

## **The Best Worst News Ever!**

### **The Story That Rocked The Capital:**

Luke 18:9-14

Two points to the story:

- Our only comparison should be to **God... not others**.
- Our only hope is for God's **mercy and compassion**, not in living a **better life**.

### **The Chapter That Drives The Point Home:**

#### ***Romans 2:***

**1-3:** Don't congratulate yourself for being a **good person**.

**4-5:** Don't confuse God's **patience and mercy** with **approval**.

**6-13:** Don't believe the lie that "good people **go to Heaven**."

**14-16:** Don't dismiss the **moral code** that we are all born with.

### **The GREATEST NEWS Ever Told:**

# Growth Group Homework

For the week of January 22, 2017

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## GETTING TO KNOW YOU

1. If you could master one skill you don't have right now, what would it be?
2. If you asked average people on the street to describe God, what do you think they would say?  
  
What percentage of answers do you think would include calling God "kind" and "patient"?
3. What was your first response when Chris said to not congratulate yourself for being a good person?
4. Looking back at your notes from this week's teaching, was there anything you heard for the first time or anything that caught your attention, challenged or confused you?

## DIGGING DEEPER

1. There's no question we should all be thankful for the many blessings we receive and the accomplishments we achieve. But as we heard this weekend, we also need to be careful of making them our measure of spiritual success and maturity. How does Jeremiah 9:23-24 add and/or change our view of achievement and success?

**Jeremiah 9:23-24** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>23</sup> This is what the LORD says:

"Let not the wise boast of their wisdom  
or the strong boast of their strength  
or the rich boast of their riches,  
<sup>24</sup> but let the one who boasts boast about this:  
that they have the understanding to know me,  
that I am the LORD, who exercises kindness,  
justice and righteousness on earth,  
for in these I delight,"  
declares the LORD.

Of the three character traits of God listed in verse 24 which one do you identify with the most? Is there one you find more challenging to understand than the others? If so, explain.

If you remembered Jeremiah's words every day, can you think of any ways it may have an effect on you?

2. This week we heard how realizing our sinfulness actually gives us an opportunity to see and respond to the good news of what Jesus has done for us. An important part of being a follower of Christ and part of a Growth Group is creating an environment where someone can be honest about their shortcomings.

What specifics do the following verses give to help create this kind of environment?

**Romans 12:10** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>10</sup> Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves.

**Hebrews 3:13** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>13</sup> But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called "Today," so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

**1 Thessalonians 5:15** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>15</sup> Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else.

**Ephesians 4:29, 32** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>29</sup> Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

<sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Which one of these verses do you want to focus on putting into action this week?

**3.** The good news we heard this weekend was that God is kind, gracious and patient with us (Romans 2:4) in spite of all we've done! How do the following verses reinforce this great news?

**Romans 2:4** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>4</sup> Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?

**Nehemiah 9:17** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>17</sup> They refused to listen and failed to remember the miracles you performed among them. They became stiff-necked and in their rebellion appointed a leader in order to return to their slavery. But you are a forgiving God, gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and abounding in love. Therefore you did not desert them,

**Psalms 117:2** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>2</sup> For great is his love toward us,  
and the faithfulness of the LORD endures forever.  
Praise the LORD.

**Psalms 86:15** *New International Version (NIV)*

<sup>15</sup> But you, Lord, are a compassionate and gracious God,  
slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness.

Is there anyone you need to be patient with or show kindness to as God has shown you?

## TAKING IT HOME

**1.** Looking back at this week's teaching and study, is there one thing you'd especially like to remember this week?

**2.** Do you have any prayer requests for your group?

## Tips on Group Prayer

Prayer is an important part of being in a Growth Group. Over the years we've found that group prayer goes better when we follow three simple guidelines.

**WE PRAY FOR ONE TOPIC AT A TIME** - Anyone in the group is free to introduce a prayer request either before prayer begins or during the prayer time. Once a topic is introduced, the group focuses on that request alone. Once it's covered, the group moves on to the next topic.

**PRAY MORE THAN ONCE** - Because the group is focusing on one topic at a time, each person is encouraged to pray several times during the prayer time for those topics they feel most led to pray about. No one is required to pray.

**WE KEEP OUR PRAYERS SHORT AND SIMPLE** - Group prayer goes better when members keep their prayers short and to the point. When someone prays for a long time, it's hard for the other members to stay focused and long prayers tend to intimidate those who are just learning to pray out loud in a group. No one is required to pray out loud.



The "Amazing Race To Serve" event is just two weeks away on **Saturday, February 4!** It will be part race, part party and all FUN for everyone, from the adrenaline junkie to the couch potato and everyone in-between. If you haven't already, start making your plans to be part of a team, support a team, or just cheer a team on! Don't miss the new **family friendly course** option and the **grand prize fundraising challenge!**

You can sign up, make a donation, become a corporate sponsor, or get more information online at [amazingracetoserve.com](http://amazingracetoserve.com)

*All money raised will go to our next Weekend of Service, scheduled for April 29-30, 2017.*