Long Story Short: Understanding God’s View of Outreach

Reflect

1. Has anyone ever made the effort to understand you personally? Who in your life has loved you well? Who have you received grace from?
2. Are there people in this world that are hard for you to relate to? Are there others in your own life who it is particularly hard to extend grace to?
3. Why do we call it “grace” when we receive God’s love?

Read Your Bible

- Acts 10:34-43
- Joel 2:28

Apply God’s Word to Your Life

1. Acts 10 is the story of God’s grace towards a soldier and his family. Read the whole chapter if you have time!
2. What do you see in Joel 2? What exactly has God promised to do among all peoples? What makes this amazing?
3. From Acts 10, what did Peter need to realize? Why was this important? What did he have that they needed?
4. In verses 34-43, what are some key things Peter wanted them to know? Do you have questions about anything he explains? What do you think is most important to explain to someone else about salvation? Have you ever had the opportunity?
5. The Old Testament Scriptures often promised this type of the event: sharing the good news of God across cultures and divides. Jesus makes clear that love is the central behavior in this work. How does love shape our call to share the good news in His name?

Grace gives what cannot be earned. Love prioritizes another’s best, at great cost to self. How important are these two things in your relationship with God? What would happen if they were taken away? Grace and love are also fundamental in the way we relate to God’s work in those around us. What does this mean for you? Love as you been loved. Forgive as you have been forgiven. Speak in plain language the good news of Jesus Christ in this world. God, according to His patient plan, is working to expand His saving grace to all people. Our mission at Hope is “to encourage all people to know the love of Christ.” What does that mean for us as a church? Who can we be in our homes, our neighborhoods, our cities, and beyond? Ask God today for more of His love—His grace, His truth, His vision, His heart. Then, be ready to run with Him. Jesus is for all people, everywhere. Because “all the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

Pray

Lord, we are gathered in Your name today. Yours is the name above all names, the only name by which we can be saved: Jesus Christ. We confess that we hide Your name at times in fear of judgment from others. Some days, we run from Your love. But we don’t want to run or hide from You. Fill us with Your love. Bring Your name to our lips. Open our eyes to see the lost, the hurting, and the seeking. To love as You have loved us and forgive as we have been forgiven. In Your name, Lord Jesus. Amen.