***We are the Church***

***Session 5: Transformed by Grace***

***2 Corinthians 12: 7- 10; 2 Timothy 1:3-12***

Reflect back on last week’s session about being ‘loving family’

* How have you seen that in action this week?

**What is Grace?**

* What does grace mean to you? How would you define it?
* Reflect together on the quotes below.





**Saved by Grace**

***Read 2 Timothy 1:3-12***

* What does it say here about us being ‘saved by grace’ (v9-10, and read Ephesians 2:8-9)? What does that mean to you? How is this different to other religions?

**Worship**

IN response to what you have read, listen or sing along to ‘This is our God (Your Grace is enough)’ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g-RIWtmINOc>

And thank God for his grace in saving you.

**Transformed, Sustained and Empowered by Grace**

Not only are we saved by grace, but we are transformed and empowered by grace, by the Holy Spirit.

* How does the Spirit empower, sustain and transform us by grace (see particularly 2 Timothy 1:7, 2 Corinthians 12:7-10)?
* How do these verses encourage us in times of suffering and hardship and when we are feeling weak (and read 2 Corinthians 1:8-11)?
* Share stories of how you have been empowered, sustained and transformed by God’s grace in your weakness.

**Be ‘Grace Dispensers’ to a Needy World**

In his book ‘Vanishing Grace,’ Philip Yancey describes how we are called to be ‘grace-dispensers to a needy world.’ He says we are to show grace out of the grace we have shown…

*“Grace dispensers give out of their own bounty, in gratitude (a word with the same root as grace) for what we have received from God.”*

* What do you think it means for us to be ‘grace dispensers’ in our communities? What might this practically look like on your frontlines?

**Live it out… Be transformed by grace, and go and be a ‘grace dispenser’ this week…**

Here are some ways in which you might respond and live this out this week:

1. Maybe you have your own ‘thorn in the flesh.’ Offer that to God in prayer (maybe with someone else) and ask God to make his power ‘perfect in your weakness.’
2. Seek to be a ‘grace dispenser’ this week on your frontlines. Pray for God to show you someone to show grace to and find a way of blessing them even if you feel they don’t deserve it!
3. Seek to rely fully on God this week, not your own strength. Consciously commit everything to God and ask him to empower you by His Spirit in all that you do this week – and see if there is any difference!

**Pray**

In small groups pray particularly for those going through a hard time at the moment. If they are present, you might like to lay hands on them and ask God for words or scripture to encourage them at the time and then pray for the Holy Spirit’s strengthening and empowering.

*“Through many dangers, toils and snares,*

*I have already come;*

*’Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far,*

*And grace will lead me home.”*