



What GRACE is All About

Week 2—God's Love Changes Everything



1. When considering whether a church is “good” or not, what are the primary things to consider from a Biblical perspective? How about from a personal perspective? It has been said, “If you ever find a perfect church, make sure you don’t attend because you would mess it up for everyone else”. What do you think this means?
2. When we say that God’s love is unconditional, what does that mean? How does our salvation in Christ reflect this? If God’s love was conditional, how would that change how we are saved?
3. In reality, your small group is a church. What causes unity within your group? How do you actively show love to each other in your group? In what ways could you improve this?
4. The main way we show unbelievers the love of Christ is by explaining to them what Christ did for them and what they must do to receive salvation. Is there anyone who would be able to say of you, “I learned the good news because of you”? If not, why not? Pastor Rick said it will take multiplication to reach the world with the gospel, what did he mean?
5. Do you know how God has shaped you to serve others? In what ways are you actively serving other people? What pathway does Grace Church provide for people to become involved in ministering to others? Have you availed yourself of those opportunities?
6. Read Romans 12:1. What does this verse ask every believer to do? What do you think this means to you personally? Why do you think Christians now days have such a hard time making and keeping commitments? When I make a commitment as a Christian to do something that will help me to grow spiritually, who am I really making the commitment to? Read Deuteronomy 23:21-23. What warning is given in this passage?

Answers

1. Obviously when considering a church, the theological beliefs of the church and how they compare to what the Bible says are the main thing to consider. If a church does not stand for what the Bible teaches, then it should be rejected. Aside from that, all other considerations are based on personal preference, which is okay but is not reason to say that a church is "bad". The quote refers to the fact that there are no perfect churches because they are made up of imperfect people. Should you ever find a "perfect" church (which does not exist) do not go to it since you are an imperfect person who would ruin its perfection.
2. By definition, unconditional love is love that is bestowed upon a person by choice and not based on their behavior. God chooses to love us no matter how bad we are because everyone is bad, we are all sinners. Scripture says that "while we were still sinners" Christ died for us. Salvation from hell is a free gift given to us by God and all we can do is accept it. It is not based on doing anything to please God because spiritually dead people cannot please God in any way, shape, or form. If God's love were conditional then our salvation would be based on our good works as a reward for correct behavior, which is impossible because you would need to behave perfectly for your entire life, an impossibility. Without God's unconditional love, there is no salvation from hell.
3. Your group is a church because the church are the people, so when we say that we should love each other as believers, the beginning point is in our small groups.
4. If there is no one who can say that they know the gospel and trusted Christ as savior because you told it to them or provided the opportunity for them to hear the gospel, then you are not following Christ. He said if you follow Him, you will be a "fisher of men" which means to bring people to Christ. We will never reach all who need to hear the gospel just through weekend services at all of the churches in the world. Multiplication means that all believers must share the gospel with the unsaved so that we can multiply the efforts of the church. We need to personally lead people to Christ and then train them to lead others to Christ, and so on.
5. The pathway that Grace Church provides to learn how you are shaped and then to use your shape to serve others is through our Membership Class system, our Small Group ministry, and providing serving opportunities for people to engage in. The starting point is our Membership classes, so if you have not taken them, start there.
6. Romans 12:1 tells us that every believer should make a commitment of their entire lives to be lived for God. That is what worship is. The entire Christian life rises or falls on our ability to make this main commitment to God and then all of the smaller commitments that are involved in keeping this over-all commitment. Every time we make a decision to do something that helps us to grow spiritually, that is part of this over-all commitment. Deuteronomy 23 tells us that God takes these verbal commitments that we make very seriously and that it is better not to make a promise to do something for God than to make the promise and not follow through on it. Do not make promises that you are not going to keep.