

Why the Local Church and Church Membership is Important!

By Pastor Larry Rupp

In recent years, individuals have questioned the importance and relevance of the local church. There is a philosophy that says: 'as long as I'm part of the universal church it's okay.' This has led to the "Consumer Christianity" that we see today; the shopping around in many locations for the "Christian experience." It is clear in scripture that all born again believers around the world are bound together and are brothers and sisters in Christ's church. It is equally clear that God ordained the local church to fulfill his mission to proclaim the Gospel to the world. Paul and the other apostles spread the gospel by planting and growing local churches. Thus, virtually all of the epistles were written to or about local churches. Acts 2:41-43 shows us what the characteristics of the local church should be: *So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. [42] And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*

Making Christ Known – The local church is called to make Christ known to a lost world. Luke 19:10 says: "the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which is lost." Because there are many views of salvation, the local church provides the only means of accountability to insure the proper proclamation of this important doctrine (by Grace alone, through Faith alone, in Christ alone!).

A local church guards and presents the true way to salvation!

Discipleship – It is our desire at Grace Bible Church, to see believers become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ. Acts 2:42 says: "*they continued steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine*" Discipleship includes nurturing, maturing, and reproducing based on God's word. The local church is designed and called to do discipleship.

A local Church disciples individuals in Biblical Truth!

Authentic Relationships – Acts 2:42 states; that the believers were steadfast in fellowship. Grace Bible Church exists to meet the physical, emotional, and spiritual needs within the body of Christ and provide a biblical means of mutual accountability. We are our brothers' keeper and we must be accountable to one another. The local church is the God ordained way to accomplish this.

A local church provides authentic Christ-centered relationships!

Worship (Prayer) – Warren Wiersbe has a great definition of worship: "*Worship is the believer's response of all that he is (mind, emotions, will, and body) to all that God is and says and does.*" Thus, you must be a believer in order to be a worshiper. As a bible believing local church, all new members must give testimony of their personal faith in Jesus Christ. Thus all that is done in the church should be an act of worship to the Lord (Romans 12:1).

A local church practices Christ-centered worship & prayer!

Ordained Organizational Structure – First Timothy 3 & Titus 1:5-16 clearly speak of the local church's structure, organization, offices, and requirements for its leaders. God has chosen this local church structure to carry out ministry. It is also clear that this, structure which is only found in the local church, is the means for carry out His ministry. Ephesians 4:11-12 states; "*And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,*"

A local church provides the God given structure for Christ-centered ministry!

Have you been baptized as a believer as Acts 2:41 commands? Have you been called to Grace Bible Church? Are you a member of Grace Bible Church? Are you using your time, talents, and energies at Grace Bible Church? Is Grace Bible Church your priority in ministry?

Please pray about being a member of Grace Bible Church! **It is important!**

GRACE BIBLE CHURCH CONNECTION

DECEMBER 2009

Mosaic(n.) 1. A picture or decorative design made by setting small colored pieces, as of stone or tile, into a surface. Also includes the process or art of making such designs. 2. The people of Grace Bible Church engaging their communities with God-given skills for the sake of the Gospel.

“...FOR WHAT GOOD IS IT MY FRIENDS IF SOMEONE SAYS THEY HAVE FAITH, BUT DO NOT HAVE WORKS?”

Mosaic is how we are reaching out...it is how we are putting our faith into action. Not just so that we can say at the end of the day that we were good people, but so that all may know of the God we serve. Each person in the church can participate – helping hands, a loving embrace, a bowl of soup, or a caring mentor, are just some of the ways. Wherever God has equipped you, we want to

enable you. Gather others who are like-minded, contact those who need help, and get ready to serve. Will you join us? Will you be a part of the mosaic that God is creating in the world around us?

{Psst...now it's your turn! Get together with like-minded friends in the church who want to serve in the same way as you and get out there into the world. Need help finding others to serve with? Need funding to get started? Ideas of where to serve? Contact a pastor or elder to get the ball rolling – we are here to equip you!}

THE FORUM @ GBC - COME JOIN US!

THE FORUM IS A NEW ADULT CLASS WHICH WILL TAKE US THROUGH THE END OF THE YEAR. THE PURPOSE IS TO ALLOW DISCUSSION ABOUT CURRENT THOUGHTS AND TRENDS IN OUR CULTURE AND HOW WE AS CHRISTIANS CAN AND SHOULD RESPOND. SOME OF THE TOPICS THAT WE WILL BE TACKLING ARE: THE AMERICAN DREAM, MONEY, POSSESSIONS, WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A PART OF A CHURCH, ETC. PLEASE MAKE PLANS TO JOIN US ON SUNDAY MORNINGS OVER AT THE PARSONAGE AT 9AM IF YOU AREN'T ALREADY INVOLVED IN A CLASS. BE PREPARED FOR DISCUSSION TOGETHER RATHER THAN A LECTURE FORMAT.



Ministering to the Lord, the Church, and Others

Worship Coordinator: Annette Miller

Week Date	Nursery	Ushers/Greeters	Treats	Cleaning
12-06-09	Carol & Ann	Marvin & Dick F	Cindy	Eubank's
12-13-09	Tina & Anita	Jill & Galen	Baker	Rupp's
12-20-09	Cindy & Michelle	Wade & Annette	Holck	Joan & Baker's
12-27-09	Karen & Lindsey B	Dave R & Kirk	Becker	Becker's

The Balanced Life

What does it mean to have a balanced life as a Christian? In our Energizer Bunny society, it can be pretty hard to figure this out. Rather than trying to tackle every part of the problem at once, let's make a commitment to either start one new spiritual discipline or to become a little bit more committed in practicing it for the sake of getting to know God, His Son, and the Holy Spirit in a deeper and more faith-filled way.

For some of us, that means getting into our Bibles more often. I know, I know. Parts of it seem irrelevant and boring. Sometimes it is hard to understand and it just makes you feel dumb or like you're not good enough. But the truth of the matter is that it doesn't have to be that way. This January we will be starting our study in Ecclesiastes. One way to kickoff your Bible reading is to take Ecclesiastes and break it up: if you aren't reading anything in the Bible currently, start reading a paragraph a day. Just one paragraph. For others of you, maybe step it up a notch and read a chapter a day. The length isn't as important as what you do with the time: get to know God - who He is and what He is asking of us. I assure you that you won't regret it.

Another example that I know most of us need to work on (myself included!) is regular daily prayer. If you aren't praying at meals, then start there. If you are already praying then, perhaps add a morning or evening prayer with your spouse. Again, the principle is to take the next step, rather than the next leap! And don't forget to listen - that's the part of prayer that we all too often neglect.

When all is said and done, the truth is that God rewards faithfulness. Taking the next step with your personal devotional life will draw you nearer to God, all the while strengthening your faith for the sake of portraying His Son, Jesus Christ, for all the world to see. I look forward to continuing the journey with each of you as we seek to become more like Christ - we're all in this together!

-Pastor Kevin

Baptism & Church Membership

Have You been baptized as a believer?

Are you a member of Grace Bible Church?

If you questions or are interested,

please see Pastor Larry or Kevin!



**CHANGING LIVES
THROUGH JESUS CHRIST**

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*CONNECTING TO THE GILBERT AREA
WITH THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST*



Larry Rupp - Lead Pastor

Kevin Miller - Discipleship & Community

Engagement Pastor

Amanda Jennings - Worship Director

Service Times:

Sunday morning prayer: 8:30am

Sunday School : 9:00 a.m.

Church Service: 10:30 a.m.

E.K.G. - Wednesday 6:00pm

Celebrating ... Our Messiah!

A Message of Hope!

“Our Messiah” Christmas Play - December 6th at 6pm

An original production of Grace Bible Church

Christmas Message Series: Based on Isaiah 9

December 6 - Our Messiah! A Simple Gift

December 13 - Our Messiah! Kingdom of Grace

December 20 - Our Messiah! Full of Wisdom

December 24 - Our Messiah! Prince of Peace

December 27 - Our Messiah! Righteous Ruler

