

LOVE > SELF

When you learn to see yourself and others through the eyes of Jesus, your life will be radically changed. He loves you. Don't just skip over that. You. Are. Loved.

God doesn't love the person you wish you were or the person you pretend to be. He loves you. The real you.

How freeing is that?

Many of us spend our lives comparing ourselves to others, hoping we can be good enough. But seeking identity and worth in anything other than Jesus is a never-ending cycle of disappointment. Our identity and worth are found only in Him.

To wrap our hearts and minds around just how explosive and powerful this truth is, we're going to look at three ideas:

- 1 Grace is more than we deserve.
- 2 Humility means thinking of yourself less.
- 3 Love is the greatest commandment.

FOR MORE, READ CHAPTERS 4–5 IN THE BOOK: *JESUS > RELIGION*.

MORE THAN WE DESERVE

read

Grace is scandalous. It's more than we deserve. In fact, grace is getting something we don't deserve at all. It's a good gift we could never earn (see Romans 11:6). When we introduced grace last week, we learned that it's the opposite of religion—the opposite of trying harder to do the right things to deserve God's favor. Now, let's move beyond the concept and see how grace transforms our lives.

Read John 4:1-6.

Religion makes enemies. Jesus makes friends. He doesn't go around us. He comes straight to us. Recall in the group session we learned that Jews and Samaritans were bitter rivals. The root of this disdain and prejudice was religious. Jews viewed Samaritans as people who had compromised the purity of the Jewish religion by integrating into a foreign culture. But instead of dismissing and avoiding people, Jesus had to go to them (see verse 4). His mission on this earth was to extend God's love and grace to whoever would believe in Him (see John 3:16.)

Who do you avoid? Why?

How would you feel if God wanted to change their lives? Would you celebrate the change, or would you question God? What does your response reveal about your perspective of grace?

Read John 4:7-15.

The woman immediately questioned Jesus from a cultural and religious perspective. But Jesus wasn't deterred by her questions. He put the religious and cultural differences aside and got personal.

