

THE GRAVITY OF MISREADING GRACE

Luke 9:43b-50 ▪ September 7, 2025 ▪ Brad Manley

The gravity of _____ versus the grace of _____. (43b-45)

The gravity of _____ versus the grace of _____. (46-48)

The gravity of _____ versus the grace of _____. (49-50)

Luke 9:43b-50

^{43b} But while they were all marveling at everything he was doing, Jesus said to his disciples, ⁴⁴ "Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men." ⁴⁵ But they did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying.

⁴⁶ An argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest. ⁴⁷ But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and put him by his side ⁴⁸ and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. For he who is least among you all is the one who is great."

⁴⁹ John answered, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he does not follow with us." ⁵⁰ But Jesus said to him, "Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you."

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: What's one competition you've participated in, and what motivated your desire to win?

Read & Discuss: Luke 9:43b-50

1. In the previous context, people were "astonished at the majesty of God" (v. 43a) following Jesus' healing of a boy. But Jesus redirects His disciples' attention to his impending suffering and betrayal (v. 44). Why do you think He chose this moment to speak of His suffering? What does this reveal about His mission and priorities?
2. Verse 45 says the disciples "did not understand" and were "afraid to ask Him about this saying." Why might they have been hesitant to ask Jesus more about this? Can you recall a time when you avoided a hard or uncomfortable truth God was revealing to you?
3. Immediately following Jesus's dire prophecy, the disciples begin arguing about which of them was the greatest (v. 46). Why do you think this topic was on their minds? Why—and how—do we still wrestle with the same desire for greatness and recognition?
4. Jesus responds by placing a child next to him (v. 47). Why do you think Jesus chose a child to illustrate greatness? How does this challenge our culture's definition of greatness?
5. Jesus says, "Whoever receives this child in my name receives me..." (v. 48). What do you think He means by "receiving the child"? What does it look like to receive someone lacking social status in the world or church today?
6. John proudly reports that he and the others tried to stop a man from casting out demons because "he does not follow with us" (v. 49). Why do you think the disciples were concerned about this outsider? How is this desire for exclusivity still a temptation within Christian communities today?
7. Jesus responds to John by saying, "Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you" (v. 50). What does Jesus' response reveal about the scope of His mission and the nature of spiritual partnership? Where might we need to grow in generosity or humility toward others in ministry or faith?

Apply: The passage presents a stark contrast between Jesus's path of suffering and humility and the disciples' pursuit of honor and status. What is one practical, concrete step you can take this week to prioritize humility and service over personal recognition and position?

Pray: Ask God to give you a heart that values those considered culturally without worth and a generous spirit toward Christians from other groups who love and serve Christ.