



# What GRACE is All About

Week 1—Choose to Belong



1. If believers in Christ are God's children, what does that make the local church? Why is it important for us to get connected into a local church? What do you think happens when Christians do not get connected into a local church?
2. Pastor Rick made the statement: "A healthy church is an active church where every member is a minister and every minister is a missionary". What do you think that means? Do you agree with the statement? How is this view different from the way many churches function?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 12:11-20. What would you say are the main ideas being communicated in this passage? What do you believe these ideas should mean to you personally?
4. Read Ephesians 5:18-20. What do these verses say we should not do? How does being drunk affect a person? What do you think it means to be "filled with the Spirit"? What are the outward characteristics of a person who is filled with the Spirit?
5. Do you know what your spiritual gift(s) is? What exactly is a spiritual gift? What is the purpose of spiritual gifts? How does a person discover what spiritual gift they have? Are you using your spiritual gift at Grace? How?
6. Read 1 Corinthians 12:25,26. What does this passage tell us to do? What should these verses cause you to do personally? What do you think happens if we do not do what these verses tell us to do?

## Answers

- 1. Since all believers are God's children, the local church is where the family life of God's family occurs. It is your home as a child of God. It is important to be connected to a local church because if you are not, you are like an orphan, you do not have a home to connect with your family. There are many commands in scripture that cannot be kept if you are not connected to the family of God in a local church. When Christians do not connect with a local church, their spiritual growth will be stunted and the church cannot accomplish the purposes of God as effectively as it should.*
- 2. These verses mean that there is not a distinct class of "ministers" and "lay people" in the church. Every member is supposed to be a minister. In many traditional churches, the "lay people" think that it is the job of those who are the paid pastors to do all of the work of the ministry. At Grace, we believe the roll of those who work at the church are the "administrators", whose job is to facilitate and provide opportunities for the membership to exercise their spiritual gifts in ministering to other people.*
- 3. Main ideas: The church functions exactly like our bodies function. There are many different parts, every part is important for the body to function correctly. God has placed you exactly where He wants you in the body and if you do not carry out your function, it affects the ability of the entire body to function. No part is more important than any other part, they are all essential. No matter where you are placed, it is essential that you function as that part. That means that it is extremely important that you discover your role and begin to serve others using your spiritual gift(s).*
- 4. We are not to get drunk (or high) because when we are, it lowers our inhibitions and we do things that we normally wouldn't do, many times things that are sinful. We should never put ourselves in the position of being controlled by a "substance". Ironically, being filled (controlled) by the Spirit has some similarities. When we are controlled by the Spirit, we do things and act in ways that we would not normally, only in a positive way. The outward characteristics of a person being controlled by the Spirit are to be joyful, to praise God and be thankful for all our brothers and sisters in Christ. Galatians 5:22 explains what the Spirit produces in our lives, what the "fruit" is.*
- 5. A spiritual gift is a supernatural ability to serve other people in a specific way. The purpose of all spiritual gifts are always to build up the body of Christ, whether that means to increase its numbers (gift of evangelist) or to build up the individual members by helping them to grow spiritually. You can begin to discover your spiritual gift by taking a spiritual gift profile like we do in the 301 Membership class, it will get you pointed in the right direction. But ultimately, you discover your spiritual gift by beginning to serve other people. You will find as you serve, there is a specific area that is easier for you to do than others, such as the gift of teaching. You will be the most fulfilled and effective when you serve in an area where you can use your spiritual gift.*
- 6. These verses tell us that we should be involved in supporting our brothers and sisters in Christ so that they can function in their roll in the body. We must realize that when another Christian fails, it affects us all and holds back the function of the entire body, just like when part of your physical body is injured. When you smash your finger with the hammer, the rest of your body goes to the assistance of your injured finger. We are all interconnected in the body of Christ and what we do affects everyone else so we need to help each other.*