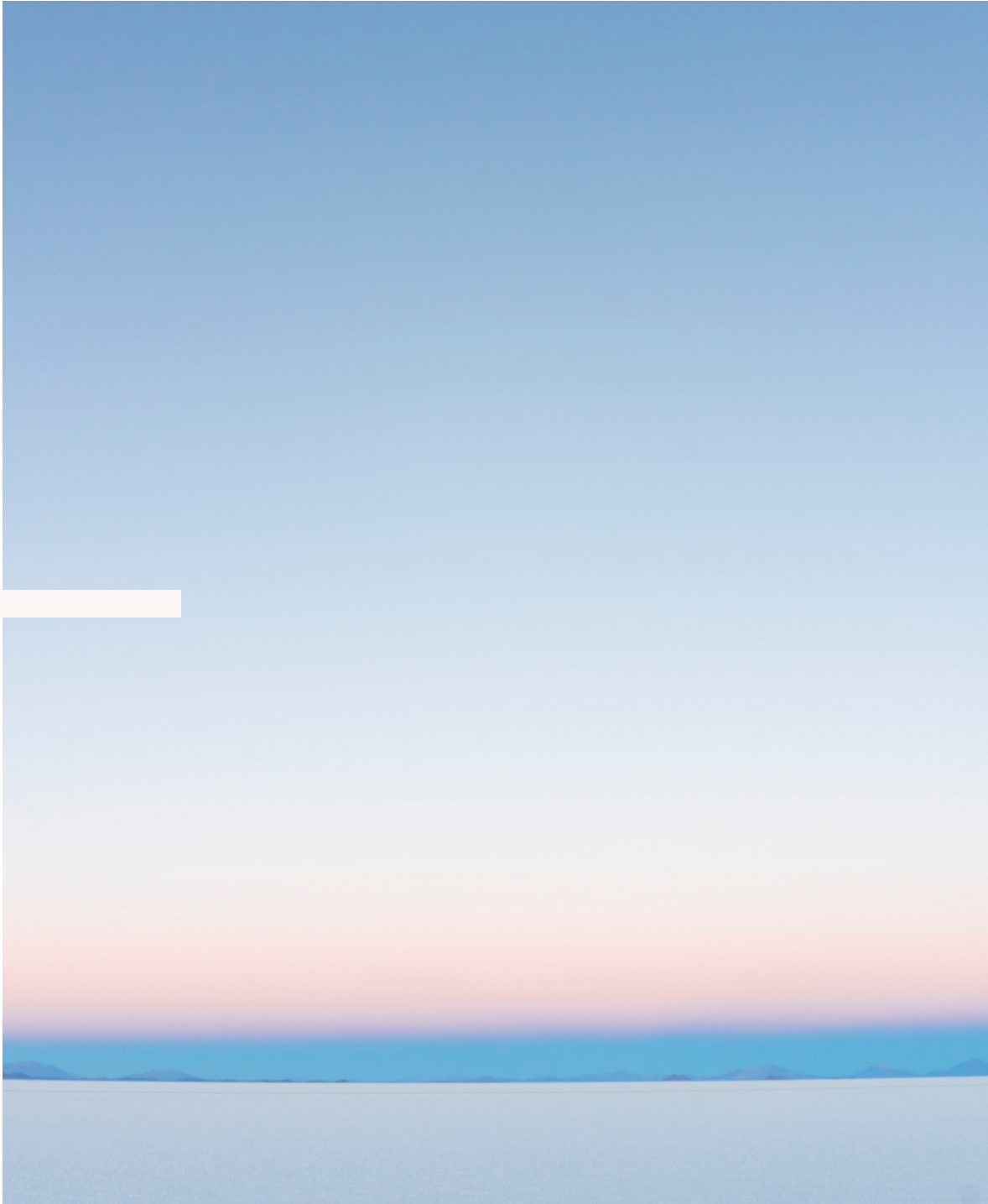


KINGDOM CULTURE



GRACE BIBLE CHURCH

FOLLOW. BECOME. DO.

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K I N G D O M
C O M M U N I T Y



PURPOSE: TO INVEST IN AUTHENTIC BIBLICAL COMMUNITY

KEY VERSES | ACTS 2:42-47

MADE FOR RELATIONSHIPS

We were never meant to follow Jesus alone. We need one another. When we drop everything to follow Jesus, we become part of a global family of believers called the church. The church is not primarily a building or an institution, it is a people. The church is a people redeemed by God's grace, filled by God's Spirit, and sent on God's mission.

WHAT IS THE CHURCH?

The church, or *ekklesia*, refers to a group of gathered believers. It's a gathering of disciples who are dropping everything to follow Jesus, become like Jesus, and do what Jesus does. A local church gathers to encounter God's presence in worship, encourage one another in community, equip one another in ministry, and partner with God in opposing the works of Satan and restoring the world.

WHY CHURCH?

Being part of a local church community is essential to following Jesus. Church is not a product we consume, it's a community to which we belong. We were made to love one another. This involves using your gifts, talents, passions, money and time to serve your church community. It also involves being accountable to and dependent on other believers who know you and are known by you.

EVERYONE GETS TO PLAY

Romans 12, 1 Corinthians 11-14, Ephesians 4:11, 1 Peter 4:11

The church is a community that is meant to embody the way of Jesus as we serve one another humbly in love. Christianity is not a spectator sport. Everyone gets to play. Paul commands the church to go on being filled with the Holy Spirit, that is to eagerly desire more of the Holy Spirit's activity in our lives. The Holy Spirit brings unity in the church, gives spiritual gifts, and produces spiritual fruit in our lives. The Holy Spirit is at work in each of our lives, giving us gifts so that we can strengthen, encourage, and build up the church.

What are barriers to regular participation in and commitment to church? Where can you use your gifts (time, talents, treasure) to serve the church?

AUTHENTIC BIBLICAL COMMUNITY

John 13:34-35, Luke 10:1-23, Matthew 10:1-4, Luke 8:1-3, Mark 5:37, Luke 9:28

Jesus modeled deep and healthy friendships. While hundreds of men and women followed him, he sent out 72 to minister, called 12 to be his core community, and 3 to be part of his inner circle. Jesus understood the importance of deep, honest, and committed relationships. He relied on them. If you want to grow in following Jesus, search for an authentic biblical community. Over time, seek out, foster, and develop 2-5 organic relationships to practice consistent prayer, accountability, and confession with.

Markers of Authentic Biblical Community

- Prayer
- Accountability
- Confession
- Consistency

Why do we sometimes resist deep relationships? Who are you following Jesus with? Can you identify 2-5 people who you would consider to be your authentic biblical community? What steps can you take to pursue this kind of intentional community?

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P R A C T I C E



WITH YOUR GROUP

Part of building authentic biblical community is spending time in prayer together. This week, in your group, take some time to pray over one another. Through prayer, we want to learn what God is doing in the people around us. Feel free to divide up into smaller groups of 2-3, if your group is larger, or pray over one person at a time as a group. Below is a simple prayer model that helps us to make space to listen to God and allow the Holy Spirit to guide our prayers.

Prayer Model:

Ask | Ask the person if you can pray for them. Invite the Holy Spirit to minister to them. As you pray, keep your eyes open to look for visible signs of God ministering to the person.

Listen | Create space to listen to God. Ask him what he is up to and how he wants to love this person. There are many ways that people hear God. You might hear God speak through a thought, word, phrase, impression, picture, word, emotion, or gut sense.

Pray | Pray simple prayers over the person. In humility, share what you are hearing from God. As you pray, seek to share in a way that is encouraging, strengthening, and comforting.

ON YOUR OWN

We want to learn to partner with God in what he is up to wherever we are. This week commit to asking God what he is up to in specific people or places and ask him to help you partner with him in his work. To do this, choose a person or a place to practice!

Choosing a person | Consider people in your life who you regularly interact with. Ask God to highlight someone in your life he wants to encourage. As someone comes to mind, ask God how he wants to encourage this person. It might be a simple act of kindness, an encouraging word, or even an area he wants to bring healing. He may even simply invite you to commit to praying for this person in private. If you pray for someone in person, remember to keep it short, simple, and encouraging.

Choosing a place | Consider a place where you already go throughout the week such as a grocery store, coffee shop, or workout studio. As you go to this place, ask God to highlight a person he wants to encourage or minister to while you're there. Ask him what you should say or do and go for it! You might not hear anything specific, but as you pay attention to the people in front of you, you might notice something about them that helps you discern a way of encouraging them. Sometimes it's as simple as a specific compliment, an intentional question, or offering to pray for them.

DAILY TIME WITH JESUS

Day One | Acts 8

*watch video on Acts 8-12

Day Two | Acts 9

Day Three | Acts 10-11

Day Four | Sabbath

Day Five | Acts 12

Day Six | Acts 13

*watch video on Acts 13-20

Day Seven | Acts 14