

Grace Unleashed – Discussion Guide and Questions

Baptist Hui Main Session #6, Dunedin, 5 November 2016.

Sarah Harris, New Testament Lecturer, Carey Baptist College sarah.harris@carey.ac.nz

Watch the video online <http://www.lifelonglearning.nz/grace-unleashed> (24 minutes)

God's grace is unleashed in many places in the Bible. The first time God describes himself he says, "The Lord, The Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Exod 34:6). Yet this is not the first time we have seen God's grace unleashed; in Gen 1 when God created the world, he made a planet which had order instead of chaos; he created suitable habitats for all creatures, and made men and women to steward his creation and to be his image and likeness in the world. Because of grace he spoke the world into being.

We see God's grace when he addresses Adam and Eve's sin by not only judgement, but by clothing them as they leave the garden. The whole Old Testament tells of God's unrelenting grace in pursuing a sinful and disobedient people; he never gave up on his people even when they had given up on him.

Pre-eminently we find God's grace in the incarnation – The Word, Jesus coming to earth in human form. Jesus made God's grace visible to humanity as he ate with sinners, challenged the righteous, and fed the hungry. In his death as a sinless human, we find God's sacrificial grace which pays for the sin of the world that the cycle of sin and death will be broken. In his resurrection we find God's triumphant grace which broke the power Satan had on humanity. And, as Jesus ascended into heaven he charged his many disciples to proclaim this gospel of grace to the world, and he empowered them by the Holy Spirit for this task. Acts 2 tells of this empowering event:

Acts 2:1-42

1. What aspect of God's grace challenges you? What encourages you?
2. How important is it that we speak of God's grace to the world?
3. In the video, Sarah describes the setting where there are male and female disciples who are empowered for the proclamation of the gospel. In what ways are you empowering all of God's people for this mission? How can you grow in this regard?
4. Can children really be part of the worshipping community? How does your church encourage children to find the church as a place to which they belong?
5. When the Holy Spirit was poured out, people began to speak other people's languages; they could hear and understand one another. How is cultural diversity visible in your community? How is it valued?