



GEEKS UNDER GRACE

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GLASS (2019) | *Battling Skepticism* | BIBLE STUDY

Facilitator Note: We encourage facilitators to take this Bible study and expound on it throughout the week, allowing it to be a springboard for deeper conversation and personal meditation.

PRESS START

Glass continues stories started in the films *Unbreakable* and *Split*. The main characters possess abilities that exceed the norm, and with this film's evaluative look at society's fascination with heroes and villains, it begs us to think about what a world with powers might look like. As children, we may have played make-believe and dreamed up what superpowers we'd like to have.

If so, what powers did you wish to have? While you might not be able to fly or bend steel, do you have any unique abilities you would like to share with the group?

EQUIP

In *Glass*, our lead characters are men gifted with extraordinary strength, abilities, and/or intellect...or are they? The character of Dr. Ellie Staple turns everything we know from the two prior films on its head. Whereas we've seen them survive train crashes, bend steel, survive point blank shotgun blasts, and devise heinous plots with incredible precision, her doubts and expressions of such can even cut through layers of Kevin's dissociative identity disorder and spread throughout their minds.

With a series of plausible explanations, she quickly and effectively calls into question what they know about themselves and explains away the fantastical nature of their uniqueness, and likewise, it begins to make the audience take a second look at everything said and done thus far. Along those lines, Christians possess a saving faith and belief in a loving God that defies the boundaries of what many may deem possible or probable. While many would say science wins out by its reliance on explanation-based understanding of any and all observable things, what it means to be a Christ-follower hinges on matters beyond our own observation and even understanding in many cases. Our eternity is grounded in matters of faith alone, and that presents an issue for a non-believing world.

LEVEL UP

Skepticism is nothing new. Jesus Himself faced it within the ranks of his own apostles. "Doubting" Thomas, as he's been called, famously said in **John 20** he would have to put his finger in the holes in Jesus' hands and side to trust it as fact! Of course, the resurrected Jesus addressed these points and left the questioner convinced. "But that's Jesus!" we might respond. "How do we address the doubters that seem to surround us and in increasing numbers and persuasive tactics?" Well, let's look at a main passage of **1 Peter 3:13-17**:

1 Peter 3:13-17 (NKJV) *"And who is he who will harm you if you become followers of what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness' sake, you are blessed. And do not be afraid of their threats, nor be troubled. But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear; having a good conscience, that when they defame you as evildoers, those who revile your good conduct in Christ may be ashamed. For it is better, if it is the will of God, to suffer for*

doing good than for doing evil.”

As we are warned later in **1 Peter 5:8-10**, Satan, our adversary, seeks to devour any he can. We should also pair that readiness to confront him with a readiness to face any and all who will oppose us for any reason. Maybe they will attack what we believe or for how we live or act. Regardless, this passage tells us in **v.14** suffering for righteousness' sake is itself a blessing. There is no room for fear of such or being troubled by it. Why? Two reasons: Because it is inevitable on some level, and because we will overcome it. Even if it appears to not “win” in the moment by convincing others with the truth we proclaim, then it will still be truth that wins in the end, as all will ultimately proclaim Jesus as the Christ.

Philippians 2:10-11 (NKJV) *“that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

So, we shouldn't fear any skepticism, mocking, or attacks on our faith, but **v.15** clues us in on how to beat the attacks, and word usage is key: We use God's Word as a defense. If someone attacks what we believe, we need to stand ready to defend it. If skeptics often address certain aspects of the Bible around us, we should already be prepared to have an answer for them, because we have studied as scholars of the Word.

2 Timothy 2:15 (NKJV) *“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.”*

We don't attack them with truth to win and crush our opponents. No, as **v.15** in our main passage shows, we must address them with the proper attitude of humbleness and respect. We do that for their benefit and our own, as **v.16** says we are to have a good conscience. It also shows we can put to shame those who oppose us by standing ready to give a defense for what we believe and do so with the proper attitude. It's amazing the number of people who lash out on spiritual matters in our world who have no idea what Christians actually believe. Sadly, many “Christians” don't either, because they don't ready themselves to give a defense. May we not be guilty of this in an unbelieving world that needs Christians giving a defense, even if we suffer for it (**v.17**).

The ending of the film, however you feel about it, does effectively stress this point. Our hero and our villains die living out the truth of their powers they were told defied all reason and science. Still, they demonstrated the unexplainable up to the point of death, and the world ultimately saw the evidence. It was up to each person after that to decide what they believed, and it's the same in regards to accepting Christ.

MOD

Dr. Staple personalized her explanations for each of those under her watch. Likewise, those who antagonize us often know exactly how to push our buttons.

What are some attacks you've received against your beliefs that feel tailored to you? What opposition do you see most often?

Dr. Staple knew from the beginning those with abilities actually possessed them, as convincing them of being delusional was just a means to suppress the populace from knowing.

Do you ever feel like there are people you know who rally against Christianity as a whole or rally against a relationship with God, but they know deep down there is a God they refuse to serve?

At the film's end, we don't know if seeing the video footage will have any affect or not on the world believing in the unexplained. Still, **when it comes to believing God's Word and knowing Jesus Christ, do you think there will always be some people who will still refuse to believe, even if the proof was right there in front of them?**

PRAY

Does anyone have any prayer needs outside of what we discussed here?

God is still at work in our world, even if many seem to be antagonistic to the faith. God has not abandoned us, and knowing that, our best defense in this world is knowing and relying on His Word. Maybe as we close, you know people who are especially antagonistic to you or those you know. Maybe they are antagonistic to the faith in the public sphere, as celebrities or politicians. If anyone comes to mind as we say this, take the moment now and for the days to come to pray God would use you or others to give a good defense in proper attitude. Pray God would soften their hearts to hear the truth and believe it.

THE NEXT LEVEL

Colossians 4:5-6 (NKJV) *“Walk in wisdom toward those who are outside, redeeming the time. Let your speech always be with grace, seasoned with salt, that you may know how you ought to answer each one.”*

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