

INVITATION TO *IMAGINE*

Invitation To Imagine Series

Part 2 - "The Hard Truth"

Small Group Material

March 11th, 2018

Leader Guide

Bottom Line: *Worship engages our heart, our mind and our body.*

Study Verses: *1 Corinthians 2:9-10, John 1:14-16, Hebrews 7:18-19, Isaiah 64:3-5, Isaiah 66:2-3*

Define The Win: *Participants would understand how engaging their mind and thinking critically awakens their heart to worship. They would recognize how Christ's sacrifice serves as the ultimate expression of God's love. Group members would pinpoint where they need to respond to their circumstances with worship.*

Key Points

- *We are looking to understand what God reveals, not merely what we observe.*
- *Truth without grace crushes.*
- *When truth is misused, relationships change.*
- *To offer grace under the law destroys truth.*
- *Worship is evidence of understanding.*
- *The mind is given to awaken the heart.*
- *We engage our hearts by using our minds.*
- *Worship creates space for perspective.*
- *When we understand what we've received the response is to worship.*

- *We have to position ourselves to see differently or we're going to filter and edit and see through what we have always believed.*
- *Truth is required for grace to exist.*

ENCOUNTER

- **Describe your picture: what would a god who is worthy of your worship look like? What about their character would compel you to worship and praise them?**
- **Throughout the years, how have you experienced the tension between grace and the law? How has this tension influenced your perspective of God?**
- **What does it mean that grace and truth make up the fullness of God's expression of love?**
- **How can thinking critically about God awaken our heart to worship? How does worship create space for perspective?**

FORMATION

- **Read 1 Corinthians 2:9-10. What is the difference between looking to understand what God reveals rather than what we merely observe?**
- **Read Isaiah 64:3-5 and Isaiah 66:2-3. In this passage a simple, yet profound question is asked: how then can we be saved? How have we attempted to answer this question by using our limited knowledge and understanding?**
- **Read John 1:14-16 and Hebrews 7:18-19. How did Jesus serve as a game changer when it came to understanding God's heart as well as our relationship to the law and grace? How did He usher in a new way of connecting to God?**

EXPRESSION

- **What situations are you facing where you need to worship to gain perspective? What would you be declaring by pausing and deciding to worship as a response to these circumstances?**
- **In what ways do you find yourself interacting with God based off the old law and it's "give and take," performance mindset? On the other end of the spectrum, where have you become loose with the truth and cheapened grace?**

- **When we understand what we've received (in Christ) the response is to worship. If this is the case, articulate exactly what you've received through what Christ did on the cross. How does it serve as the greatest expression of God's love?**

LEADER INSIGHT: *We need to position ourselves to see differently. We can't take this step for granted. Why? Because if we fail to do so, we are going to filter and edit what we see through what we've always believed and what we have come to imagine about God. We are looking to understand what God reveals, not merely what we observe.*

Even though it might be scary or intimidating, there is freedom by accepting an invitation to imagine. By engaging our minds, we awaken our hearts. Our eyes open to the hope that is found only through Christ. The incarnation of Jesus, God's arrival, was a game-changer. His sacrifice fundamentally changed everything, especially the way we approach God and our connection with Him.

No longer do we reside under the burden of the old law. A new way, leading to life and freedom, took over. Trying to wrap our minds around what's been done on our behalf is impossible. It goes against the grain of everything culture teaches us. Rather than trying to earn our way into favor and access to Him, we only have to trust and abide.

Our ability to abide, to remain and stand still, is where we get into trouble. We try to understand God from our perspective, and in turn, without even knowing it, we create human-made solutions and alternative ways to justify ourselves before our Creator. Truth gets misused and becomes a token of the law and not a means of grace. Truth without grace crushes. When we misuse truth, relationships change, including our relationship with God. Instead of freedom, we settle for a "give and take" performance mindset, which is old covenant thinking.

Truth is required for grace to exist. Grace without truth dissipates, but grace rooted in truth is an expander. It builds, breathes, and fills us with life. Grace and truth make up the fullness of God's expression of love. God's grace sounds too good to be true, and this is why we have a problem receiving it. But, that doesn't change it from being offered to us.

When we understand what we received through Christ, the response is to worship. Worship is evidence of understanding. We use worship as a declaration that we know and believe He is worthy. Sometimes our minds awaken our heart and sometimes our heart provides a focus for our mind. Worship creates space for the right perspective by allowing us to slow down and engage our heart, mind, and body. Worship starts when we receive grace upon grace upon grace.