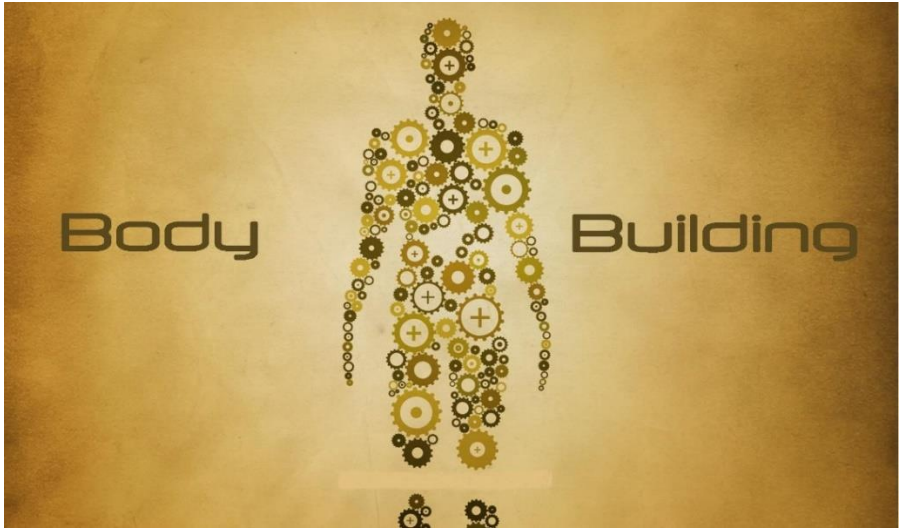


Grace Church

Participant Study Guide



“Now you are the body of **Christ**, and each one of you **is** a part of it.”
1 Corinthians 12:27

“For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so **we, though many, are one body in Christ**, and individually members one of another.” Romans 12:4-5

Note for Participants!

Did you happen to pause for a second to **read the verses** before you flipped this packet open? We hope so! Christianity has *never* been a solo mission or individual journey. In God's wisdom, we have been created for community - - uniquely with gifts and abilities that contribute to something bigger than the sum of its parts.

If Jesus is your Savior, you are the body of Christ!

That is a profound statement. But what does that mean? How do we grow individually and as a part of the body? How do we recognize our unique giftings and fit them functionally into the whole?

Our sermon series, "Body Building" seeks to answer some of those questions. This church-wide study has the opportunity to expand, explain, digest, and apply the passages and teachings from Sunday mornings!

Would you consider pursuing these 4 things to make this journey as fruitful as possible?

#1 - - **COMMIT** to making this series a priority. Attend services &/or small groups as regularly as possible so we don't miss a piece of the puzzle!

#2 – **REFLECT**. If we eat one meal a day – our body will suffer. If we eat one meal a week – we will likely die!! Think on these passages, themes, and conversations. Incorporate them into your prayer life.

#3 – **PRAY**. When we read God's word, we hear from Him. Pray how to apply what we are learning together. Pray that God would reveal for you how you can invest in the Body (the church). Pray that any misconceptions would be corrected. **Pray for others in the body as they share struggles, revelations, and apply them!!**

#4 – **CONTRIBUTE!** We need all our body parts to function when called upon. The right arm can't sit a game of basketball out... So, add your thoughts (or fears, doubts, questions) **to the discussion and see how God can use you to challenge someone else!!**

Session One – Fellowship With One Another

1 John 1:5-8

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me?
(taking notes – see back of packet – could be a huge help!) How is God
reshaping my view so far in this “One Another” study?

Get Real - - Why for some is being in the dark considered a
scary thing? How does having the light on change our
perspective?

As a group, read 1 John 1:5-2:2 (or if ambitious start @ 1:1)
Initial reactions or observations???

Why is John able to say with such certainty what Jesus said/did?
What else do you know about John’s unique perspective/exp?

What is the message or standard John immed. holds high? –
(v5)

Did you notice the four ‘If-Then’ statements? What are
they? How do they relate one another?

What does it mean (or look like) to “walk in darkness”?
Why is this such a big **red flag** for John? (what’s the
contrast?!)

What is the basis of Christian fellowship accord to v7?

How do our actions (walk) confirm or deny our faith? (Can
they earn it??)

Is confession of sin a part of your experience? Why? Why not? Are you a “right away” or “much later” confessor? Explain.

What is the danger of avoiding our sin? Denying our sin? Have you ever done so to keep up appearances? When?

How is the gospel held high/highlighted? In what ways is it the foundation for this kind of Christian fellowship?

APPLY: – How does fellowship contribute to our individual journey? To body life as a whole? To our witness?

Prayer Requests:

God how would you like to change my heart/mind/actions?

Action Plan: This week I plan to _____

THIS WEEK - - Try to finish the rest of 1st John - -

How is your identity in Jesus confirmed? Any comfort found??

Why did John write this book?

How does God love?

How can we “love” better?

Why is that word so prominent/important to John?

Session Two – Accept One Another

Romans 15:1-7

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me?
(taking notes – see back of packet – could be a huge help!) How is God
reshaping my view so far in this “One Another” study?

Be real: share a story of when you felt accepted by a group of people.

As a group, read Romans 15:1-7 - - Initial reactions or
observations??

In order to accept someone we have to accept their
failings. What does it look like to bear the failings of the
weak? Is it okay to view someone else as weak? Why/Why
not?

We touched on this last week – but Paul prays for the
importance of unity. Reiterate why this is important. How
can we contribute (and destroy) being of one
heart/mouth?

How does accepting someone contribute to unity – or
rejecting someone to disunity?

What are some synonyms for accept? Can you list some
reasons (good or bad) we might not want to accept others?
(Is there a time you accepted someone others didn't? Knew you
should have been accepting and weren't?)

Consider: How has Jesus accepted you? In what condition? With what stipulations?? If God accepts us as we are but works to change us – how does this apply? How/why does our accepting one another bring praise to God?

One a Sunday morning – what could accepting one another practically look like?

How might we encourage one another to escape our “comfort zones” with a united heart/mind/voice to accept others in Jesus name when at church? When at home? When at work?

Prayer Requests:

God how would you like to change my heart/mind/actions?

Action Plan: This week I plan to _____

THIS WEEK - - Let Romans Shape your vision of God and Self - -

Romans 1- - Why is God’s wrath against humanity justified?

Romans 3 - - Who is going to stand guilty before God? Why?

Romans 5 - - Where does justification come from?

Romans 7 - - How does struggling with sin fit into the big picture??

Romans 8 - - What characterizes a life in the Spirit?

Session Three – Bear Burdens With One Another

Galatians 6:1-10

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me?
(taking notes – see back of packet – could be a huge help!) How is God
reshaping my view so far in this “One Another” study?

Let’s get real: Are you by nature a rule stretcher or follower?
How can both of those mindsets be beneficial? Hurtful?

AS a GROUP – read out loud Galatians 6:1-10 - - Initial
reactions or observations???

As **body builders** - - What responsibilities do we have
to a fallen or struggling brother or sister?

Why are those things essential? Which of these come easy
to you? Which are more difficult? (What makes them hard?)

Dig Deep - - Is Paul contradicting Himself in v2 and v5? How
can we reconcile these commands?? (study Bible anyone?!)

MIX THINGS UP: Pause and try having men head to one room and ladies another.

Talk about the following:

We all have burdens and tend to deal with them in different ways. Some avoid. Some deny. Some conceal. Some try to bear it alone.

If you had to pick one thing in life that feels “heavy” – what would it be?

How can we bear those burdens together tonight? This week? This month?

Prayer Requests: (larger than usual tonight anticipating we might need it)

God how would you like to change my heart/mind/actions?

Action Plan: This week I plan to _____

THIS WEEK - - The Galatian church had issues – we have some too. How can we learn from them??

Gal 1 - - Paul comes out of the gate swinging... What is the main issue?

Gal 2 - - What was the basis of Paul’s acceptance? Of his opposition?

Gal 3 - - Why was the law necessary? Can it save? What can?

Gal 4 - - Like a parent, Paul longs for maturity. What does that look like?

Gal 5 - What characterizes freedom? Life in the Spirit?

Session Four – Pray for One Another

James 5:13-20

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me?
(taking notes – see back of packet – could be a huge help!) How is God
reshaping my view so far in this “One Another” study?

Let’s get real: What is the sickest you’ve ever felt/been?
Did your prayer life change at all during that time? Dependence
of others?

AS a GROUP – read out loud James 5:12-20 - - Initial
reactions or observations???

What kind of “one another” language and behavior is on
display here? (hopefully by now the Bible’s commitment to community
as an expected way of life is becoming more and more obvious)

Is there anyone you look up to as a “Prayer Warrior”? What is it
about them (or their prayers) that is admirable?

We should confess our sins to God, or course, but why is it important
to confess to one another? Maybe you have heard it said,
“confession is good for the soul”. When have this been true for you?

What kind of relationship do we have to have with someone to get
to this level of confession/prayer? What steps can we take to be that
kind of friend?

If I’m honest... (Make an X for the following)

What percentage of my prayers involve others?

Involve confession?

0% -----50% -----100%

Is this ok??

One study Bible defines **intercession** as "holy, believing, persevering prayer whereby someone pleads with God on behalf of another or others who desperately need God's intervention."

What a beautiful picture of "Body Life"!

Rather than ask/answer more questions... spend the final 15-20 (yep...) minutes of our time praying/confessing.

This will stretch you. That's ok. If a guys/girls split is helpful go for it.

Here are some suggestions:

- Start with a minute or two of silence. Reflect on this week. What have you said? Done? Thought? Any one Offended?

- In a moment, what can you pray to God and by doing so confess to Him and others at the same time??

- Experiment: Pick someone to start a "pop corn" style of prayer where one short confession or request is made – then others can build on or redirect to another topic.

- Feel free to pray more than once!

Confess/Request/Rep.

- Consider: How can we be interceding for our church??

- By now several celebrations/burdens/issues could be known. Pick one - - bring it before the God who hears and answers prayers!

Session Five – Bear With One Another

Ephesians 4:1-6

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me?
(taking notes – see back of packet – could be a huge help!) How is God
reshaping my view so far in this “One Another” study?

Let’s get real: Have you been on a team that worked well
together? What about one that was full of distrust/selfishness?

AS a GROUP – read out loud Ephesians 4:1-6 - - Initial
reactions or observations???

What is Paul’s current situation/attitude?!?

How can that reality inspire one to live out their life
calling?

List out the characteristics in verse 2 _____

Which of them have you best exemplified today/this
week? How about struggled with?

We are zooming in on **“Bearing With”** one another - - or
“Forbearing” (a word that is a lot like “forgiving”). What does
this look like in a sibling relationship? Friend relationship?
Marriage relationship?

Does the description “in love” provide helpful clarity and
instruction into what this looks like? How?

Why might Paul be using all this “one” language?

What things does He single out - - break them down for just a minute.

How have you seen “dis-unity” in some of these areas?
What might be the significant of unity in each of them?

Prayer Requests:

God how would you like to change my heart/mind/actions?

Action Plan: This week I plan to _____

THIS WEEK - - Ephesians is a beautiful letter of encouragement

Eph 1- What truth is comforting from this introduction/greeting??!!

Eph 2 - - What transformation is happening and how is it accomplished?

Eph 3 - - What about Paul’s prayer can you add to your prayer life?!

Eph 5:1-20 - - How do children of light live?

Eph 5:21 – 6:24 - Authority/structure is difficult for rebellious hearts.
How are these different spheres meant work in harmony?

Session Six – Serve One Another

1 Peter 4:7-11

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me?
(taking notes – see back of packet – could be a huge help!) How is God
reshaping my view so far in this “One Another” study?

Let’s get real: When have you had an experience where you
helped someone at your own significant expense?

AS a GROUP – read out loud 1 Peter 4:7-11 - Initial
reactions or observations???

What truth does Paul build this section upon? (v7) What
does having this perspective look like and how is it helpful?

What should one have to **do** to earn your
love/forgiveness? (Give “church answer” first - - then, discuss what
reality often looks like)

Why is hospitality (Titus 1:8, 1 Tim 5:10, Mt 25:42-46) an
important fruit of the believer? What hurdles are there in
our culture? **Body Build:** What are suggestions to
overcome them?

V10 – “Each on should use whatever give he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”

BRAINSTORM -

How could your small group, this week, apply this passage and use your collective gifts, finances, man-power to put into action these verses?

What might that look like?

Action Plan: This week/month WE plan to _____

Consider PRAYing – “Lord help us to be not merely listeners of the Word – but _____.”

<p>THIS WEEK - - Make a plan It can be something small – maybe even a mindset</p> <p><u>Personal Acts of Service</u></p> <p><u>Family/Small Group Acts of service</u></p>
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Session Seven – Care For One Another

1 Cor 12:12-26

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me?
(taking notes – see back of packet – could be a huge help!) How is God
reshaping my view so far in this “One Another” study?

Let’s get real: Is there an ability or skill that you are uniquely
gifted @ or better than most? What is it?!

AS a GROUP – read out loud 1 Cor 12:-26 - - Initial reactions
or observations???

Can someone summarize what Paul is saying in one or two
short statements??

If you had to **Brainstorm** - - what type of people/gifts
might apply to different parts of the body.

Jesus is the Head – how?

Hands - -

Feet - -

Eyes

Ear - -

What else?

What is Paul trying to teach with his illustration in 12 –
then statement in 13. (how could we “contemporize”
those distinctions)

Debate: Is a hand “more connected” to the arm or the foot?

Based on our brainstorm section, what causes the church to feel *unified* as body? Disconnected (even though connected)?

What might Verse 21 look like in a job setting? Church setting? Does this happen?

ASK YOURSELF: How connected am I?
Where might I be overextended (a nose trying to see)?
What is holding me back (an arm hanging limp)?

Has anyone taken a SPIRITUAL GIFTS ASSESSMENT to identify God given giftings? What were the results?
See Grace-free.org resources for one example!

BIG PICTURE: What changes might we see if every member took using their giftings/responsibilities more seriously?

Prayer Requests:

God how would you like to change my heart/mind/actions?

Action Plan: This week I plan to _____

Session Eight – Motivate One Another

Hebrews 10:19-31

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me?
(taking notes – see back of packet – could be a huge help!) How is God
reshaping my view so far in this “One Another” study?

Let’s get real: How did you meet your best friend? (spouse)
What did that first interaction/date look like?

AS a GROUP – read out loud Hebrews 10:19-31 - - Initial
reactions or observations??

Is there a time/season when have you felt closest to God??

What is the “Therefore” reason to have confidence when
coming before a holy God?? What other things might one
mistakenly place confidence in (or lose confidence from...)

In view of Jesus - - -Let Us...: v22-25

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.

What do each of these mean? Require?

Key Verse: v24 *“Let us consider how to spur one another on toward love and good deeds”*

What specifically might this look like in a school setting?
Work setting? Church setting? Small Group setting?

How does verse 26 settle in your minds/hearts?
What is actually happening when we choose sin (v29)?

How does v31 put an exclamation on the who discussion?
Should we tremble? Rejoice?

Ask Yourself - - Do I fear God with a healthy fear?
What in my life might hint @ “yes”? Point to “No”?

Prayer Requests:

God how would you like to change my heart/mind/actions?

Action Plan: This week I plan to _____

Session Nine – Admonish One Another

Colossians 3:12-17

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me?
(taking notes could be a huge help!) How is God reshaping my
view so far in this “One Another” study?

Let’s get real: *Ladies* – what is your go-to item in your closet
right now? Why? *Gentlemen* – how many days in a week can
you wear the same pair of jeans... (could see my small group
loving – others?)

AS a GROUP – read out loud Colossians 3:12 – 17 - - Initial
observations??

What must we ask when a passage starts w/ a
“Therefore”?

(Skim 3 prior verses to piece together an answer)

Verses 9-10 set up the visual image Paul is painting. We are
in the process of taking off an old set – and consciously
putting on a new self.

What type of actions are involved in this “new clothing line”?

Which of these *fit naturally* to you? Are more difficult to wear?
What are the 2 building blocks for unity in the church (v13)
(...or home/marriage/family...)

Why are they both essential? How do they complement one another?

Key Verse: *“Let the Word of Christ dwell in your richly as you teach and admonish one another will all wisdom...”*
Is this (and the following applications) an action? Mindset?
Progression? **What does it look like? How is it fostered?**

Prayer Requests: (include our key verse/thoughts in the direction)

God, how would you like to change my eart/mind/actions?

Action Plan: This week I plan to _____

THIS WEEK - - Colossi was a prosperous commercial center

Col 1- What truth is comforting form this introduction/greeting??!!

Col 2 - - A transformation is taking place. What does it look like?

Col 3 - - When you hear “Rules” – are you comforted or set on edge?

Col 4 - - What from Paul’s closing is comforting? Challenging?

Session Ten – Comfort One Another

1 Thes 4:13-5:11

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me?
(taking notes – see back of packet – could be a huge help!) How is God
reshaping my view so far in this “One Another” study?

PAUSE: We are 2 weeks from finishing this “Body Building”
training. Do you have a takeaway or two yet?
(maybe it is a mindset – action – intentional time commitment)

Let’s get real: What potential damage (and encouragement)
can losing a loved one do on a family? Stories?

AS a GROUP – read out loud 1 Thess 4:13-5:11 - - Initial
reactions or observations??

What two topics are primarily on display? How are they
related in Paul’s mind?

At large - - How does our culture handle death or tragedy?
Talk about a few common responses to it?
(think - what are some online “encouragements” we hear?)

Be honest: When is the last time a decision you have made was impacted by the reality that Jesus is coming back?

If recently – why/how?

If not at all - - why is this mindset difficult to have?

5:8-10 – so often we see truth being the basis for our actions. What is the truth on display – what is the action? Why can this be encouraging (v11)?

Real Application: What would change today – or this week – if we lived like Jesus might return this coming Sunday?

Is it realistic to live like that? Why/Why Not?

Prayer Requests: (include our key verse/thoughts in the direction)

Action Plan: This week I plan to _____

Consider checking this - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FMv4gx7-InU>

THIS WEEK - - 1 Thessalonians, full of encouragement and advice

1 Thes 1- Why is Paul so thankful? What might he say about Grace?

1 Thes 4 - - Should it be our aim to please God? Can we? How?

1 Thes 5 - - Which of these (v16-22) challenges you? Convicts you?

Session Eleven – Build Up One Another

Ephesians 4:11-16

Sermon Recap: What from the sermon impacted me? (taking notes – see back of packet – could be a huge help!) How is God reshaping my view so far in this “One Another” study?

Let’s get real: It’s almost thanksgiving time - - what is your favorite (or traditional) Thanksgiving dish/meal/pie??

AS a GROUP – read out loud Ephesians 4:11-16. Initial reactions or observations??

This section of the Bible speaks specifically to the diversity of the body (Think 1 Cor 12 from a few weeks back) except with titles instead of body parts.

When you see the list in v 11 – do you think professional ministry – or every day Christian?

(Is that what Paul had in mind?)

What (v12) seems to be the purpose/goal of all of these positions – and when (v13) have they succeeded?

What might an infant faith look like, and how does speaking the truth in love help the maturing process??
Examples?

V16 has our final destination = Unified, Maturity in Christ.

In what ways is our church seem like a unified body??

In what ways could we use sharpening?

Application: “I love Jesus, I just don’t love the church,” is a popular statement these days... What are some **MAJOR** problems when trying to follow Jesus without the church?

ASK: What can I do personally to promote unity/growth?

ASK: How can I pray, like Jesus did in John 17, for unity??

ASK: How can our small group better utilize our gifts??

ASK:

Prayer Requests: (include our key verse/thoughts in the direction)

Action Plan: This week I plan to _____

Body Building SERMON NOTES

Sept 8th, Fellowshiping with One Another

Body Building SERMON NOTES

Sept 15th, Accept One Another

Body Building SERMON NOTES

October 6th, Bear with One Another

Body Building SERMON NOTES

October 13th, Serve One Another



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