

ReFocus Guide: We Need Grace More Than We Think

Focus: Grace begins when we stop pretending we are enough on our own. Romans reminds us that the gospel is God's power to save, not advice for self-improvement. This week invites us to look honestly at the created things we often trust for worth, peace, safety, and identity. When we stop hiding from the truth, we discover that conviction is not God's rejection. It is God's invitation to grace.

Day 1: Not Ashamed of the Gospel

Scripture: *Romans 1:16–17*

I'm not ashamed of the gospel: it is God's own power for salvation to all who have faith in God. - Romans 1:16a (CEB)

Reflection:

Paul is not ashamed of the gospel because it is not just good advice or a better way of thinking. It is God's power to save. Salvation means more than going to heaven someday. It means God is rescuing, healing, restoring, and making us whole in this life. Many try to save themselves by being good enough, strong enough, useful enough, or faithful enough. But the gospel tells us the truth: we are not enough on our own, and we were never meant to be. Grace begins when we stop pretending and trust God's power more than our own.

Questions:

Where are you trying to be enough on your own?

What does it mean to you that the gospel is God's power to save?

How can you practice trusting God's power instead of your own strength today?

Prayer:

God of grace, help me not to be ashamed of my need for You.

Teach me to trust the power of the gospel and receive the grace I cannot create for myself. Amen.

Day 2: When Created Things Become Too Important

Scripture: *Romans 1:21–23*

Though they knew God, they didn't honor God as God or thank God.

Instead, their reasoning became pointless, and their foolish hearts were darkened. - Romans 1:21 (CEB)

Reflection:

Paul says people knew something of God, but they did not honor God as God. Instead, they turned toward created things. That is still one of the ways sin works in us. We take things and ask them to give us what only God can give. We ask success to give us worth. We ask money to give us safety. We ask approval to give us identity. We ask comfort to give us peace. These things may not be bad in

themselves, but they cannot become the center of our lives. When created things take God's place, they eventually leave us restless and afraid.

Questions:

What created thing are you tempted to trust more than God?

What are you asking that thing to give you?

What would it look like to return that part of your life to God today?

Prayer:

Creator God, You are the source of my worth, peace, and life. Show me where I have trusted created things more than You. Turn my heart back toward Your grace. Amen.

Day 3: Trading Truth for a Lie

Scripture: Romans 1:24–25

They traded God's truth for a lie, and they worshipped and served the creation instead of the creator. - Romans 1:25a (CEB)

Reflection:

Most of us do not choose lies because we know they are lies. We believe them because they promise something we want. The lie may say, "You are what you achieve." It may say, "You are only safe if you are in control." It may say, "You are loved only when people need you." It may even say, "You are fine without grace." God's truth sounds different. God says we are loved, created, pursued, and invited into new life. God's truth does not flatter us, but it does free us. It tells us we need grace, and it tells us grace is already reaching for us .

Questions:

What lie have you been tempted to believe about yourself, God, or your worth?

How has that lie shaped your choices or reactions?

What truth from God do you need to hold onto this week?

Prayer:

God of truth, help me recognize the lies I have believed. Replace them with Your grace, Your love, and Your promise that I belong to You. Amen.

Day 4: Conviction Without Shame

Scripture: John 16:7–11

When he comes, he will show the world it was wrong about sin, righteousness, and judgment. - John 16:8 (CEB)

Reflection:

Conviction is not the same as shame. Shame tells us we are hopeless. Conviction tells us the truth so we can come home to God. Shame pushes us away from God. Conviction opens us to grace. The Holy Spirit does not reveal our sin to destroy us. The

Spirit reveals what is false, wounded, and broken so God can heal and restore us. When God shows us the truth, it is not rejection. It is an invitation. God's grace is strong enough to meet us honestly and lovingly at the same time.

Questions:

Where might God be gently convicting you right now?

How can you tell the difference between shame and the Spirit's invitation?

What would it look like to respond to conviction by moving toward God instead of hiding?

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, convict me without shame. Help me hear Your truth as an invitation to grace. Give me courage to come honestly before God and receive mercy. Amen.

Day 5: Grace for Human Beings

Scripture: Romans 3:22–24

All have sinned and fall short of God's glory, but all are treated as righteous freely by his grace because of a ransom that was paid by Christ Jesus. - Romans 3:23–24 (CEB)

Reflection:

We do not need grace because we are worse than everyone else. We need grace because we are human. Every person falls short. Every person needs mercy. Every person needs God's saving and transforming love. That truth can humble us, but it can also free us. We do not have to pretend anymore. We do not have to prove that we are better than others. We do not have to hide the places where we struggle. God already knows us fully, and God's grace still reaches for us through Jesus Christ. Grace does not leave us where we are, but it always meets us where we are.

Questions:

How does it change things to say, "I need grace because I am human"?

Where do you need to stop pretending and let God meet you honestly?

What is one way you can extend grace to another person this week?

Prayer:

Gracious God, thank You for loving me as I am and for not leaving me unchanged. Help me receive Your grace honestly and share that grace with others. Amen.