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WITH CHARLES MARTIN

STUDY GUIDE

RUN OVER BY THE GRACE TRAIN

COVER CONCEPT BY DARREN WELCH

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INTRODUCTION

This study guide is a companion to my book *Run Over by the Grace Train*. My prayer is that by reading the book and using this guide, your understanding of grace will deepen and your affection for the Lord will grow. I wrote this book because, simply put, I can't get over the gospel. The gospel of Jesus Christ has transformed my life. It has saved me, cleansed me, justified me, freed me and so much more. I don't walk the same, talk the same or think the same because I'm not the same person before I was hit by the grace train.

Each chapter in this book is full of stories and illustrations from my own life, but most importantly, they each focus on Scripture that tells us what grace truly is, how we receive it, and how it changes everything about everything. Grace is the central theme of the Christian life, and in this study guide, you will examine Scripture and your own heart to dive deeper into the truth that we are saved by grace alone.

Whether you use this study guide on your own or with a small group, I encourage you to read each chapter of *Run Over by the Grace Train* beforehand and look up each Scripture in the Study Guide, carefully reading it. As you work through the guide, ask The Holy Spirit to illuminate the Scripture so you may understand the original meaning and to speak to your heart. Remember, this guide is not homework; rather, an invitation to sit with our good and gracious heavenly Father and just be with Him.

CHAPTER 1

Grace Saves

1. Read Ephesians 2:1-10. What is the significance of the apostle Paul stating that everyone is not merely lost or bad apart from Christ but is actually dead in their sin? What does it mean to be spiritually dead?

2. Paul uses some very intense language to describe all of mankind: “among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath.” What does this diagnosis ultimately tell us about our nature and our future if we do not surrender to Jesus?

3. Verse 4 is the linchpin of this text. ‘But God.’ Everything changes with those two words.

“But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—” What did you do in your deadness to make yourself alive? What did God do?

4. Why is grace so hard for us to comprehend?

5. While your salvation is a free gift to you, it cost Christ everything. How should we respond to this gift?

6. How are you living as if you need to earn God’s grace instead of receiving it and living out of gratitude for it?

CHAPTER 2

Grace Can't Be Lost. And Neither Can You.

1. Read Romans 3:9-18, Psalm 14 and Psalm 53. Summarize what Paul is saying about every person.

2. How have you experienced the reality that sin leads to death? Think about physical death, death of a relationship, death of joy, etc.

3. Read Romans 3:19-20. What was the point of God giving the law if He knew we could not keep it?

4. Read Romans 3:21-26. What does it mean to be justified by God's grace?

5. If propitiation (v. 25) means 'a payment that satisfies,' and Jesus was that payment, what did He satisfy?

6. Why does sin have to be paid for?

7. What does it mean to receive this grace by faith?

CHAPTER 3

Grace Sanctifies Both the Rebel and Religious

1. Read Luke 15. What do the three parables have in common?

2. Write down 10 details you see in the parable of the prodigal son.

3. How does the father represent God and His grace?

4. Why is the lavish party so offensive to the older brother?

5. What other parties/celebrations are described in the Bible? (Read Deuteronomy 14:22-29, Luke 14:12-24, John 2:1-11, Revelation 19:6-10) What themes do you see throughout?

6. Compare and contrast the younger brother and older brother. Which one is your tendency to become? A rebel who cheapens the grace given by Jesus or a religious person who thinks they can be made righteous through keeping the rules?

7. Describe your relationship with God in this current season of life.

8. What hinders you from trusting the truth that there is more grace in Jesus than sin in you?

CHAPTER 4

Grace Does Not Condemn

1. Read John 8:1-11. How is the woman treated by the scribes and Pharisees?

2. What did the scribes and Pharisees care about in this account?

3. Read Leviticus 20:10, and then go back a few chapters and read Leviticus 16. Why is it important that the Day of Atonement was established *before* the giving of the laws and their consequences? What does this tell us about God?

4. Read Matthew 5:27-30. What is so profound about this teaching? How is sin being described as deeper than just behavior?

5. Read 1 Corinthians 6:12-20. What does this text tell us about how sexual sin is different from other sins?

6. How is Jesus's response of "neither do I condemn you; go, and from now on sin no more" show grace and truth?

7. What sins do you need to repent from? Bring them to Jesus.

CHAPTER 5

Grace Cleanses

- 1.** Read 2 Samuel 11. What is significant about David remaining in Jerusalem in verse 1?

- 2.** How did David's direction (daily choices), not his intention, determine his destination? What direction are you on in your life? Does it line up with your intentions?

- 3.** 1 Corinthians 6:18 tells us to flee sexual immorality, not flirt with it. How are you taking this command seriously in your life? How are you not?

4. Read Psalm 51. This Psalm is penned by David after he commits sins against Bathsheba and her husband. What do you notice about David's heart posture in the Psalm?

5. David is not telling God he will try harder; rather, he is confessing and crying out to God. What is David crying for God to do?

6. Verses 3 and 4 refer to God's blameless judgment in response to David's sin against Him. Read Romans 3:23-25. How do these verses explain God's grace and simultaneously the payment of sin?

7. If Jesus is the final and satisfactory payment for our sins, and we can walk in the freedom of that sin, what is stopping you from bringing all your sins, past and present, to Him?

CHAPTER 6

Grace For The Outcast

1. Read John 4:1-45. In these verses we see Jesus go against culture and popular opinion to sit with a Samaritan woman who was an outcast. What do you notice about Jesus' divinity and humanity in this text?

2. What do you observe about the interaction between Jesus and the woman?

3. Jesus exposes the woman's sin and pattern of trying to fill her soul with the things of the world. The Bible talks about three categories of this (1 John 2:16-17), the lust of the eyes, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life. What do you crave in these categories?

4. What can you conclude about these cravings in your life? How have they tricked you into thinking something can satisfy your soul outside of Christ?

5. Jesus shone a light on the thing the woman was most ashamed about and removed the shame. We know this because she ran into town and testified. Many surrendered to Jesus because of this woman's testimony. What would it look like in your life if you walked in freedom from shame and condemnation? What would it look like if Jesus used your mess to bring His message to others?

CHAPTER 7

Grace Forgives

1. Read Matthew 18:15-20. Why did Matthew write specifically about reconciling with fellow believers (brothers and sisters in Christ)? If someone sins against you that is not a follower of Christ, how can you present the gospel to them?

2. Why is talking face-to-face with someone who has sinned against you the ideal way to communicate?

3. Read Matthew 18:21-35. What does this parable tell you about the severity of unforgiveness?

4. How is forgiving others evidence that you have received forgiveness from God?

5. Forgiveness is not a feeling but a canceling of debt. It takes guts to do it. It is not about forgetting, and sometimes reconciliation is not even possible. How have you experienced the power of forgiveness? What is holding you back from forgiving?

6. You have two choices: You can cancel the debt and walk in the freedom Christ purchased for you, or you can live as a prisoner and let unforgiveness torment you. If you want to take the step towards forgiveness, write down the name of the person who sinned against you and what they took from you. Then choose to cancel the debt like Jesus canceled yours.

CHAPTER 8

Grace Is Slow To Anger

1. Read James 1:19-27 and Exodus 34:1-9. What do these tell us about God's character?

2. How is anger the antithesis to God's grace?

3. Read Ephesians 4:26-27. What is the difference between feeling anger, having anger and sinning?

4. Why is it so important to take anger to Jesus instead of trying to manage it on your own?

5. Ask God to reveal the root of your anger. When He does, be honest with Him and ask Him to help you heal that root.

6. What is your next step in your journey of healing? (Reconciliation with someone, counseling, etc.)?

CHAPTER 9

Grace Again and Again and Again

1. Read Matthew 4:18-22, Luke 22:31-34 and Luke 22:47-62. What do you observe about Peter in these verses?

2. Read John 21. What similarities do you see between the setting of Peter's denials and his reinstatement?

3. After Jesus died, Peter returned to his old way of life of — fishing. He was confused and heartbroken and Jesus calls him to sit with Him and have breakfast. Why is this so profound?

4. What did Jesus mean when He told Peter to follow Him? What did it entail?

5. Jesus doesn't promise Peter an easy life full of cash and prizes. He promises him the best treasure forever and forever: Himself. What needs to change in you to believe that Jesus is better than life?

6. Jesus restored Peter and He offers you the same restoration over and over again. What do you need restored?