



The Grace of God - A Gift That Transforms Us

By Ariel Presswood

Ephesians 2:8-9 - "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

Setting the Scene

Key Concept:

God's grace is the cornerstone of our faith. It is an unearned, undeserved gift that transforms our hearts, minds, and lives. Grace is not only the foundation of our salvation but also the source of the strength and hope we need to live each day with love and purpose. By understanding and embracing God's grace, we are empowered to reflect His love to others, share His message, and grow in our relationship with Him.

Engaging Analogy:

"Think of grace as a seed planted in fertile soil. When nurtured with faith, trust, and gratitude, it grows into a beautiful, life-giving tree that bears fruit for the benefit of others. Just as the tree's roots go deep into the soil for nourishment, our lives must be deeply rooted in God's grace to flourish and grow."

Invitation:

Invite participants to reflect on the transformative power of God's grace in their lives. Encourage them to consider how this incredible gift shapes their thoughts, actions, and relationships, and to explore practical ways to live as reflections of His grace.

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Section 1: Reflect and Discuss

Reflection Questions

1. What does it mean that grace is a gift from God? Why can't we earn it?
2. How does God's grace transform the way we think, act, and live?
3. Why is it important to remember that grace is not something we achieve but something we receive?
4. How can we show grace to others in our daily lives, just as God has shown grace to us?
5. What are some moments in your life when you have experienced God's grace? How did it change you?

Family or Group Discussion

- **Biblical Examples:** Explore stories of God's grace in the Bible, such as:
 - The parable of the prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32).
 - The woman caught in adultery (John 8:1-11).
 - Paul's transformation on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-22). Reflect on how grace brought healing, redemption, and transformation in these stories.
- **Living in Grace:** Discuss practical ways to embrace God's grace daily, such as practicing forgiveness, showing kindness, and trusting in His promises during difficult times.



Section 2: Hands-On Activities

Activity 1: Grace Tree Craft

Objective: Create a tree to symbolize how grace transforms and bears fruit in our lives.

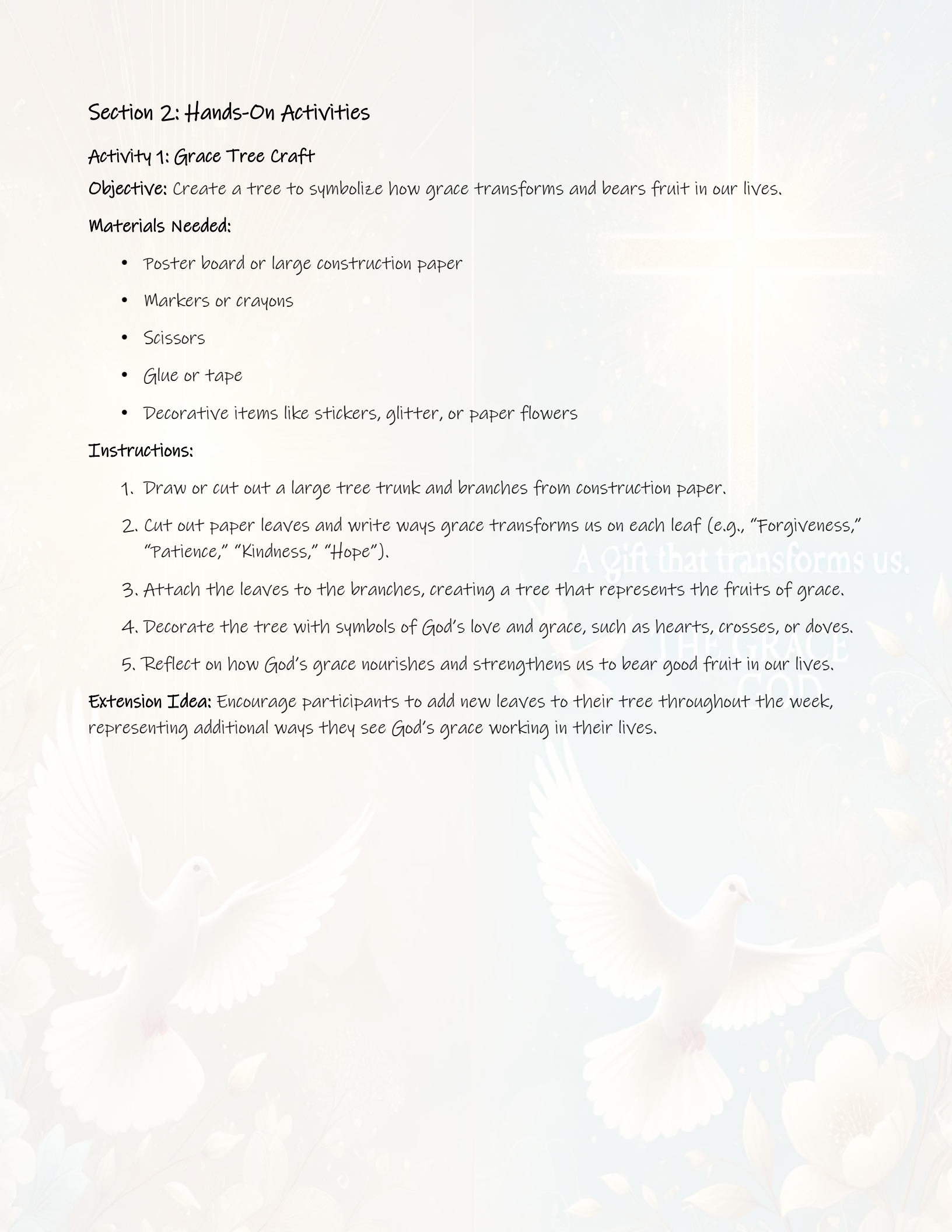
Materials Needed:

- Poster board or large construction paper
- Markers or crayons
- Scissors
- Glue or tape
- Decorative items like stickers, glitter, or paper flowers

Instructions:

1. Draw or cut out a large tree trunk and branches from construction paper.
2. Cut out paper leaves and write ways grace transforms us on each leaf (e.g., "Forgiveness," "Patience," "Kindness," "Hope").
3. Attach the leaves to the branches, creating a tree that represents the fruits of grace.
4. Decorate the tree with symbols of God's love and grace, such as hearts, crosses, or doves.
5. Reflect on how God's grace nourishes and strengthens us to bear good fruit in our lives.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to add new leaves to their tree throughout the week, representing additional ways they see God's grace working in their lives.



Activity 2: Grace Gift Box

Objective: Design a gift box to symbolize God's grace as a precious gift.

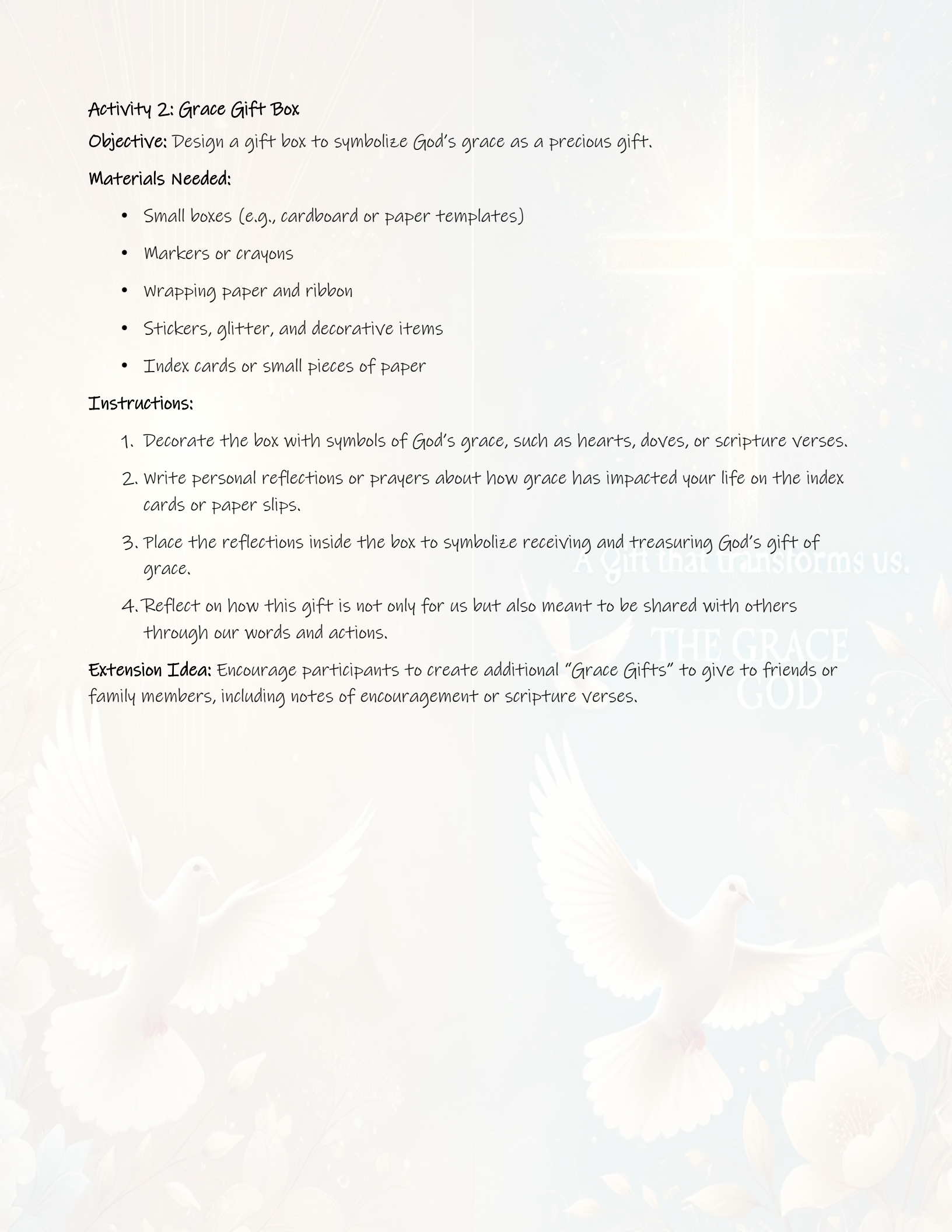
Materials Needed:

- Small boxes (e.g., cardboard or paper templates)
- Markers or crayons
- Wrapping paper and ribbon
- Stickers, glitter, and decorative items
- Index cards or small pieces of paper

Instructions:

1. Decorate the box with symbols of God's grace, such as hearts, doves, or scripture verses.
2. Write personal reflections or prayers about how grace has impacted your life on the index cards or paper slips.
3. Place the reflections inside the box to symbolize receiving and treasuring God's gift of grace.
4. Reflect on how this gift is not only for us but also meant to be shared with others through our words and actions.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to create additional "Grace Gifts" to give to friends or family members, including notes of encouragement or scripture verses.



Activity 3: Path of Grace Timeline

Objective: Create a timeline of moments when God's grace transformed lives in the Bible and your own life.

Materials Needed:

- Large poster board or paper
- Markers or crayons
- Sticky notes or index cards
- Tape or glue

Instructions:

1. Draw a horizontal timeline across the poster board and mark key events from the Bible that illustrate God's grace, such as:
 - Creation and the fall of humanity (Genesis 1-3).
 - Noah and the ark (Genesis 6-9).
 - The resurrection of Jesus (Matthew 28:1-10).
2. Write short reflections on each event and attach them to the timeline.
3. Add sticky notes or index cards to highlight moments in your own life where you have experienced God's grace and transformation.
4. Reflect on how these moments reveal God's love and His desire to bring healing and redemption.

Extension Idea: Invite participants to share their timeline moments with the group, encouraging mutual reflection and inspiration.

Section 3: Music and Creativity

Memory Verse Song

Set Ephesians 2:8-9 to the tune of a familiar children's song, such as "Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star":

"Saved by grace through faith we are, / It's a gift from God above. / Not by works, no need to boast, / Grace is what transforms us most."

Encourage participants to sing along and create hand motions to make the song more interactive and memorable.

Extension Idea: Invite participants to write additional verses about how God's grace has changed their lives and share these during a group activity.

Creative Writing Prompt

Ask participants to write or draw about a time when they experienced God's grace. How did it transform their perspective, actions, or relationships? What did they learn about God's love through this experience?

Extension Idea: Combine participants' stories and drawings into a group "Book of Grace," celebrating God's transformative power.

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Section 4: Closing Reflection and Prayer

Reflection Questions:

1. How can I embrace God's grace in my life today?
2. What are some ways I can share God's grace with others this week?
3. How does understanding grace help me trust in God's love and plan for my life?

Prayer:

Lead a prayer thanking God for His incredible gift of grace and asking for guidance to live in a way that reflects His love and kindness. Pray for hearts that are open to receiving and sharing His grace with others.

Extension Idea: Encourage participants to write personal prayers of gratitude for God's grace, sharing them with the group or keeping them for private reflection.

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Section 5: Bonus Interactive Features

Downloadable Printable:

- A "Grace Tree" template for designing and personalizing.
- A "Grace Gift Box" template for reflection and prayer.

Challenge of the Week:

- Practice showing grace to someone in your life. Whether through forgiveness, kindness, or encouragement, reflect on how God's grace inspires your actions.

Social Media Prompt:

- Share photos of your Grace Tree or Grace Gift Box using the hashtag #TransformedByGrace. Inspire others to reflect on the beauty of God's gift!

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