



## Is That in the Bible?

### Part 1 Discussion Guide

#### Face the Issue:

This week we start a new series called “Is That in the Bible?”. We began with the saying “God helps those that help themselves”. Jeremy shared that this saying actually originated with Benjamin Franklin. He also shared that it is a dangerous saying because it gives the idea that God has expectations of us before He will provide for us.

Our fallen natures make it hard to believe that God loves us unconditionally. We are so used to being in this world where there is always a hidden agenda. Where the first question we ask is “what is in it for me?” or “what do you want of me in return?” when we enter relationships with others. Some of us know people that we just cannot seem to please no matter what we do.

As a result of these situations, God may be seen by some people as one who is never pleased. God’s standards may seem impossible. God’s expectations always appear to be beyond our reach.

But, as Jeremy shared, the God of the Bible is a gracious and merciful God who delights in each of us. The God of scripture is a God who knows and accepts our limitations far better than we do ourselves. As followers of Christ, we are not bound to some set of laws that we have to fulfill in order for God to accept us.

*What would it be like to live or work with someone who rarely seemed pleased with you?*

*Think of a little child you know and love— maybe a grandchild, a niece or nephew, your own child, or a child from church. How will you respond to this child when he or she falls down in attempting to take his or her first steps? How will you respond when this child is hungry? Would you withhold anything from them until they meet a certain standard?*

#### Into the Word:

##### Read Psalm 103:1-14

*Make a list of all the things the psalmist gives thanks for in verses 1-8. Do any of these things require you to do anything?*

*What does the psalmist say about God in verses 9-14?*

*Based on this psalm, how would you explain to someone else God’s expectations of us?*

*How does the image of God presented in this text challenge the image of a God-of-impossible-expectations?*

*How might this biblical image of God help you feel more accepted and loved by God just because you are one of His children?*

**Apply The Word**

Responding with praise or thanksgiving is a way of taking in the gifts of love God offers us.

*Write a gratitude list each day this week, identifying specific gifts you are aware of receiving from God who is a God of compassion.*