

Season of Grace | Preparing, Celebrating, Discipling

I. Preparing

- Each of the holidays this Season drip with God's grace. Advent is about anticipating His coming to earth and His future return. The 12 Days of Christmas celebrate His incarnation, and Valentines celebrates His indescribable love!
- Each of those are amazing gifts we do not deserve. And that's what grace is. It's unmerited favor. It's God giving us what we don't deserve.
- Utilize the Grace Bible Reading. Psalm 84:11; Ii Corinthians 9:8; Ephesians 2:8
- We want to get our minds ready to focus on Him. We want to get our plans in place and our schedules in order so that we can worship God uninterrupted.
- And, yes, that right there can sound overwhelming when it comes to Christmas.
- Even if Advent weren't a concern, and you were only planning to celebrate *one day* of Christmas, the planning and buying of presents and hosting and cooking and the like can send people into a chaotic or alternatively catatonic state.
- But God offers you grace. He's given us everything we need for life and godliness in His Word. We don't need to freak out. There is more than enough grace for you to navigate this season in a way that pleases the Lord, matures you, and benefits those in your life.
- **Make a plan.** Human beings don't improvise well. We need to premeditatedly purpose to only do those things that are valuable and dismiss the activities that aren't.
- **Make sure God is at the center of that plan.** Mankind's biggest problem is that they want to do God's job. They want to define terms, they want to determine what is right and wrong. They want to dictate what they — and everyone else — is supposed to do. When we apply this thinking to Christmas, everyone is going to have some sort of plan that seeks to accomplish what they want. But what if everyone else's plans disagree? But when everyone makes God's plan their plan, it is much easier to unify and work with each other. You'll have more people serving and loving and thanking and working hard and praising the Lord.

II. Celebrating and Discipling

- A good plan will involve discussing God's grace throughout the Season. At the barest minimum, I would recommend memorizing a verse about God's grace and reviewing it throughout the Season.
- Then — during each of the holidays — I would suggest discussing with your discipleses how that particular holiday is a celebration of God's grace.
- And — beyond that — you could try monthly, weekly, or daily focusing your mind and the minds of your discipleses on God's grace.
- We recommend praying and talking to God about His grace. You could compile lists of the ever-present grace of God in your life. You could read the many passages that describe and illustrate His grace.
- Perhaps your church could take a time every Wednesday night or during small group to specifically praise God for His grace in their lives.
- You could have your students write a paper about God's grace. Depending on their age and ability, the paper could be about biblical grace in general or an example of that grace in their own experience.