

PREPARATION

- Familiarize yourself with this Study Guide.
- You can watch the sermon online [HERE](#).
- Spend some time in prayer before your group gathers.
- You **always** have the option to use some or all the questions and/or prepare your own questions.

Welcome: *Icebreaker – Tell your group about a memorable experience you have had involving fire!*

Study Tip: This week, we asked ourselves what happens if the person we need to forgive is either God (for what He has allowed to happen in our lives) or ourselves (for what we have done in the past). Pastor Austin drew our attention to Psalm 13, a Psalm of David, to talk about making amends with God. Scholars believe that David was coming face to face with an enemy we are all bound face: death. As you read this Psalm, can you empathize with David’s anguish as he expresses his reactions of lament toward God for allowing death to draw near? He is **wholistically** affected as he harbors distress against God. *“From the perspective of Hebrew anthropology, the essence of a person could not be conveniently split into parts—for example body, spirit, and soul—as was done at a later date in the context of Greek thought. Human life was a whole, a single entity. Yet, from a more practical perspective, there were deafly different dimensions to the life of a person: there was the physical body, the mind (in Hebrew “heart”), and the emotions.”* Is your anger toward God affecting your entire being today? If this is you, your task is to corral your emotions, thoughts, and physical being in order to **confidently** come to God! *“It is in the nature of confidence to transform the present on the basis of past experience and thus to create hope for the future.”* Finally, Pastor Buz compares the feeling of not forgiving ourselves to a fire: we warm others while there is still a scorching heat burning me on the inside. Fire is often used to describe good things such as the presence of God (Ex. 3:2-6, 2 Thess. 1:7; Rev. 1:14, 19:12) and the Glory of the Lord (Ex. 24:17, Lev. 9:23-24). It is fire that symbolizes God’s presence in us when we are baptized in the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:11, Acts 2:3-4). However, fire can be dangerous. It symbolizes God’s judgment (Judg. 6:19-24, 13:15-20; 2 Kgs. 1:10-14; Lk. 9:54), God’s anger (Num. 11:1, 16:35; Lev. 10:2; Is. 66:15; Ezk. 21:31, 22:31), all culminating at the unquenchable fires of Hell (Mk. 9:43). This is why the prophets (Is. 48:10-11; Jer. 9:6-7; Zec. 13:8-9; Mal. 3:2-3) and Paul (1 Corinthians 3:13) say that fire will be used as a test in the last days. The fire will destroy what is wicked and refine what is good! As you read this study guide, pay attention to this dual metaphor of fire as you begin to refine your relationship with God and yourself as God continues to put you through the fire to ultimately mold you and bring forth a New heaven and a new Earth (2 Pet. 3:10-12).

What’s Going on This Week

This week, Pastor Austin Foxworthy (Families Pastor) and Pastor Buz Hannon (Connections Pastor) led us into our sixth week of our series titled *Uncaged: Living in the Freedom of Grace*. Pastor Austin brought our attention to *Psalm 13* in order to encourage us to have confident conversations with God when we are having a difficult time forgiving what God has done in our lives. Then, Pastor Buz brought our attention to several different passages about *fire* in order to talk about refining our thinking about our own situations when the person we need to forgive is ourselves.

“Our obedience to God’s unfailing love bring about the deliverance of others.”
– Pastor Austin Foxworthy

Beyond the Reach of Grace? (May 16th, 2021)

GROUP MEETING (60 – 90 minutes)

Opening Time of Worship (10 – 15 minutes)

Take time with your group and prepare your hearts as you enter into the presence of God for this meeting.

<p>Option 1: Worship Music Have someone share their favorite worship song. Find it online, play it, and sing along! Have them explain why the lyrics impacted them!</p>	<p>Option 2: Meditation As we come towards the end of the Series, spend some time yielding to the Holy Spirit and allow him to speak into your current circumstances.</p>	<p>Option 3: Alternative Biblical Story Matthew 26:36-56 documents the garden of Gethsemane. Even though God's will may seem excruciatingly difficult, Jesus remained obedient to the end bringing salvation to all!</p>
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Confident Conversations with God! (15 – 25 minutes)

Primary Texts: Psalm 13:1-6; Philippians 4:11-13; – In his portion of the sermon, Pastor Austin points to these passages to suggest that when we hold a grudge against God in our difficult times, we are able to confidently approach God and have difficult conversations with Him. **What situations come to mind as you reflect on the words of David in Psalm 13? What do you think makes obedience to God so hard for you in these difficult moments? How might the testimonies of the Bible (such as David, Jesus, or Paul) encourage you to remain faithful in these moments in which you are angry with the Lord?** **Prayer Tip:** Identify any ways the Spirit may be working in tough times and be ready to affirm this in prayer!

Refining Fire! (15 – 25 minutes)

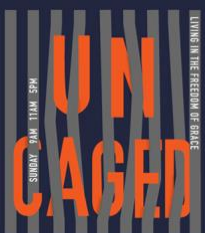
Primary Texts: Exodus 24:15-19; Hebrews 10:13-18; Matthew 3:11; Isaiah 43:1-3a – Pastor Buz suggests that obedience may be difficult because it is like a fire that is helping others but still destroying myself. **What are the ways in which your situation may actually be refining your faith instead of destroying it? What are some things that you still need to throw into the fire so that you may be able to forgive yourself?** **Prayer Tip:** Identify any self-perceptions that may be antithetical to the gospel message and surrender them to the Lord.

Closing Time of Prayer (20 – 25 minutes)

In light of this week's discussion, here are some different ways that your group can pray!

- Pray and affirm how the Spirit is at work in your group's situation!
- Pray for the Spirit to get rid of any self-perceptions that fight against the gospel of Jesus.
- Pray for any individual prayer request that comes up in your group.
- Pray for the entire group and how they might be able to contribute to future group meetings.
- Pray for an interaction with someone who you can invite into your next group meeting!

Lear how to pray for our 3Crosses family by joining us at the [House of Prayer](#) (May 23rd at 6:30 PM)



Beyond the Reach of Grace? (May 16th, 2021)

Throughout the Week (60 – 90 minutes)

-Stay up to date with Coronavirus Ministry Opportunities: Help us out by pointing the people in your Community Group to 3Crosses.org/coronavirus . If you or anyone in your group is looking to serve food in our pantry, access spiritual care, or seek financial assistance, you can find all you need at 3Crosses.org/neighborhood

-Community Groups 2021: For more information about joining a group, leading a group, or general inquiries, contact AJ at avanegas@3crosses.org