illustrate the type of week you’ve had)
- Where have you seen God move?
- Share one aspect of Gods character/promises which is particularly relevant for you at this time. *(Alternatively share a question about God/faith that is relevant if you’d prefer – NB but beware of being side-tracked by having a detailed discussion about it at this point)*

UP – *Here the purpose is for the group to draw nearer to God together.*

[Optional] You may wish to start this section by a different group member each week sharing a verse/passage which holds meaning to them; or by some other act of worship – perhaps listening to a worship track or simply reading a Psalm together.

1. Understanding the Passage(s)

First read the passage(s) together – and then use the following questions where applicable.

- What is the overall message that you get from the passage?
- What do you know about the context of the passage that will help you better understand its meaning? (ie who it is written to? what else was happening at the time?)
- Is there one or two key phrases which stand out to you? Why?
- What further questions does the passage leave you with?

2. Drawing Close to God through the passage

This part is the heart of the study – these questions are about moving from knowledge about God to engagement with him

- What about the passage (a) encourages you? (b) challenges you?
- How does this shape or affirm your understanding of God and his relationship with you?
- Prayerfully consider what God might want to say to you through this passage? (It may help to put yourself into the position of one of the people within the text – either a character, or perhaps the recipient)
- What would you say to God in reply?

OUT – *This is about encouraging each other in living out our faith: both in terms of personal discipleship (spiritual habits), ministry to others (showing love to friends, family, church), and our calling to the world (blessing others, social engagement, evangelism, etc.)*

Ideally this may be as a result of the discussion you have just had, but it doesn't have to be.

- Share one hope/prayer for yourself this week
- Share one hope/prayer for Gods work through you this week

End with a period of prayer for each other