

surprised by

hope

SERIES OVERVIEW

We are living in a post-Christian world. At least, that is how many describe this time of declining church attendance, the rise of religious 'nones,' and the ever-widening credibility gap. While some may throw up their hands and say, "there's nothing that can be done," at Grace we don't believe that is an option. Why? Because we believe that the chief broken place of our world is humanity's separation from God, and that we, the Church of Jesus Christ, have been called to help heal that separation.

This is no easy task, however. Many of those separated from God in our world today are not simply ignorant of who Jesus is but have become disillusioned by those who claim to follow him. It is far too easy to reject Christianity because of well-established assumptions about who we are or what we believe. For this reason, we will be exploring what it might look like to surprise our world with the hope of the gospel and introduce them to a message far more real and life-changing than they ever imagined before.

WEEK 1 - AMBASSADORS OF RECONCILIATION

OVERVIEW

To begin a conversation about surprising our world with hope, we must first understand the hope that we have. In 2 Corinthians 5:18 Paul describes how God "brought us back to himself through Christ." We will explore this idea as well as Paul's insistence that we, Christ's followers, are called to be ambassadors of reconciliation in this world. Are we ready for such a lofty and important call?

So we are Christ's ambassadors; God is making his appeal through us.

2 Corinthians 5:20

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Which of the six broken places are you most drawn to, and why?
2. How does "evangelizing" make you feel?
3. Read [2 Corinthians 5:18-21](#).
 - a. If God "*brought us back to himself through Christ*", why is He still "*reconciling the world to himself*"? Why the different verb tenses?
 - b. What does it mean to you to be Christ's ambassador?
 - c. What is something we can do to help heal the broken place of Separation from God?
4. Have you ever faced a "credibility gap" situation with someone you care about? How did you/are you overcoming that?
5. If someone asks about your hope as a believer, how would you explain it? ([1 Peter 3:15](#))
6. Has God's Spirit placed a "one" on your heart? What would it look like for you to dedicate yourself to healing their separation from God? What is your next step with your "one"?

RESOURCES

gracechurch.us