



## NEW YEAR NEW OPPORTUNITIES

by Ron Story, Community Life Pastor

As we begin a new year, it is always a good time to reflect on the blessings of God and what He might have for us in this new season. A verse that comes to mind for me records the last inspired words of the Apostle Peter:

***“But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity! Amen.”*** (2 Peter 3:18)

These words do not just reflect a possible New Year’s resolution but have become one of several life mission verses for me. I want to grow not just in the knowledge of Jesus but also in His grace! For most of us, this requires a balance. At times we have knowledge but not much grace. At other times we can be quite gracious but lack true knowledge of the situation. Generally, when we are out of balance, the outcome is not healthy. So ... how do we strike a healthy balance of grace and knowledge?

Let me suggest that a primary source of growing in knowledge comes from our study and application of God’s Word while a primary source of growing in grace comes from our interaction with people. I can be pretty “chill” when I am by myself, but when others enter the picture, it can test my ability to be gracious.

Therefore, to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus, we need to have a healthy dose of studying God’s Word as well as interacting with others. In addition to your own personal study and involvement with others, Parkside provides other opportunities for knowledge and grace growth through our worship services, LIFE-groups, and ministry serving options. Many of you are already regularly plugged into our Worship Service (now

at 10:00 a.m.) and some form of a small group where you do life together with others. As we begin 2023, I want to be sure you are aware of a new opportunity for growing in the grace and knowledge of Jesus.

Beginning this Sunday, January 8, at 9:00 a.m., we are offering a new discipleship class titled: **HANDLING LIFE’S ISSUES**. This will be a 12-week class that is geared to teach us how to Biblically handle issues in our life (anger, fear, worry, lust, depression, etc.) In other words, “How to Grow in the Grace and Knowledge of Jesus!”

Additionally, this class will equip us to provide counsel and encouragement to others who are struggling with these same issues, which are common to man ... i.e., “Help Others to Grow in the Grace and Knowledge of Jesus!” With all the brokenness and confusion in our culture today, we have a special opportunity to bring the grace and truth of Jesus as healing in our own lives and to potentially help others. Come grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus! (Taught by Joe & Janet Gruchacz at 9:00 a.m., Room 8).

**BONUS:** We will also be offering a **Financial Peace University Class** on Wednesday nights beginning February 8 from 6:15 – 8:00 p.m. A nine-lesson course that teaches us how to save for emergencies, pay off debt fast, spend wisely, and invest for the future using common sense Biblical principles for managing our money that work! (Led by Mike & Loreen Messerschmidt in Room 8).