



SG | Small Groups

The 'e' stands for grace .

"God accepts you just as you are, not as you should be, because none of us is as we should be." – Brennan Manning

" I accept you ."

" We accept you ."

And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how **wide**, how **long**, how **high**, and how **deep** his **love** is. May you experience the **love of Christ**, though it is too great to understand fully. Then you will be made **complete** with all the **fullness of life** and power that comes from God.

Ephesians 3:18-19

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. "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?" "No, Lord," she said. And Jesus said, "**Neither do I.**" *John 8:10-11*

God accepts you right where you are.

Isaiah 42:3

The 'e' stands for transformation .

"The church exists for nothing else but to draw men into Christ, to make them little Christs...God became a man for no other purpose."

– C.S. Lewis

"Go and sin no more." John 8:11

God accepts you right where you are, but has no intention of leaving you there.

Ephesians 4:11-13

How does **transformation** happen?

Ephesians 4:21-24

Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God **transform** you into a new person by changing the way you **think**. *Romans 12:2*

"The greatest single cause of atheism in the world today is Christians: who acknowledge Jesus with their lips, walk out the door, and deny Him by their lifestyle. That is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable." – Brennan Manning

Group Prep

Please read Ephesians 3-4 and John 8:1-11, then answer the following discussion questions prior to attending.

Introduction

As consumers, we all know how important a good brand is to a product. Nike, Starbucks, Apple, McDonald's, and many others have such solid brands that the symbol alone carries certain values, connections, or feelings. It's the same for Emmanuel. If you are wearing the Emmanuel brand, you represent our values, connections, and feelings. Are you wearing it well?

Discussion Questions

1. How do you define the word "brand?" How does a brand develop or gain notoriety and power?

What does the Emmanuel brand stand for?

2. John 8 tells us how Jesus forgave and accepted a woman who had been caught in the act of adultery by some of the religious leaders. If you were in her place, what would you have expected to happen? How do think she felt when she heard Jesus say, "I don't condemn you"?

The Emmanuel brand stands for acceptance. Read Ephesians 3:18-19. How does understanding the love of God and His acceptance of you help make you "complete?" How is your acceptance of others impacted by your understanding of the love and acceptance God has shown toward you?

3. In John 8, Jesus tells the woman, "Go and sin no more." What does it mean that God accepts you just as you are, but He has no intention of leaving you there?

Read Ephesians 4:21-24. What does it mean to "let the Spirit renew your thoughts and attitudes?" How does this type of transformation take place? The Emmanuel brand stands for transformation. Share an area of your life where you have experienced, or are experiencing, spiritual transformation.

4. Brennan Manning wrote, "The greatest cause of atheism in the world is Christians: who acknowledge Jesus with their lips, walk out the door and deny Him by their lifestyle. That is what an unbelieving world simply finds unbelievable." Where can you do better in making sure your lifestyle best represents Emmanuel?

Are there areas in your life where you need to receive God's acceptance? If so, what will you do?

In light of God's acceptance of you, do you need to show more acceptance of others? If so, how will you accomplish that? In what areas of your life do you need transformation? What steps could you take to begin to change?

Outreach: Groups in Action

As a small group, start collecting hats and gloves (new or good condition) for the cold weather approaching. You can drop them off at the information counter during a weekend service throughout October.

Action Step

Fill in the blanks below for this upcoming week.

My action steps are _____
_____.

I'm accountable for _____, and their action steps are _____.

My memory verse is _____.

This coming week, I'm praying for:
