



## **Moving ahead with a Journey of Grace in Small Groups**

By Daryll Stanton

What's happening in your discipleship plan for small groups? The SDMI approach of discipleship is illustrated as a three-fold framework called [A Journey of Grace](#). Let's look at that framework and some of the supporting resources.

### **God's Grace to Us**

#### ***Jesus is THE WAY.***

Jesus prepares people to follow Him. Through prevenient grace, God prepares the path before us. His hand reaches out and beckons us to Him, drawing us into a deeper relationship with Him. This grace both precedes and enables our response.

#### ***Jesus is THE TRUTH.***

Jesus rescues people. This is saving grace. Jesus rescues us from sin and leads us into the truth that sets us free. We receive the gift of saving grace by believing in God. He redeems us, makes us a new creation, and adopts us into His family.

#### ***Jesus is THE LIFE.***

Jesus guides His followers. He provides sanctifying grace. The Holy Spirit empowers us to live a life fully consecrated to God. Sanctifying grace begins the moment we experience salvation. Initial sanctification is followed by spiritual growth in grace until, in a moment of full consecration and complete surrender on our part, God purifies and cleanses the heart.

### **Our Response to God's Grace**

In our small groups, disciples and disciple-makers learn how we are able to share this Journey of Grace by...

**WITNESSING:** Every disciple of Jesus is called to share with others the story of God's grace in his or her life. As we make disciples, we must tell and retell the story of God's grace in our lives and the lives of others.

**WALKING:** God does not make Christlike disciples in a moment. The journey of grace spans a lifetime. Christ calls His followers to a journey with others from no faith to new faith to mature faith. The journey with others takes patience. It takes love. It takes grace!

### **Moving forward in Discipleship with *A Journey of Grace* resources**

The Journey of Grace resources can be used as part of your overall discipleship plan. Here is the 6-week plan the Mesoamerica Region has for its churches:

- Utilize the introductory brochure
- Preach sermons on the Journey of Grace
- Present lessons in Sunday School for adults and youth based on Dr. Basic's book *WAY, TRUTH, LIFE*
- Host adult small groups utilizing the *Way, Truth, Life Small Group Discussion Guide*
- Offer youth and young adult lessons utilizing the *Way, Truth, Life Youth and Young Adults Discussion Guide*
- Provide family devotionals so children can be taught at home about a journey of grace
- Use children's *A Journey of Grace* activities and lessons during worship

### **Small Group Discussion Guide for Adults**

This is [a companion resource](#) to David Basic's book *Way, Truth, Life* to be used in conjunction with the seven videos that Dr. Basic recorded. If you are a small group leader or a Sunday school teacher who has planned to use this resource, there are numerous ways to make the most of this material in your own context, and the materials are flexible to adapt to your needs.

### **Youth and Young Adults Discussion Guide**

This [resource](#) is a collaboration of youth leaders from all six Nazarene regions. For them, the idea of a journey brings to mind images of traveling, walking, and exploring—the journey is all about what happens between setting out and arriving. The chapters in Dr. Basic's *Way, Truth, Life* are not markers along the road, merely showing us how far we've come and how much farther we have yet to go. We do not travel past marker number one, check it off, and leave it in the past, ready for the next marker. Our growth as disciples of Jesus Christ will come as we explore and wrestle with each aspect of the journey. There will be much to pick up along this journey, and there will be much to lay down. As with any journey, resources and guides are available to help along the way.

### **Utilizing the VBS *A Journey of Grace* Resources for Children's Small Groups**

These [VBS resources](#) can be adapted for backyard VBS groups as well as mid-week children's activities. Children will learn about God's great grace through the story of a treacherous trek through a dense forest, up a jagged mountain, and through the darkness on the other side. Along

the way, you'll meet a cast of grace-filled creatures who remind us of God's prevenient, saving, and sanctifying grace.

Discipleship is a journey of grace with Jesus as our guide and companion. Christian discipleship helps believers grow in the Lord Jesus Christ as His Holy Spirit, who resides within them, equips them to overcome the pressures and trials of this present life and become more and more Christlike.

We would like very much to hear about how you are utilizing our new A Journey of Grace discipleship resources. Connect with me at [dstanton@nazarene.org](mailto:dstanton@nazarene.org).