

GOD'S NEW COMMUNITY!

WEEK 1 - INTRO!

- Ian the first week!
- How old are you?
- What is your family set up?
- What do you do during the week?
- How do you relax?

EARLY YEARS!

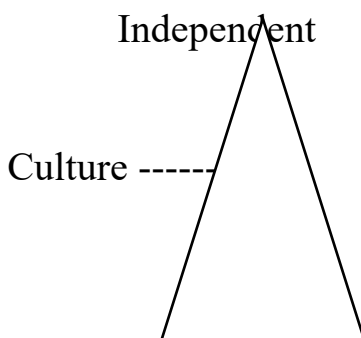
- Summarise early childhood up to 18 years old!

EXPERIENCES OF CHRISTIANS AND CHURCH!

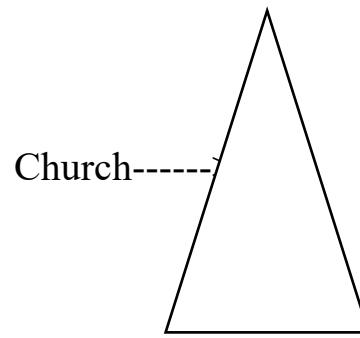
- What is your story?
- How did you become a Christian?
- What were your experiences of Church?
- How do you view Church?
- What are you hoping for over the next 9 weeks?

CH 1! "A BREED APART" 1 PETER CH2:4-10

- Foreword
- Triangle
- Questions
- How to apply
- Pray



Isolated



Place

People

Indulging

Purpose

1 Peter Ch2:9 – Remember you are chosen by God, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession!

WEEK 2 - INTRO!

- James the second week!
- How old are you?
- What is your family set up?
- What do you do during the week?
- How do you relax?

EARLY YEARS!

- Summarise early childhood up to 18 years old!

EXPERIENCES OF CHRISTIANS AND CHURCH!

- What is your story?
- How did you become a Christian?
- What were your experiences of Church?
- How do you view Church?
- What are you hoping for over the next 9 weeks?

CH2! “WE ARE FAMILY” EPHESIANS CH2:11-22

- Re-cap over Ch1
- Questions in Ch2
- Picture of Herod's Temple
- 36 One Another's
- Attitude towards other Christians - Family

36 “ONE ANOTHERS!”

1. MARK CH9:50

.... be at peace with each other.

2. JOHN CH13:34-35

A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

3. ROMANS CH12:10

Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honour one another above yourselves.

4. ROMANS CH12:16

Live in harmony with one another....

5. ROMANS CH14:13

Therefore let us stop passing judgement on one another...

6. ROMANS CH15:7

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

7. ROMANS CH15:14

I myself am convinced, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, complete in knowledge and competent to instruct one another.

8. 1 CORINTHIANS CH1:10

I appeal to you brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought.

9. 1 CORINTHIANS CH12:25

....so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.

10. GALATIANS CH5:13

You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature; rather, serve one another in love.

11. GALATIANS CH5:15

If you keep on biting and devouring each other, watch out or you will be destroyed by each other.

12. GALATIANS CH5:26

Let us not become conceited, provoking and envying each other.

13. GALATIANS CH6:2

Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.

14. EPHESIANS CH4:2

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

15. EPHESIANS CH4:32

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

16. EPHESIANS CH5:19

Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord...

17. EPHESIANS CH5:21

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

18. COLOSSIANS CH3:9

Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices...

19. COLOSSIANS CH3:13

Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

20. COLOSSIANS CH3:16

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God.

21. 1 THESSALONIANS CH5:11

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are

doing.

22. 1 THESSALONIANS CH5:15

Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always try to be kind to each other and to everyone else.

23. HEBREWS CH3:13

But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called, Today, so that none of you may be hardened by sin's deceitfulness.

24. HEBREWS CH10:24

And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds.

25. HEBREWS CH10:25

Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another – all the more as you see the Day approaching.

26. JAMES CH4:11

Brothers do not slander one another...

27. JAMES CH5:9

Don't grumble against each other....

28. JAMES CH5:16

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed...

29. 1 PETER CH1:22

... love one another deeply, from the heart.

30. 1 PETER CH3:8

Finally, all of you, live in harmony with one another...

31. 1 PETER CH4:9

Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling...

32. 1 PETER CH4:10

Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others...

33. 1 PETER CH5:5

... All of you clothe yourselves with humility towards one another...

34. 1 JOHN CH1:7

But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another.

35. 1 JOHN CH3:11

... We should love one another.

36. 1 JOHN CH3:23

... And to love one another as he commanded us.

WEEK 3 - INTRO!

- Paul Mckiernan the third week!
- How old are you?
- What is your family set up?
- What do you do during the week?
- How do you relax?

EARLY YEARS!

- Summarise early childhood up to 18 years old!

EXPERIENCES OF CHRISTIANS AND CHURCH!

- What is your story?
- How did you become a Christian?
- What were your experiences of Church?
- How do you view Church?
- What are you hoping for over the next 9 weeks?

CH3! "WHICH WAY IS UP?" EPHESIANS CH4:7-16

- Re-cap over Ch1 + Ch2
- Questions in Ch3
- Metaphor of a building site!
- Apostles and Prophets – for the formation of the Church!
- Evangelists – for the extension of the Church!
- Pastors/Teachers – for the care and growth of the Church!

THE CHURCH, GOD'S MANIFOLD WISDOM
TO THE COSMOS
EPHESIANS CH3:7-13

Paul in Ch3:1-6 has been talking about GOD's mystery, how he was a prisoner of Jesus Christ for the sake of the gentiles, that he trusted in the sovereignty of GOD, this is why v13 he could encourage the Church not to be discouraged! GOD had revealed to Paul that through JESUS' dying on the cross, the old order (theocracy – GOD's chosen people, the Jew living under GOD's rule) had now been “done away with” and the re-ordering had now taken place, both Jew and Gentile reconciled to each other and to GOD! Let's have a look at verse 6.

OLYMPICS

There is something special about the Olympics, a multi-racial, multi-cultural community, participating together to achieve a common purpose, “UNITY UNDER SPORT”. The advert is wrong when it says “it's not the colour you leave with but its the colour you come in that matters”. It's not quite there, its really about the colour you come in through being involved, that makes incredible tapestry of life, for all to see, that's why the opening ceremony was so popular. Its the coming together of people from all walks of life, race, ethnic group, country, language, that does something to us. It makes us feel special because it sends out a message of unity, hope, excitement and anticipation! This is what Paul covers in these next few verses, the coming together of people, multi-racial, multi-cultural, called the CHURCH. As the CHURCH comes together it sends out a message to heavenly rulers!

THE CROSS V7-9

What do you see when you think about the cross of JESUS? Let's read from Ch1 up to Ch3:13, look for how many times Paul uses the words “in HIM, in CHRIST, in CHRIST JESUS, in HIS flesh, or in HIMSELF. I've got it at least 24 times!!!! The words are connected with faith, being chosen, redemption, blood, good pleasure, riches, hope, HOLY SPIRIT, power, created, joined

together, promise, FREEDOM AND CONFIDENCE. Paul gets the cross, Paul gets the gospel!!! Do we? Are we seeing clearly? These are not just words, they bring life, sustain life, change lives!! Because of the CROSS! V8 talks about the “unsearchable riches of CHRIST”, these are just some of them!

V7, Paul gets this so clearly, he becomes a servant of the gospel, a slave to it! That means he resists to live for himself, but lives, breathes, eats, sleeps, works for the glorious gospel, which is the cross. GOD revealed to Paul, Paul now wants to reveal it to the gentiles (v8), all men (v9), rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms (v10). Paul understands that these “unsearchable riches of CHRIST”, need to be made known!!

THE CHURCH V10-11

What do we know about angels? The Bible tells us they exist, angelic beings, with powers, worshipping GOD, delivering messages for GOD, carrying out tasks for GOD. Satan is an angel a fallen one! There will come a time when Satan along with his demons, will be cast into Hell, never to escape! In the meantime Angels have certain powers, able to see certain things as Luke Ch15:10 reveals, they rejoice over sinners repenting, and 1 Cor Ch11:10 illustrates that they are able to watch over the Church.

Despite these powers, there are certain things that angels cannot see, because they are not like GOD, who is all powerful, all knowing, can be everywhere all at the same time!

V10 Paul explains to the Ephesian Church that as they come together and do CHURCH, be CHURCH, it creates a “manifold wisdom” an incredible beauty, splendour, majesty, that sends a message to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms! These rulers and authorities are blown away when we do CHURCH. When we come together, loving each other, caring for each other, showing compassion for one another, praying for each other, sharing with each other, crying with one another, rejoicing with one another growing spiritually with one another, it sends a clear planned message to these rulers.

Why do CHURCH? Why commit to CHURCH? It is part of GOD's plan! It creates amazing tapestry.

THE CHRISTIAN v10-11

As Paul reveals this astonishing splendid truth, he says to the Ephesian Christians not to be discouraged because he is in prison. He wants them to know that they can approach GOD, with total freedom and confidence, because this “pass” has been accomplished for them by JESUS through His death on the

cross!!

This VIP PASS allowed me to access Wembley Stadium, but not with total freedom and confidence, as I was only allowed access to certain parts. JESUS' death on the cross has allowed us an "all access pass" to GOD. A pass that offers total freedom and total confidence! The manifold wisdom of GOD, HIS Church, not only sends a message to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places, it includes an all access pass to GOD. When we approach GOD, is it with total freedom and confidence? GOD wants us to know this morning, how we are to approach HIM!!!

WEEK 4 - INTRO!

- Dave the fourth week!
- How old are you?
- What is your family set up?
- What do you do during the week?
- How do you relax?

EARLY YEARS!

- Summarise early childhood up to 18 years old!

EXPERIENCES OF CHRISTIANS AND CHURCH!

- What is your story?
- How did you become a Christian?
- What were your experiences of Church?
- How do you view Church?
- What are you hoping for over the next 9 weeks?

CH4! "WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BELONG?" 1st CORINTHIANS CH12

- Re-cap over Ch1 - *1 Peter Ch2:9 – Remember you are chosen by God, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession!*
- Re-cap over Ch2 – We are Family! 36 One Another's - Attitude towards other Christians -
- Re-cap over Ch3 - Apostles and Prophets – for the formation of the Church! Evangelists – for the extension of the Church! Pastors/Teachers – for the care and growth of the Church! Chain of equipping pg47. Are we growing in maturity?
- Questions in Chapter 4!

- 1st Cor Ch12:7 – manifestation of the Spirit for the common good!
- Best question in the Chapter pg58!
- Do we see the picture?
- Pg 57-58 – the eight “one anothers”
- How can we apply these?

SPIRITUAL GIFTS, FOR, ALL THE BELIEVERS!
1 CORINTHIANS CH12:1-11

ILLUSTRATION

Introduce “BUD” - The mute idol!

Concrete!!! A solid foundation!! Not mystical, not out of control! Clear, it's visible, strong, solid, you can build upon it!

SPIRIT INSPIRED SPEAKING V1-3

V1 - Ignorant – lacking knowledge or awareness. There was something about the Corinthian's spirituality that made them ignorant, lacking something and unaware of something! The Corinthian Christian thinking was that “the more taken over or possessed, the less you are in control, the more spiritual you are” (David Jackman, Let's Study 1 Corinthians, pg201).

V2 – Influenced and led astray by mute idols (remember Bud), and these mute idols have NO PERSONALITY, NO POWER! However, behind these mute idols are demons (1 Corinthians Ch10:20-22). We are not sure as to what they would do exactly, when they were influenced or led astray to mute idols, but Paul goes on to distinguish between the Spirit inspired speech and the non-inspired speech!

V3 - Inspired by the Spirit. 11 times in 11 verses the word “SPIRIT” comes up or references to Him are made!!! The HOLY SPIRIT is not mute! The HOLY SPIRIT speaks! He reveals who JESUS is, and declares that JESUS CHRIST is LORD! He resides, dwells inside us! He teaches us, enables us, influences us

and ultimately is the agent used to transform us to become more like JESUS. He is the mark, the deposit that guarantees our future inheritance! Only through His divine inspiration, can we declare that JESUS is LORD!

Paul does not want the Corinthian Church to be ignorant about GOD the HOLY SPIRIT and His gifts to the Church! He wants them to be clear, to have solid foundations, that can unite and heal any differences within GOD's Church!

SPIRIT INSPIRED DIFFERENCES V4-6

V4 - The Greek word for gifts “charismata” used in 1 Corinthians Ch12:4 means “grace gifts”. Not only are we saved solely by grace, but part of our ***salvation package is a capacity and motivation to serve others, in a particular way!*** Each truly born again Christian will have a deep desire from GOD to make a valued contribution to the Church.

V5 - There are different kinds of service and the purpose of this service is not to bring attention to ourselves but to build GOD's community.

V6 - talks about “working”. The root meaning of the Greek word for “working” incorporates both “energy and effect”. Therefore when Christians use their GOD given gifts it will reveal itself through both “energy and effect”, it will leave an imprint.

SPIRIT INSPIRED BUILDING V7-11

Paul's main thrust in these verses is for the Christian Community to know the source of these gifts, the unity that these gifts bring, and the distribution of these gifts.

V7 - The Greek word “phanerosis” – means the “public display of” or the “showing of”. These “showings” of the Spirit are not meant for the personal benefit or status of the individual, but to advantage the whole community.

V8-V10 – In these verses Paul lists 9 gifts, Wisdom, Knowledge, Faith, Healing, Miraculous Powers, Prophecy, Distinguishing between spirits, Tongues and the Interpretation of Tongues. Paul is teaching that these gifts are given to Christians, to build Christian Communities and that there is great variety in these gifts. We could put these gifts into categories like speaking gifts, gifts of signs and service gifts, only to help us see more clearly the purpose. The use of these gifts should build unity!

V11 – Paul concludes this section, by pointing out that it is GOD the HOLY SPIRIT that determines who will receive His gifts and what they shall be!

Staggering!!!

***There should be no complaint amongst believers about each others gifts!!!!
IN THEORY!!!!***

APPLICATION

We should be more clear that Spiritual Gifts come from GOD the HOLY SPIRIT. That, these gifts are given and revealed for the benefit of the Church Community and are not for personal benefit or status. There are various gifts that could be put into categories to help us understand things more clearly, for example, ***supporting gifts, speaking gifts, sign gifts and service gifts***. What are our gifts? How are our gifts being used to build GOD's community?

WEEK 5 - INTRO!

- Jamie the fifth week!
- How old are you?
- What is your family set up?
- What do you do during the week?
- How do you relax?

EARLY YEARS!

- Summarise early childhood up to 18 years old!

EXPERIENCES OF CHRISTIANS AND CHURCH!

- What is your story?
- How did you become a Christian?
- What were your experiences of Church?
- How do you view Church?
- What are you hoping for over the next 9 weeks?

CH5! "CONCRETE LOVE" ROMANS CH12:3-21

- Re-cap over Ch1! - A Breed Apart! - ***1 Peter Ch2:9 – Remember you are chosen by God, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession!***
- Re-cap over Ch2! – We are Family! 36 One Another's - Attitude towards other Christians Eph Ch2:11-22

- Re-cap over Ch3! – Which way is up! - Apostles and Prophets – for the formation of the Church! Evangelists – for the extension of the Church! Pastors/Teachers – for the care and growth of the Church! Chain of equipping pg47. Are we growing in maturity? Eph Ch4:7-16
- Re-cap over Ch4! What does it mean to belong! - 1st Cor Ch12:7 – manifestation of the Spirit for the common good! Best question in the Chapter pg58! Do we see the picture? Pg 57-58 – the eight “one anothers” - How can we apply these?
- Read Romans C12:1-21
- Ch5 – Questions On page 77

OFFER OUR WHOLE SELVES, FOR OUR WHOLE LIFE! ROMANS
CH12:1

1. Ch11:33-36 The Doxology?
2. Ch11 as a whole?
3. Ch1-Ch11 The whole of the letter so far?

I would like to suggest that the word “Therefore” is linking the whole letter and is intended to make us consider everything that has been said so far. At the very beginning of Ch12 Paul deliberately moves from doctrine (Teaching Biblical Truths) to the practical application of those truths (Christian Living) Ch12-16, demonstrating that he has finished with the first part of the letter.

YOU SAINTS!

Remember the nine times throughout Ch9-11 that the word “mercy” was used to illustrate how God has spared His people from not receiving the things that we justly deserve. So how has God shown His people mercy?

SUMMARY

Ch1:17 – God has given us His “Gospel”
 Ch3:21 – A righteousness from God
 Ch3:22 – A righteousness that is by faith alone
 Ch8:3 – God forgives our sins by punishing His Son
 Ch8:28 – We know that God works for the good...
 Ch11:26 – God's plan for the Jews
 Ch11:29 – God's gifts and call are irrevocable

In light of these mercies, Paul is begging the Saints! But begging them to do what? To bring a “THANKS OFFERING”. Yes our bodies as a “THANKS OFFERING”.

YOUR BODIES!

What is the right biblical motivation for Christians to live according to God's will? It's gratitude for the grace that God has shown us (Ch1-11)! Our primary motivation for changing, is always, the sheer grace that God has shown us! Let us be prepared to change in light of God's sheer grace towards us!

Paul's request, literally begging the Church in Rome, to offer their bodies as living sacrifices harkens back to the Old Testament system of worship. The first act of worship that we see between God and His created beings, is when Cain and Abel brought their produce and livestock to God as an offering (Gen Ch4:3+4). Such sacrifices were the very definition of early worship. Then came the Tabernacle and Temple, where the mode of worship expanded to include bulls, goats, sheep, doves, fruit and food offerings. We therefore think of *worship as an act of giving away something of value*, but the primary point of worship, is not that we should lose something or give something up, *but in offering something, we are expressing our thanks*. The whole principle of giving to God is an expression of our “**THANKS FOR THE SHEER GRACE HE HAS SHOWN US!**”

Unlike the Old Testament, where what was given, was killed and it's blood poured out on the altar, Paul is saying that in light of God's mercy and the Gospel, offer your “*bodies*”. As we receive God's mercy and become Christians through repenting and believing the words and the work of the LORD JESUS CHRIST, we are then meant to be willing to offer the whole of our lives back to CHRIST!

YOUR SPIRITUAL ACT OF WORSHIP!

Holy and pleasing, we are meant to be to God as we offer our lives. It is as we respond to God's mercy, and allow God to rule in our hearts and minds, that we are truly free to worship, and this is expressed in constant gratitude and offering God thanks, whilst availing ourselves to Him for service!

Our lives can then, potentially, be an everyday offering of thanks and service, allowing God to truly rule our lives, whilst being constantly motivated because of the sheer grace that God has shown us! The more we understand God's mercies to us, the more prepared we will be to offer up our lives, daily to GOD.

CONFORM OR BE TRANSFORMED? ROMANS CH12:2

RECOGNISE AND REJECT THE WORLD

Why does Paul plead and beg the Christians in Rome to offer their bodies as living sacrifices to God, why doesn't he just ask them, why beg? It is because he knows human nature so well! Paul knows all too well the tremendous pull

upon our minds towards the world, its principles and its values!

The Latin translation of the word “world” that Paul uses here is “*seculum*”. It refers to the present age. You see part of conforming to the pattern of this world and its values, is living for the present, for the now, whilst having no thought about eternal matters. The Christian must continually recognise and reject the worldly pattern!

We are to live our lives in light of what the Bible teaches us about eternity. It is the only truth. It is truth that comes from above and revealed to us in the Bible through the life and work of the LORD JESUS CHRIST!

RECOGNISE AND RECEIVE THE WORD

There is much confusion about the meaning of the word “repentance” and what it actually means. The word repentance comes from the Greek word “*metanoia*” which means “a change of mind”.

Literally what happens through God the Holy Spirit coming to reside within us, through repentance, causes us to have a “change of mind”. Literally the things that we would usually conform to, change. How? By the transformation of our minds, through God's Word and His Holy Spirit.

The mind is central to change because it is through the renewing of our minds that we are transformed!

Therefore the goal for the Christian is not merely non-conformity to the world and its values, but also transformation of our minds by the Word of God! The Word of God is not just information, it leads to transformation of the mind!

WE ARE SAVED BY ANOTHERS KINDNESS WHO THEN GIVES US GIFTS! ROMANS CH12:3-8

SELF EVALUATION V3-5

Gods' grace given to me – In order to have a correct view of himself, Paul evaluates himself in light of the grace and mercy that God has shown him.

Gods' grace given to you – Paul urges the Christians in Rome to have the correct view of themselves, by evaluating their existence in light of Gods' grace and mercy to them.

Gods' grace through CHRIST – Paul encourages the Christians in Rome to be united! ***Each One Counts*** – For our human bodies to continue to exist they need to be healthy, in the same way, for our spiritual bodies to continue to grow and be healthy we need to serve one another, in CHRIST!

Each One Contributes – Each one in CHRIST needs to contribute, by using their gifts! But how?

SELF SACRIFICIAL SERVING V6-8

The Greek word for gifts is “charismata”, meaning “grace gifts”, not only are we saved solely by grace, but part of our ***salvation package is a capacity and motivation to serve others, in a particular way!*** Each truly born again Christian will have a deep desire from God to make a valued contribution to the Church!

Through unity in diversity, grace is given to everybody in the Church, and everybody in the Church has a role to play. Persistent in the Church today is the troubling idea that some believers are gifted by the Holy Spirit while others are not. In addition to the Spirit's work of regeneration in the life of the Christian, the Spirit also distributes gifts or abilities to every Christian. The Church is to help believers find their gifts so that all work together for the good of the Church (Cited in R.C Sproul, Romans, Pg415+416).

There are different kinds of service and the purpose of this service is not to bring attention to ourselves, but to build Gods' Community of Grace. But how? Through gifts, Paul mentions 7:

- ***Speaking gifts*** – V6 Prophesying, V7 Teaching
- ***Serving gifts*** – V7 Serving, V8 Leading
- ***Support gifts*** – V8 Encouraging, V8 Giving, V8 Mercy
- ***Sign gifts*** – (Not mentioned here but elsewhere in Scripture – Healing, Speaking in Tongues, Interpretation of Tongues, Miraculous Powers)

We are the same in our standing in the Gospel, but we are different in our varied abilities to minister to each other.

How do we discern our spiritual gifts? Paul gives us three things to do:

Self-examination - To begin with, we look at our hearts to discover gifts.

1. We can look at our feelings. We can ask what: What do I like doing? What kind of ministry is satisfying and attractive to me?
2. We can look at our perceptions of needs. What problems do I most notice? Do I feel burdened for the poor? Do I feel the Church is too disorganised?
3. We can look at our effectiveness. Am I any good at what I enjoy? Do people get helped? (Cited in Timothy Keller, Romans 8-16 For You, pg 110, +113-114)

APPLICATION - HOW CAN WE HAVE EQUAL CONCERN FOR EACH OTHER?

Firstly, we have to see Scripture, clearly!

V1 – In view of Gods' mercy

V2 – Be transformed by the renewing of our minds

V3 – Self evaluation in light of Gods' grace

V4 – In CHRIST

V5 – We belong to each other

V6 – Different by Divine Wisdom

Secondly, we have to care, to obey GOD, and to use our gifts to build Gods' Church!

Thirdly, we need to know our gifts! The following references are not necessarily an exhaustive list, but are gifts for the Church – Ist Corinthians Ch12:1-11 + 27-31; Ephesians Ch4:11-12; 1 Peter Ch4:10-11.

Fourthly, if you are unsure about your gifts, keep praying asking God to affirm in you the gifts He has given you, and try out the following questions:

In my work or church ministry I find myself most fulfilled when

Others have told me I am most helpful when

I am often asked to

As a Christian, I most often picture myself as

I believe God has given me the responsibility of in my congregation.

My biggest concern for the church is

If I could be assured of not failing in ministry I would

(Cited in Greg Ogden's – Discipleship Essentials, Inter Varsity Press, 2007)

Paul wants the Christians in Rome to be clear about Gods' mercies, and to build the Community of Grace from there, by having solid foundations that build, unite and heal any differences within Gods' Church! There should be no evidence amongst believers about thinking of oneself more highly than one ought or any resistance about using ones gifts to serve others, in theory!

LOVE MUST BE SINCERE! ROMANS CH12:9-21

STEPPING STONES!

Paul wants his readers to follow the flow of his teaching in light of the mercy of God, which we will refer to as “Stepping-Stones”.

Firstly, in view of Gods mercies (Ch1-Ch11), and Gods ultimate act of mercy towards us demonstrated in Ch8:3, offer our whole-selves back to God for our whole-lives.

Secondly, no longer conform to the pattern of this world, which is living for the “here and now” without any thought of eternal things, but be transformed by the renewing of our minds through Scripture.

Thirdly, undertake a “self-evaluation” thinking correctly about yourself in light of Gods mercy.

Fourthly, use the gifts that God has given you for the brothers and sisters in Christ, through the local Church.

FOR LOVE TO BE SINCERE, LOVE MUST BE STRATEGIC

Hate what is evil – Our love, in order to be sincere, must love Gods revealed moral will and hate what is evil. When someone becomes a Christian, through the presence of God the Holy Spirit there begins a journey of ***a disgust for sin and finding no lasting pleasure in sin.*** As this develops through obedience to Gods Word, our hatred towards what is evil increases.

Cling to what is good – Real Christians will cling to truth and allow truth to reign, which in turn sets them free. No matter what the circumstances, Christians need to cling to what is good. The revealed will of God, His moral will, is good! Cling to it!

FOR LOVE TO BE SINCERE, LOVE MUST BE SHOWN

V10 - Be devoted to one another – Sincere love is “doggedly” committed love. Paul is saying love one another as if you are family.

V10 - Honour one another – The word honour means ***to treat someone as if they are valuable and precious.*** Human beings are created in the image of God. That is our starting place. All human beings bear that value!

V16 - Live in harmony with one another – Where we possibly can, be peace makers. Harmony is precious within God's community.

FOR LOVE TO BE SINCERE, LOVE MUST BE SPONTANEOUS

V 14 - Do not curse – But bless those that persecute you

V16 – Do not be proud – But be willing to associate with people of low position

V17 – Do not repay anyone with evil – Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everybody

V19 – Do not take revenge – But leave room for God's wrath

V21 – Do not be overcome by evil – But overcome evil with good

APPLICATION

Will you take time this week to think through the ultimate mercy of God to us, highlighted in Ch8:3?

What should our response be to God in light of His mercy toward us?

Will you think about what changes need to be made in how we relate to one another, bearing in mind Paul's instructions?

WEEK 6 - INTRO!

- Mark the sixth week!
- How old are you?
- What is your family set up?
- What do you do during the week?
- How do you relax?

EARLY YEARS!

- Summarise early childhood up to 18 years old!

EXPERIENCES OF CHRISTIANS AND CHURCH!

- What is your story?
- How did you become a Christian?
- What were your experiences of Church?
- How do you view Church?
- What are you hoping for over the next 9 weeks?

CH6! "ALL YOU NEED IS LOVE!" 1 JOHN CH3:16-18

- Re-cap over Ch1! - A Breed Apart! - *1 Peter Ch2:9* – *Remember you are chosen by God, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special*

possession!

- Re-cap over Ch2! – We are Family! 36 One Another's - Attitude towards other Christians Eph Ch2:11-22
- Re-cap over Ch3! – Which way is up! - Apostles and Prophets – for the formation of the Church! Evangelists – for the extension of the Church! Pastors/Teachers – for the care and growth of the Church! Chain of equipping pg47. Are we growing in maturity? Eph Ch4:7-16
- Re-cap over Ch4! What does it mean to belong! - 1st Cor Ch12:7 – manifestation of the Spirit for the common good! Best question in the Chapter pg58! Do we see the picture? Pg 57-58 – the eight “one anothers” - How can we apply these?
- Re-cap over Ch5 Concrete Love! Romans C12:1-21 Ch5 – Questions On page 77
- Ch6 – All you need is love 1 John Ch3:16-18 – Pity and sacrificial “no matter what love” + action filled love! Questions on pg 93!
- Picture of this kind of Love: Shared love (3 examples), breach of love (Acts Ch6), get in their shoes love (Hebrews Ch13:1-3), and the power of presence love (Acts Ch28:11-16).
- Now discuss: Acts Ch2:44-47, Acts Ch4:32-37, Acts Ch6:1-7, Acts Ch28:11-16, Hebrews Ch13:1-3, Philippians Ch4:14-19.

THE BIBLICAL MODEL

Acts Ch2:42-47

Make a list of the characteristics and functions of the early church which are evident from this passage.

1. The Church trained and educated its members. V
2. The Church brought its members together. V
3. The Church moved members into relationships of mutual support and fellowship. V
4. The Church had both small group meetings and large group meetings. V
5. The Church practised the ordinance/sacrament of the Lords supper. V
6. The Church spent much time in group prayer. V
7. The Church practised radical stewardship. V
8. There were deeds/actions of power which verified the apostles teaching. V
9. The Church had a general spirit of JOY. V
10. Community life was extraordinarily attractive to outsiders. V
11. The Church was evangelistically effective. V

12. When people were saved they were incorporated into a deep relationship into the Church body not just the Lord. V

FIVE VITAL SIGNS OF A SPIRIT FILLED CHURCH

1. GOSPEL – is central from which everything else flows
2. GROWTH – personal ownership, a desire to grow in holiness
3. GROUPS – healthy discipleship groups, walking together
4. GIFTS – Christians using their gifts to build God's Church
5. GIVING – Christians using their time, talents and treasure

WEEK 7 - INTRO!

- All having a go at answering the questions on pg108 q1-9

EXPERIENCES OF CHURCH LEADERSHIP!

- What is your story?
- What were your experiences of Church?
- How do you view Church?

CH7! "FOLLOW YOUR LEADER" 1st TIMOTHY CH3:1-13 + ACTS CH20:25-38

- Re-cap over Ch1! - A Breed Apart! - *1 Peter Ch2:9 – Remember you are chosen by God, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession!*
- Re-cap over Ch2! – We are Family! 36 One Another's - Attitude towards other Christians Eph Ch2:11-22
- Re-cap over Ch3! – Which way is up! - Apostles and Prophets – for the formation of the Church! Evangelists – for the extension of the Church! Pastors/Teachers – for the care and growth of the Church! Chain of

- equipping pg47. Are we growing in maturity? Eph Ch4:7-16
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 - Now discuss: Acts Ch2:44-47, Acts Ch4:32-37, Acts Ch6:1-7, Acts Ch28:11-16, Hebrews Ch13:1-3, Philippians Ch4:14-19.
 - Answer questions on page 108, questions 1-9.

ROLE OF AN ELDER

PASSION TO SERVE

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|-----------------|---|--|
| Matthew Ch23:11 | - | The greatest among you will be your servant. |
| 1 Timothy Ch3:1 | - | Here is a trustworthy saying: If anyone sets his heart on being an overseer, he desires a noble task. |
| 1 Peter Ch5:2 | - | Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers-not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve. |

PASSION TO CHANGE

- 1 Timothy Ch3:2-5 - temperate, self controlled, respectable, hospitable, able to teach, not given to drunkenness, not violent, but gentle, not quarrelsome, not a lover of money.....
- Titus Ch1:7 - Since an overseer is entrusted with God's work, he must be blameless-not over bearing, not quick-tempered, not given to drunkenness, not violent, not pursuing dishonest gain.
- 1 Peter Ch5:3 - not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock.
- Acts Ch20:28 - Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.

PASSION TO CARE, TEACH AND PRAY

- Titus Ch1:9 - He must hold firmly to the trustworthy message as it has been taught, so that he can encourage others by sound doctrine and refute those who oppose it.
- 1 Timothy Ch5:17 - The elders who direct the affairs of the Church well are worthy of double honour especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.
- James Ch5:17 - Is anyone of you sick he should call the elders of the Church.

PASSION TO BE A MISSIONARY

1 Timothy Ch3:7 - He must have a good reputation with outsiders.

PASSION TO DEFEND THE TRUTH

Titus Ch1:9 - He must hold

Acts Ch15:6 - The apostles and elders met to consider this question.

PASSION TO PRACTICE HOSPITALITY

Titus Ch1:8 - Rather he must be hospitable.....

WEEK 8 - INTRO!

- All having ago at answering the questions on pg121 questions 1-10

CH8! "MAKING IT WORK!" COLOSSIANS CH3:12-17

- Re-cap over Ch1! - A Breed Apart! - *1 Peter Ch2:9 – Remember you are chosen by God, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession!*
- Re-cap over Ch2! – We are Family! 36 One Another's - Attitude towards other Christians Eph Ch2:11-22
- Re-cap over Ch3! – Which way is up! - Apostles and Prophets – for the formation of the Church! Evangelists – for the extension of the Church! Pastors/Teachers – for the care and growth of the Church! Chain of equipping pg47. Are we growing in maturity? Eph Ch4:7-16
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- Re-cap over Ch5 Concrete Love! Romans C12:1-21 Ch5 – Questions On page 77
- Re-cap over Ch6 – All you need is love 1 John Ch3:16-18 – Pity and sacrificial “no matter what love” + action filled love! Questions on pg 93! Picture of this kind of Love: Shared love (3 examples), breach of love (Acts Ch6), get in their shoes love (Hebrews Ch13:1-3), and the power of presence love (Acts Ch28:11-16).
- Re-cap over Ch7 - Questions on page 108, questions 1-9.
- Servant leadership, Shared leadership, Male leadership, Pastoral leadership.
- Ch8 – Questions on page 121
- Making it work – Being like Jesus in love and servitude!
- The Golf analogy! Talking about it one thing, playing it well is another!

WEEK 9 – PAINTING A PICTURE!

- ***What did the new Church devote itself to?***
- Teaching and learning.
- Fellowship, sharing, practical daily help.
- Praise, breaking of bread, singing.
- Prayer!
- Evangelism.
- ***What does devoting mean?***
- Wholeheartedly, our time, talents, and treasure for the strengthening and extension of the Kingdom!
- ***What does devoting yourselves in the above areas mean I practice?***

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- *What does this mean you will and won't do in the Church?*

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- *Are there any ways you can do this better?*

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- *Think back over the studies and consider what does it mean to be part of Church, and how would you like to change your involvement in Church life?*

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- A breed apart
- We are family
- Which way is up?
- What does it mean to belong?
- Concrete love
- All you need is love
- Follow your leader
- Making it work
- Painting a picture
- **WHAT NEXT??**