

INTERMOUNTAIN *Moments*

"I don't like grace..."

The chapel lessons, five in all, were based upon spiritual truths that common road signs could teach us. Sometimes, in the midst of a pretty straight-forward presentation, the profound breaks through, and it was an honor to hear it from the heart of one of our children.



It all happened because I was working the children through the Bible stories we had previously discussed. I started with the STOP sign... this sign taught us to stop and listen to God. One young lady helped walk the rest of us through the insight that "Stop and listen to God" is a little like the skills learned in the cottage about stopping and thinking. "How am I feeling? What is my body telling me? How can I slow down and not get caught up in strong emotion?" These are the kinds of questions children are encouraged to process when they slow down, stop and think.

Then, we came to the caution sign for "Grace Ahead." The girl that held this sign did a wonderful job of recounting the story and lesson behind the sign. We had covered the parable of the unforgiving servant in conjunction with that sign. She explained to all in attendance that "The King had forgiven this guy - like a whole bunch, and then he had someone who owed him - just a little bit, thrown in jail when he couldn't pay it back. The servant had been forgiven so much, but he couldn't forgive anyone." I asked her why she had chosen that particular "GRACE AHEAD" sign to share with the group. She responded, without hesitating, "Because I don't like grace."

"I don't like grace." Truth be told, not many of us *do* like grace - at least not when we are honest with ourselves. We are much more patterned to think we need to earn our place in the world and jockey with others for position and power. This young lady is coming to grips with an issue that is really holding her back from having a connection with God and with her family: she doesn't like grace. She feels she needs to earn what she has been freely offered: love, acceptance, and a sense of truly belonging in a family. Will you pray for this young lady, and many others like her (maybe even yourself?) so they can get to the place where they accept the grace of God and the love of others as a gift and a resource for building strong and healthy relationships.

Intermountain Chaplain Chris Haughee

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