

We all have memories of our failures, and some of them were epic. The good news is that God's grace is even more epic. This series will remind us that God is better at forgiving and fixing than we are at failing.

These questions are designed to extend the impact of the weekend message. Use them to go deeper in your personal study time, with your family and/or with a group.

1 Rick mentioned two claims that differentiate Christianity from other world religions: the resurrection of Jesus, and the message of salvation by grace. Agree or disagree? Can you think of other things about the Christian faith that make it unique?

2 **Read 1 Corinthians 15:1-18.** Why is the validity of the actual resurrection of Jesus so crucial to our faith? What reasons or evidences would you give to someone to validate your faith in this huge claim?

3 **Read Ephesians 2:1-9.** What is the connection between the resurrection of Jesus and the message of salvation by grace through faith?

4 Rick pointed out that many find it easier to believe in Jesus' resurrection than to believe that God's grace is available to them. Why is this so?

5 We are often better at remembering our worst than at remembering God's best. Why is this so? How does Satan use the memories of our worst moments to diminish our service to Christ? What can we do to combat those memories when they resurface?

6 No doubt Peter replayed the scene of his denial of Jesus many times in his mind. **Read John 21:15-19.** What was Jesus trying to tell Peter? What was he asking Peter to believe and do?

7 Our lives are often like stained glass windows—broken fragments made beautiful by grace. That's because God is better at fixing than we are at failing. Share a time in your life when God's grace proved to be more epic than your fail.

8 Close your time together asking for God's grace to move in a powerful way from your heads to your hearts. Ask him to help you receive it as much as you believe it.





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1 Rick noted that some people understand the Bible as if grace never existed until Jesus came along but the truth is that grace is **there from start to finish**. How does our understanding of one of the first stories in the Bible affect how we understand the rest of the Bible?

2 GRACE PREPARES a paradise. Read Genesis 2:8-9, 15-17. The most epic fail cannot be blamed on heredity or environment. God graciously set Adam up not to fail, but to flourish. Why do many read this story as if God only cares about "the negatives"? What does that kind of reading overlook?

3 Read Genesis 3:1-7. The enemy tries to convince us that God is holding out on us. How was that true in the temptation Adam and Eve faced? In what ways was eating the forbidden fruit a real "eye-opener" for them? Follow up discussion: Rick mentioned that Satan is the master of creating FOMO (Fear of Missing Out). How have you experienced that in your life?

4 GRACE PRESERVES a relationship. Read Genesis 3:8-10. After their sin it is the serpent who abandons the man and woman, not God. Instead, God asks a question. Rick said that "God's question should not be read as a condemnation but as an invitation." Why is that such a powerful truth? Share a time when God invited you out with a "Where are you?" moment so he could deal with your failure.

5 GRACE PROTECTS a destiny. This story teaches us to look for the mercies of God in the judgments of God. **Read Genesis 3:22-24.** In what ways was God preventing them from eating of the Tree of Life "an act of mercy" rather than "an act of wrath"? How might considering God's mercy toward Adam and Eve give us confidence that God will be merciful to us today (see Romans 5:17)?

6 GRACE PROVIDES a covering. Sin altered their nature, but it did not alter God's. So God responded to their worst with His best. **Read Genesis 3:21.** What is the significance of God making skins for Adam and Eve and clothing them? What would have had to happen for the God to give them clothing made of skins and how is that relevant today?

7 Read Genesis 3:15 and 2 Timothy 1:9-10. What grace announced in the garden to people hiding from God was a way for all people to hide in God (see Galatians 3:27). God made the very first sacrifice for sin, and He made the very last. With that in mind, how does God's epic grace change your perspective on life?

8 Read Revelation 22:14. Grace is there from start to finish, and grace will **finish what God started**. Share an example of a time you experienced the length grace was willing to go for you. What difference will God's epic grace make for you this week?





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1 Share about a time you stepped into unknown territory (maybe a first day at a new job or school, or a significant move or transition). What did that feel like?

2 **Read Genesis 12:1-8.** God promises Abram divine blessing and a growing family. But to receive what he has never had will require giving up what he has always known. What was Abram asked to leave, and how do those things compare with what people trust in today?

3 **Read Genesis 12:10-16.** Abram’s journey of faith is like ours: full of stumbles and sins. Here **Abram acts out of selfishness and fear.** How do those two motivations undermine trust in God?

4 **Read Genesis 12:17-20.** In response to Abram’s lack of faith, **God protects and keeps His promise.** God is a rescuer, even though Abram doesn’t cry out for help or repent. Has God ever intervened in your life without you even asking?

5 **Read Genesis 15:1.** For Abram’s fear, God is His shield. For Abram’s self-interest, God will be his reward. Why do we, like Abram, need to be reminded of this promise so often?

6 **Read Genesis 15:5-6.** Abram (later named Abraham) has a legacy defined by his faith (see *Romans 4:2 and Galatians 3:29*). So **we trust God’s promise and live in His grace.** Why is it good news that God credits us with righteousness? How does that show us God’s grace?





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1 Rick began by reminding us that family is where we learned how much we all need epic grace, because sometimes our families are just an epic mess. Share a memory of one way your faith was shaped in a positive way by your family.

2 FAMILY MESS Read **Genesis 16:1-6**. Rick noted that *"everybody in the story bears some responsibility."* How did Sarai, Abram, and Hagar each fail to some degree in this story? Follow up discussion: What might have prompted Abram and Sarai to take matters into their own hands? Have you ever tried to "help" God by devising your own plan? How did that turn out for you?

3 God uses people after epic fails. Most of us have chapters in our family story that just don't read very well. But His grace is more epic than our mistakes and problems. That's why the worst chapter never has to be the last chapter. How have you experienced this truth in your family?

4 Read **Genesis 16:7-10**. What does this part of the story tell you about God? Follow up discussion: **Read 16:13**. What resonates with you about the name Hagar gives God?

5 Grace sees your family. When the mess is present, it can seem as if God is absent. But nothing could be further from the truth. **Read Psalm 22:24**. Describe a time in your life when you were comforted by knowing that God sees you and that you matter to Him.

6 Grace sees your future. This story reminds us that because God can see and bless tomorrow, we can live in obedient trust today. How can Jesus' words in **Matthew 6:33** help you live with more peace and resolve today? What is one thing you can do to trust God more with the chapter of life you are currently in?

7 Grace sees your faith. It took great faith for Hagar to return to Sarai (she had to believe that God's message was bigger than the mess). Her story reminds us to never underestimate the capacity of faith to overcome a fail and to shape a person's life. **Read 2 Timothy 1:5 and 3:15**. What role did the faith of Lois and Eunice have in shaping the faith of Timothy? How has God used your grandmother or mother to shape your faith?

8 God uses the unseen to make an epic difference. If your family is in a good place, give thanks. If your family is in a hard place, take courage. Every family is a place to experience grace. And when grace writes the story, the ending is always epic. What is one way we can pray for you and your family today? Close in prayer.





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1 Rick began by reminding us that "Even a casual reading of the Bible reveals that God does not do cover-ups". Why is it significant to know that Scripture records the best and worst of God's people as it tells the best story ever? What does that teach us about our need for epic grace?

2 JUDAH FAILED... as a son and brother.

Genesis 37 records the plot of Jacob's sons to get rid of their father's favorite son, and Judah led the way. **Read Genesis 37:26-27 and 34-35.** What surprises you about Judah's involvement in the plot to get rid of Joseph?

3 JUDAH FAILED... as a husband and father.

Genesis 38 provides an interesting review of Judah's private life. **Read Genesis 38:1-10.** What stands out to you regarding how Judah failed as a husband and father? As you reflect on some of Judah's failures, what thoughts and feelings rise up in you in relationship to some of your own failures?

4 Rick mentioned that what happened between Judah and Tamar was a turning point in Judah's life. **Read Genesis 38:25-26.** Why do you think this was such a pivotal moment in Judah's life? Follow up discussion: **Read Genesis 44:30-34.** What is so amazing about Judah's transformation here compared to where his story began?

5 EPIC TRUTH! God is reliable. Judah's story reminds us that God is moving relentlessly toward the fulfillment of His eternal plan, and along the way He uses some pretty scandalous resumes. **Read Genesis 49:10.** Why would God choose Judah to be the line through which the most epic promise ever would be fulfilled?

6 EPIC TRUTH! Man is redeemable. Rick reminded us that "Your history does not shock God, and He has never met a resume that intimidates Him." How does it make you feel knowing that God never deems anyone as hopeless or beyond repair? Share some "Judah examples" – stories of people you know who experienced a radical transformation.

7 EPIC TRUTH! Grace is remarkable! Rick pointed out, "I'm not shocked by the stories of fails in the Bible. I continue to be shocked by the wonder of grace. The scandal of redemption is the redemption of scandal. And the hero of the story is the Lion of Judah." **Read Revelation 5:9.** Share about a time in your own life that you were shocked by the wonder of God's epic grace. Spend some time in prayer as you close by thanking God for giving us exactly what we needed, an epic Savior.





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1 To start things off, what are some generational patterns you've seen repeat themselves in your lifetime? They can be specific to you, or they can be as general as fashion trends.

2 Read Numbers 20:1-5. The people complain, much like their parents did almost forty years earlier (**see Exodus 17:1-7**). To be fair, they needed water, but they didn't need to rebel against God or attack Moses. The people had a legitimate need, but they sought to meet it in an illegitimate way. How do people seek to meet legitimate needs in illegitimate ways in our lifetime?

3 Read Numbers 20:6-8. Despite the people's negative attitude, despite acting just like the previous generation, we see that **God provides**. What does this tell us about God's character?

4 Read Numbers 20:9-11. Moses rebels. In Moses' anger, he disobeys God's command and verbally berates the people (**see Psalm 106:32-33**). Why do you think God cares about both our actions *and* our words? How can our speech be a form of rebellion against God? (*for Jesus' take, see Matthew 5:21-22 and Luke 6:45*)

5 Read Numbers 20:12 and Numbers 20:24. When God's people sin, **God rebukes and redeems**. That's what he did with Moses, forbidding him from entering the promised land but allowing him to continue to lead the people. And beyond his earthly life, Moses did make it to the promised land (**see Luke 9:30-31**). Why do you think not trusting God is at the heart of Moses' rebellion? Why is it important that God rebukes our sin and redeems our lives?

6 Read 1 Corinthians 10:4. Paul says that the rock struck by Moses was Christ. How does this metaphor help us see and understand who Jesus is and what He has done for us?





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1 Read Hebrews 11:32. At first glance what strikes you as odd about the fact that these guys made it into the great hall of faith? Share one way that provides hope for you.

2 WHAT TOOK PLACE? A fickle people. Read **Judges 10:6-16.** This sad cycle of deliverance followed by rebellion just keeps repeating itself in the book of Judges. How comfortable had Israel become with idolatry at this point (see v. 6)? How is it possible to become comfortable with idols without even noticing their control over you?

3 Rick noted that this was the first time in Judges that God rejects the nation's plea for deliverance. What does that tell you about their condition and about God's ways of dealing with His people when we keep getting caught up in the same patterns of sin? Follow up question: Was God being unforgiving in verses 13-14, or was something bigger going on? Explain.

4 WHAT TOOK PLACE? A fugitive leader. Read **Judges 11:1-8.** How would you describe Jephthah based on these verses? How does this make him "fit" or "unfit" to be used by God as a deliverer who served as a leader for 6 years? Follow up discussion: In the middle of Judges 11 (9-28) we see that his first act was to try diplomacy before declaring war. What are some significant things regarding his faith and relationship with God that stand out to you from his letter to the Ammonite king?

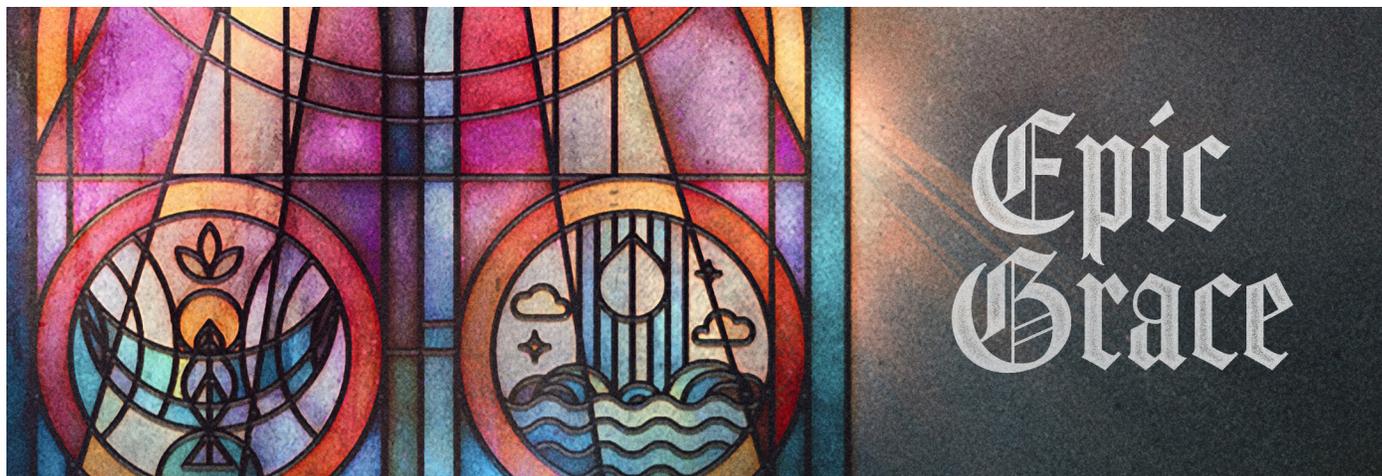
5 WHAT TOOK PLACE? A foolish vow. Read **Judges 11:29-39.** What did Jephthah promise to do if God made him successful in battle? Why did he think such a vow would help gain a military victory? Personal application: Share a time when you tried to make a bargain with God. What did you learn from that situation?

6 WHERE'S THE GRACE? In the revelation of the consequences of compromised faith. It is easy to condemn Jephthah's culture and thinking; it is much harder to recognize how we compromise our faith through our devotion to our own culture's idols. Share some examples of how you've seen this to be true in our society. Read **Romans 1:26.** Why do you think God's punishment for our love of idols is to let us keep them?

7 WHERE'S THE GRACE? In the realization that God uses deeply flawed people. Almost all the deliverers in the book of Judges are surprise choices. Why does God choose such flawed people? Read **Philippians 1:6.** What encouragement do you find from that verse?

8 WHERE'S THE GRACE? In the recognition that we need a better Savior. We can benefit from learning about the faith and fails of all the people in Hebrews 11. Describe the type of Savior their stories are meant to deliver us to by finishing this sentence, "I need a Savior who..." With that in mind, what hope does **Hebrews 9:27-28** provide for you?





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1 This series has reminded us that "The Bible does not cover up the stumbles of its champions." With that in mind, what is your biggest takeaway from this series so far? Share an example of how these lessons have impacted you.

2 SAMSON AND GRACE: His calling was God's grace to Samson. Read Judges 13:1-5; 24-25. What stands out to you about Samson's calling and birth? What would be difficult about a Nazirite vow? Why do you think Samson struggled with keeping this vow as he grew up?

3 His strength was God's grace in Samson. Rick noted that "nowhere in scripture is Samson described as a giant, muscular man." **Read Judges 14:6, 19; 15:14-15** What do those incidents attribute his power to? What is significant about this picture of Samson?

4 His success was God's grace through Samson. So many of Samson's "strong" moments were created by displays of "weak" character. He did not have a moment of weakness; he had a pattern of weakness. Why is that important for us to realize? **Read Judges 14:1-3; 16:1-3.** Even though Samson was making poor decisions God was still using him. What does this teach you about God and His desire to use you despite your mistakes?

5 His fail was God's grace for Samson. Read Judges 16:4-6, 15-17, 20-21. The Philistines knew his strength was due to more than his muscles, and they

also knew his weaknesses could be exploited. What are 2-3 things that stand out to you from this incident and what is 1 thing you can learn from it?

6 His finish was God's grace with Samson. When God leaves someone it does not mean that God abandons them. It means that God withdraws His gracious protection so that His gracious discipline might lead them to repentance. Share an example of how you've seen this to be true. **Read Judges 16:22, 28-30.** What is so significant about the phrase "Then Samson prayed to the Lord"?

7 GRACE AND ME: Grace knows there is failure in my future. Rick reminded us that "God has only called and commissioned one perfect servant. Only One can be a Savior; the rest of us need one. This doesn't mean that failing is no big deal; it means that we realize that grace is always bigger." It also may mean that you need to extend grace to someone who has failed you and/or you may need to extend grace to yourself. What next step do you need to take in this area?

8 Grace sees a future after my failure. No one can fail beyond the reach of grace, and no fail is beyond the redemption of grace. How should that truth change the way you normally think? Close in prayer asking for Holy Spirit power to fill you and guide you.





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1 In this series we've looked at some major fails of some of our favorite Bible characters. Why does God record the good with the bad when He tells the stories of His people? What does that tell us about Him and about us?

2 DAVID SENT... Read **2 Samuel 11:1-4**. What impression do you get about David from reflecting on those four verses? What do you learn about Bathsheba? Follow up discussion: Rick reminded us that "It is significant that nowhere in scripture is Bathsheba blamed for this sin." Why is it important, especially in our culture, to remember that she was a victim and not at fault in this incident?

3 David sent Bathsheba home after he got what he wanted, but a short time later he got news he never wanted. Read **2 Samuel 11:5-15, 26-27**. What stands out to you the most regarding the things David did to try and protect his image as a king (contrast that with what you also noticed about Uriah's character in this passage)? Why do we tend to cover up our wrong doings when we get caught in sin instead of immediately coming clean?

4 THE LORD SENT... David did a lot of sending in chapter 11, but now it was God's turn. Read **2 Samuel 12:1-13**. What stands out to you the most from this scene in the story? Follow up discussion: Rick also mentioned that "God's response seems almost as

disturbing as David's rebellion." With that in mind, in what ways does grace often offend us? What does that say about us?

5 Read Psalm 51:1-4, 7-9. This story is not saying that "I'm sorry" means we get to escape all the consequences of our sins (our fails often come with collateral damage). But David's story is saying that we can escape alienation from God; we can escape the burden of paralyzing guilt; we can escape being remembered and defined by our most epic fails. Share one way you've experienced God's epic grace during a time when you owned up to your sin.

6 GRACE SENDS... help to the broken heart. We can do a lot of things that take us out of God's will, but we can do nothing to take us out of His reach. Read **Psalm 51:10, 16**. David wasn't just asking for forgiveness; he wanted transformation. Why is that significant? How does having "a heart for God" tend to make our hearts more like God's?

7 GRACE SENDS... hope for a broken world. Rick said, "This series has not raised my view of the goodness of man. Even the best of us have pages that we hope get skipped. But this series has markedly elevated my view of the grace of God." Share some examples of how this series has elevated your view of God's epic grace.

