



WHEN GOD DOESN'T MAKE SENSE

Group Discussion Guide



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When God Doesn't Make Sense

Discussion Guide

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Series Overview

Sometimes, from our point of view, God doesn't make sense. Once we begin to think like Jesus, things become clear.

Purpose of This Guide

The primary purpose of this group guide is to reinforce and deepen the lessons of the Grace Church message series: **When God Doesn't Make Sense**.

You may choose to use this guide:

- with your Grace Group.
- with any group of people interested in knowing what the Bible says about these topics.

1-The Cross Didn't Make Sense

Scripture: [Psalm 22](#)

Icebreaker: It Doesn't Make Sense

Make a list of some things that don't make sense. For instance:

- Why do people say, "heads up" when you should duck?
- Why do we drive on parkways and park in driveways?
- Why are wise men and wise guys opposites?

Discussion Questions: Think Like Jesus

- In what ways did the Cross not make sense?
- As horrific as the physical suffering was on the Cross, separation from God was even worse ([Mat 27:46](#)).
 - ▶ For a Christ-follower, a sense of separation from God is more distressing than physical suffering ([Psa 22:1-6](#)). For you, what words best describe separation from God?
 - ▶ What can cause you to experience a sense of separation from God ([Isa 59:1-2](#))?
- Until the Cross, Jesus had never been apart from the Father.
 - ▶ Why did Jesus agree to this separation ([2Cor 5:21](#))?
 - ▶ What have you sacrificed for those who are separated from God?
 - ▶ In your relationships, what can help you think like Jesus?
- It is our privilege to tell others about Christ's victory over sin and death ([Psa 22:30-31](#)). As a group, pray for opportunities to tell others about Christ's victory over sin and death.

Dig a Little Deeper: Wild Animals

When we leave God out of our lives, we behave like wild animals. For each animal, list a behavior that describes how we behave without God.

<i>Animal</i>	<i>Scripture</i>	<i>Behavior</i>
bull	Psa 22:12	
lion	Psa 22:13	
dog	Psa 22:16	
ox	Psa 22:21	

Application Exercise: Pray for Open Doors

- Pray for open doors to tell others your faith story.
- If God opens a door, walk through it.
- If you recently told someone about Jesus or shared your faith story, tell your Grace Group about it.

2-Parable of the Good Samaritan

Scripture: [Luke 10:25-37](#)

Icebreaker: Neighborly

Make a list of ways people have been neighborly to you.

Neighborly = to be helpful, friendly, or kind

Discussion Questions: Who Is Your Neighbor?

- What are the key teachings from these passages?
 - ▶ [Deuteronomy 6:4-7](#)
 - ▶ [Leviticus 19:18](#)
- Why do you think the man asked Jesus, “Who is my neighbor?” ([Luke 10:29](#))?
- What were the possible risks of stopping to help the man ([Luke 10:30-35](#))? Think of times you have helped others. In helping them, what were the risks to you?
- According to Jesus’ story, who is your neighbor ([Luke 10:36-37](#))?

Dig a Little Deeper: A Few One Anothers

Here are a few “one anothers” to consider.

Serve one another	Gal 5:13
Honor one another	Rom 12:10
Be honest with one another	Col 3:9
Love one another	John 13:34

For a challenge, find 30 more “one anothers” in the New Testament.

Application: Love My Neighbor

For the next seven days, do something to show your neighbors that you love them.

<i>Day</i>	<i>My Neighbor</i>	<i>My Act of Love</i>
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

3-Parables of the Lost Sheep, Coin, Son

Scripture: [Luke 15](#)

Icebreaker: Placing Value

In our culture, what would be comparable to a sheep, a gold coin, and a son? Which would be most distressing to lose?

Discussion Questions: Repentance

- What did the prodigal son say or do that suggests he had repented ([Luke 15:17-19](#))?

Repentance = a change of attitude and action from sin toward obedience to God.

- One of the powerful things about God's Word is that it forces you to confront your sin ([Acts 2:37](#)). How do you react to a passage when it points out your sin?
- What can we do to build relationships with people who are far from God ([Php 2:3](#) and [Eph 4:2](#))? Why is it important to build these relationships?
- Who are the "sinners" in our culture today we are unlikely to spend time with and evangelize? What can we do to remove barriers to make that possible?

Dig a Little Deeper: Rebellious vs. Religious

In the story of the prodigal son, both sons were living lives apart from their father.

<i>Rebellious</i>	<i>Religious</i>
Visible sinner	Invisible sinner
Unrighteous	Self-righteous (angry, judgmental)
Selfish	Self-sufficient

Application Exercise: Self-Assessment

What tends to pull you away from God, rebellion or religion?

<i>Rebellion</i>		<i>Religion</i>
Selfish	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1	Self-sufficient
Unrighteous	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1	Self-righteous
Visible sinner	5 - 4 - 3 - 2 - 1	Invisible sinner

What will you do to overcome the things that interfere with your relationship with God?

4-Parable of Pharisee / Tax Collector

Scripture: [Luke 18:9-14](#)

Icebreaker: Look Bad, Taste Good

List some great tasting foods that look unappealing.
If they looked bad, why did you taste them?

Discussion Questions: Prayer That Pleases God

- Who are the “good” people according to our societal standards today?

- By God’s standards, who is good ([Rom 3:10](#) and [Rom 3:23](#))?

- How can a prayer that begins with, “God, I thank You” become unacceptable to God ([Luke 18:11-12](#))?

- What type of prayer pleases God?
 - ▶ **Humble** ([Luke 18:13](#) and [Jas 4:6](#)): What does it look like to pray with humility? How can reading God’s Word keep you humble ([1Pet 5:5-6](#))?
 - ▶ **Honoring** ([Luke 18:14](#) and [Psa 95:1-7](#)): In what way can your prayers honor God?
 - ▶ **Heartfelt** ([Luke 18:13](#) and [Col 4:12](#)): When do your prayers tend to be most heartfelt? What can you do to make your prayers more heartfelt? What can you do to avoid making your prayers nothing more than a shopping list?

Dig a Little Deeper: ACTS Model of Prayer

There is no best formula for prayer. Prayer is conversing with God. Sometimes, your thoughts may overwhelm you and you aren't sure how to organize them. It can be helpful to use a model to remember key components to a good conversation with Him. The ACTS Model is one example.

<i>ACTS</i>		<i>Scripture</i>
Adoration	Begin your conversation by praising God for who He is.	Psa 48:1, Psa 63:2-4, Psa 68:35
Confession	Express your sorrow for anything you have said, thought, or done that is not pleasing to Him. Ask Him to help you avoid them in the future.	1John 1:9, Psa 103:1-5
Thanksgiving	Express gratitude for what He is doing in your life and the lives of others.	1The 5:18, Psa 69:30, Psa 118
Supplication	Request God's help for yourself and others.	Php 4:6-7, Psa 4:1, Psa 5:8, Jas 1:5, Eph 6:18

Application Exercise:

For the next seven days, use the ACTS Model to pray.

5-Parable of Laborers

Scripture: [Mat 20:1-16](#)

Icebreaker: Better Than I Deserve

Discuss times when you have gotten something better than you deserved.

Discussion Questions: God's Grace

- How would you characterize the land owner's practice of paying wages ([Mat 20:10-12](#))?
 - Unfair
 - Generous
- This parable is not about labor practices. What is it about ([Mat 20:1](#))?
- If the pay represents salvation, how do you view the land owner's pay practices ([Rom 3:23](#) and [Rom 6:23](#))?
- What is the advantage of accepting Christ sooner rather than later?
- What is the danger of comparing what you have to what others have ([Gal 5:26](#) and [Jas 3:16](#))?

Dig a Little Deeper: Grace

- Grace gives us what we need, not what we deserve. No one deserves God's grace (**Rom 3:23-24**).
- Grace makes us all equal. Those who have accepted Christ, have equal standing in the eyes of God (**Gal 3:26-28**).
- Grace is its own reward (**2Cor 12:8-9**).

Application Exercise: Grateful for His Grace

Tell God how grateful you are for His grace. Try one or more of the following.

- Write a letter or poem to God thanking Him for His grace toward you.
- Create a work of art that expresses how grateful you are for His grace.
- Sing songs of praise that express your gratefulness for His grace.
- Read aloud the Bible verses that best express your gratefulness for His grace.

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