



Lesson 5: “An Invitation to Receive Mercy and Grace”

6-8 Crew Club Plan

<u>Key Teaching Point</u>	I’m invited to receive mercy and grace from God.
<u>Bible Verse</u>	“Don’t you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can’t you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?” (Romans 2:4, NLT)
<u>Bible Passage</u>	“Jesus shows grace” (John 8:1-11, NLT)
<u>Materials</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A Bible ● A dollar bill ● A scissors ● Five sheets of paper per student OR a stack of newspapers ● A large, empty bucket or garbage can ● A sheet of red construction paper and and sheet of green construction paper, or as needed to cut eight cards of each color

Relate (20 minutes)

Welcome students with a snack.

Distribute name tags and snacks. Choose one of the following icebreaker activities to do together while students eat their snack:

Icebreaker Options (Choose one):

- God sightings: Ask students to describe how they've seen God at work in their school or at their home in the past week.
- Let students take turns sharing how they're feeling today using the Feelings Wheel (from the CKC Games Bag).
- Open a discussion with the question, "Have you ever been caught doing something you shouldn't have been doing? What happened? How did the person who caught you respond?"

Play a game.

Give each student five sheets of paper and ask them to crumple up each sheet to form five "stones" OR pass out sheets of newspapers and ask students to rip up the newspapers and crumple them up into five "stones" each. Ask students to line up on one side of the room, and set a large empty bucket or garbage can on the other side of the room. The goal is to get as many stones into the container as possible. Ask students to keep track of their own score.

Give students the following directions below or create some of your own. Students can only throw stones when these directions apply to them:

- **If you are wearing [insert a color], throw a stone.**
- **If you are wearing boots, throw a stone.**
- **If you got up before 7:00 this morning, throw a stone.**
- **If you ate a sandwich for lunch, throw a stone.**
- **If you ate eggs for breakfast, throw a stone.**
- **If you have a dog at home, throw a stone.**
- **If you are over hundred years old, throw a stone.** (For the final direction, choose something that would not apply to any students in the room.)

In today's story, some religious leaders came and asked Jesus if they should throw stones at a woman who had sinned against one of God's commandments. Jesus responded to their question with a command: he said that only a person who hadn't sinned against God could throw a stone. Only Jesus had permission to throw a stone at the woman because he is the only one who has never sinned but he chose not to do it! Instead, he showed the woman mercy and forgiveness, and gave her a precious invitation.



Receive (20 minutes)

Read God's Word.

Read from John 8:1-11 in the *New Living Translation*. You may want to encourage students to close their eyes as they listen.

Jesus returned to the Mount of Olives, but early the next morning he was back again at the Temple. A crowd soon gathered, and he sat down and taught them. As he was speaking, the teachers of religious law and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery. They put her in front of the crowd.

“Teacher,” they said to Jesus, “this woman was caught in the act of adultery. The law of Moses says to stone her. What do you say?”

They were trying to trap him into saying something they could use against him, but Jesus stooped down and wrote in the dust with his finger. They kept demanding an answer, so he stood up again and said, “All right, but let the one who has never sinned throw the first stone!” Then he stooped down again and wrote in the dust.

When the accusers heard this, they slipped away one by one, beginning with the oldest, until only Jesus was left in the middle of the crowd with the woman. Then Jesus stood up again and said to the woman, “Where are your accusers? Didn’t even one of them condemn you?”

“No, Lord,” she said.

And Jesus said, “Neither do I. Go and sin no more.”

Discuss:

- **What was Jesus’s invitation to the woman at the end of their interaction? How do you think the woman responded? What do you think she felt or did differently after this interaction with Jesus?**
- **What might be Jesus’s invitation to the Pharisees and the legal experts? What do you think they felt or did after this interaction with Jesus?**

- **What might this interaction with Jesus look like if it had occurred today with students your age?**



Respond (20 minutes)

Apply God's Truth.

What is Mercy?

Ask students: **How do you feel after doing something you know was wrong?**

After we do something wrong, we often fear the punishment and consequences that will follow our actions that we know we deserve. This is mercy: when we don't receive the punishment or consequences that we deserve when we do wrong or mess up.

How did the woman receive mercy in today's story?

Take student responses.

We all deserve to be punished for our sin but God, in his great mercy, doesn't punish us for our sin. God is holy and perfect and he can't just forget about sin so Jesus took our place and our punishment for sins upon himself. We experience God's mercy because of Jesus!

What is Grace?

Hold up a dollar bill.¹

- **What's this?** (A dollar bill.)
- **What are some different ways you can get a dollar bill?** (Earn it, steal it, borrow it, have someone give it to you, etc.)

There are different ways you could get a dollar bill. But who does THIS dollar bill belong to?

Take student responses.

Me! So, what can I do with this dollar bill?

Take student responses.

I have the right to do whatever I want with this, because it belongs to me.

¹ You could substitute this for a \$5 bill to make the gift more valuable, but it's recommended to not give away any amount more valuable to avoid students becoming distracted.

Select a student in the group and tell them you'd like to give it to them as a gift. Emphasize that they didn't do anything special to earn it, nor do they have to do anything to receive it. It's just a gift from you. Ask the student who received the dollar:

- **How did you feel about receiving this dollar bill?**
- **Did you expect to get this when you came to club today?**
- **Did you do anything to earn it?**

Ask the rest of the group:

- **Have you ever received a gift like this (unexpected, unearned)?**
- **Who gave it to you? How did you feel?**

God's grace is like that dollar bill. It is something that he gives freely, and we don't earn it by our own good behavior or anything we do.

Read Ephesians 2:8-9 from a Bible.

"God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it." (NLT)

How did the woman in today's story experience God's grace?

Take student responses.

Jesus treated the woman better than she deserved. The law experts and the religious leaders left feeling guilty for their sin, but the woman left with these words of Jesus over her life: "Go and sin no more." Even though this woman deserved to be called out as a sinner, Jesus called her out as someone who could turn away from her sin, not because of her own ability but because of God's kindness!

Read Romans 2:4 from the Bible.

"Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?" (Romans 2:4, NLT).

If we are going to receive this invitation of God's grace and mercy, we have to bring our sin before God just like this woman's sins were brought before Jesus. God's grace and mercy means everything to those who know that they don't deserve anything that God's kindness has to offer. For this reason, Jesus offers sinners an invitation to receive grace and mercy, and this kindness changes us from the inside out!

Close in prayer together.

Instruct students to hold their hands in front of them with both palms facing up.

God's grace is a gift. We can't do anything to earn it. Not by doing good things. Not by being sorry enough. It's something we receive from God simply because he loves us.

As you hold out your hands, close your eyes and pray silently. Think about one way that God might be giving you a fresh start to love and obey him. Receive God's grace as a gift.

Take any additional prayer requests and close the group in prayer.