

# COS Growth Group Study

**Series:** When God?

**Week 2:** Grace When God Says No

**Scripture:** 2 Corinthians 12:7–10

## Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, we come to you carrying burdens, disappointments, and unanswered prayers. Remind us tonight that your silence does not mean your absence and that your love is not measured by the answers we receive. Teach us to trust your will, receive your sustaining grace, and discover your strength in our weakness. Open our hearts to what you want to show us. Amen.

## Icebreaker

Choose one:

- Share about a time you didn't get something you deeply wanted. Looking back, what did you learn?
- When you hear the word "grace," what comes to mind?
- Is it harder for you to wait on God or accept when the answer is no? Why?

## Sermon Summary

In week two of the series \*When God?\*, we are reminded that God's lack of cooperation is not evidence of God's absence. The apostle Paul—faithful, courageous, and deeply loved by God—carried a persistent "thorn" that he pleaded with God to remove. Yet God's answer was no. Instead of removing the struggle, God offered Paul something greater: sustaining grace.

Grace, in this context, is not the guarantee that everything works out. It is the God-given strength to keep going when nothing changes—the ability to remain faithful, to put one foot in front of the other, and to trust that God is present even in pain. God often chooses to display divine power through human weakness, inviting us to stop striving, release control, and pray as Jesus did, "Not my will, but yours be done."

## Key Takeaways

- God's "no" does not mean God doesn't care.
- We have permission to ask; God has permission to answer.
- Grace is the strength to continue when circumstances don't change.

- God often showcases power through our weakness.
- Sustaining grace begins when we release control and trust God's will.

## **Understanding the Vision**

1. Why do you think we tend to connect unanswered prayers with God's absence?
2. What does Paul's thorn teach us about expectations we place on God?
3. How does the idea that "power is made perfect in weakness" challenge our normal way of thinking?

## **Personal Reflection**

1. Where in your life might God be asking you to trust His grace instead of expecting a different outcome?
2. What is something you may be striving to control rather than releasing to God?
3. How might your faith grow if you believed God could work through your weakness?

## **Living It Out This Week**

Choose one:

- Pray a daily prayer of release: "Not my will, but your will be done."
- Name one burden you've been carrying and intentionally surrender it to God.
- Notice moments where God gives you strength to keep going.
- Encourage someone who is walking through a difficult season.
- Practice open-handed trust—loosening your grip on something you cannot control.

## **Closing Prayer**

God, thank you that your grace is enough for us. When we are weak, remind us that your strength is made perfect in us. Help us release what we cannot control, trust your timing, and walk forward with confidence that you are sustaining us every step of the way. Amen.