



What GRACE is All About



CHOOSE TO BELONG

Acts 2:42-47 (NLT)

All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper), and to prayer. A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. And all the believers met together in one place and shared everything they had. They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

The Tale of 2 Church Members:

- **Church Member #1 – Desires to help the church.**
- **Church Member #2 – Desires to help themselves.**

Church Statistics:

- **9 out of 10 churches in America are declining.**
- **75% of people born before 2000 claim to be a Christian, but only 15% of Millennials claim to be Christians.**
 - **Where will Generation Z fall into this equation?**
- **The average size of an Evangelical Church in America in 2023 is 67 members with only 1,800 mega churches (2,000 or more members).**
- **The average pastor lasts 4.4 years in a single church, and 8.8 years total in ministry.**

A healthy church is an active church, where every member cares for each other and shares the love of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:11-20 (TPT)

Remember, it is the same Holy Spirit who distributes, activates, and operates these different gifts as he chooses for each believer. Just as the human body is one, though it has many parts that together form one body, so too is Christ... But God has carefully designed each member and placed it in the body to function as he desires. A diversity is required, for if the body consisted of one single part, there wouldn't be a body at all! So now we see that there are many differing parts and functions, but one body.

I BELONG ONLY WHEN I:

1 **Become grateful for my spiritual gift, as well as every other believer's gifts.**

1 Corinthians 12:15-16 (TPT)

So, if the foot were to say, "Since I'm not a hand, I'm not a part of the body," it's forgetting that it is still a vital part of the body. And if the ear were to say, "Since I'm not an eye, I'm not really a part of the body," it's forgetting that it is still an important part of the body.

Ephesians 5:18-20 (TPT)

And don't get drunk with wine, which is rebellion; instead be filled continually with the Holy Spirit. And your hearts will overflow with a joyful song to the Lord. Keep speaking to each other with words of Scripture, singing the Psalms with praises and spontaneous songs given by the Spirit! Always give thanks to Father God for every person he brings into your life in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 **Explore what God wants me to do with my gifts here at Grace.**

1 Corinthians 12:18-19 (MSG)

As it is, we see that God has carefully placed each part of the body right where he wanted it. But I also want you to think about how this keeps your significance from getting blown up into self-importance. For no matter how significant you are, it is only because of what you are a part of.

Ecclesiastes 1:13 (NIV)

I applied my mind to study and to explore by wisdom all that is done under the heavens. What a heavy burden God has laid on mankind!

3 **Look out for the best interests of my Grace family.**

1 Corinthians 12:25-26 (TPT)

He has done this intentionally so that every member would look after the others with mutual concern, and so that there will be no division in the body. In that way, whatever happens to one member happens to all. If one suffers, everyone suffers. If one is honored, everyone rejoices.

Philippians 2:2-4 (TPT)

So I'm asking you, my friends, that you be joined together in perfect unity—with one heart, one passion, and united in one love. Walk together with one harmonious purpose and you will fill my heart with unbounded joy. Be free from pride-filled opinions, for they will only harm your cherished unity. Don't allow self-promotion to hide in your hearts, but in authentic humility put others first and view others as more important than yourselves. Abandon every display of selfishness. Possess a greater concern for what matters to others instead of your own interests.

Worship helps people focus on God; fellowship helps them face life's problems; discipleship helps fortify their faith; ministry helps them find their talents; and evangelism helps them fulfill their mission.

- Rick Warren

4

Obediently choose to love everyone in the body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 13:4-8, 13 (TPT)

Love is large and incredibly patient. Love is gentle and consistently kind to all. It refuses to be jealous when blessing comes to someone else. Love does not brag about one's achievements nor inflate its own importance. Love does not traffic in shame and disrespect, nor selfishly seek its own honor. Love is not easily irritated or quick to take offense. Love joyfully celebrates honesty and finds no delight in what is wrong. Love is a safe place of shelter, for it never stops believing the best for others. Love never takes failure as defeat, for it never gives up. Love never stops loving. It extends beyond the gift of prophecy, which eventually fades away. It is more enduring than tongues, which will one day fall silent. Love remains long after words of knowledge are forgotten ... Until then, there are three things that remain: faith, hope, and love—yet love surpasses them all. So above all else, let love be the beautiful prize for which you run.

John 13:34-35 (NLT)

So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.

5

Never become apathetic about the ministry of Christ.

1 Corinthians 14:1a (TPT)

It is good that you are enthusiastic and passionate about spiritual gifts.

Romans 12:11-12 (TPT)

Be enthusiastic to serve the Lord, keeping your passion toward him boiling hot! Radiate with the glow of the Holy Spirit and let him fill you with excitement as you serve him. Let this hope burst forth within you, releasing a continual joy. Don't give up in a time of trouble, but commune with God at all times.

Ideas for Avoiding Apathy in Ministry:

- Attend the 101 Class, join the church, and become a consistent team member.
- Faithfully support God's work with my finances.
- Serve in one primary ministry but don't be afraid to try new opportunities.
- Go on a Grace short-term mission trip.
- Join a small group or start one today.
- Share my faith whenever I can.

6

Give God and my church family the very best I have.

Romans 12:10 (TPT)

Be devoted to tenderly loving your fellow believers as members of one family. Try to outdo yourselves in respect and honor of one another.

2 Peter 1:3-4 (MSG)

Everything that goes into a life of pleasing God has been miraculously given to us by getting to know, personally and intimately, the One who invited us to God. The best invitation we ever received! We were also given absolutely terrific promises to pass on to you—your tickets to participation in the life of God after you turned your back on a world corrupted by lust.

Seeker – Will I accept the free gift of eternal life today?

Yes No

Believer – Will I truly give God and my Grace family my very best today and from now on?

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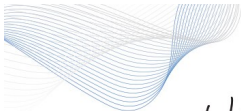
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