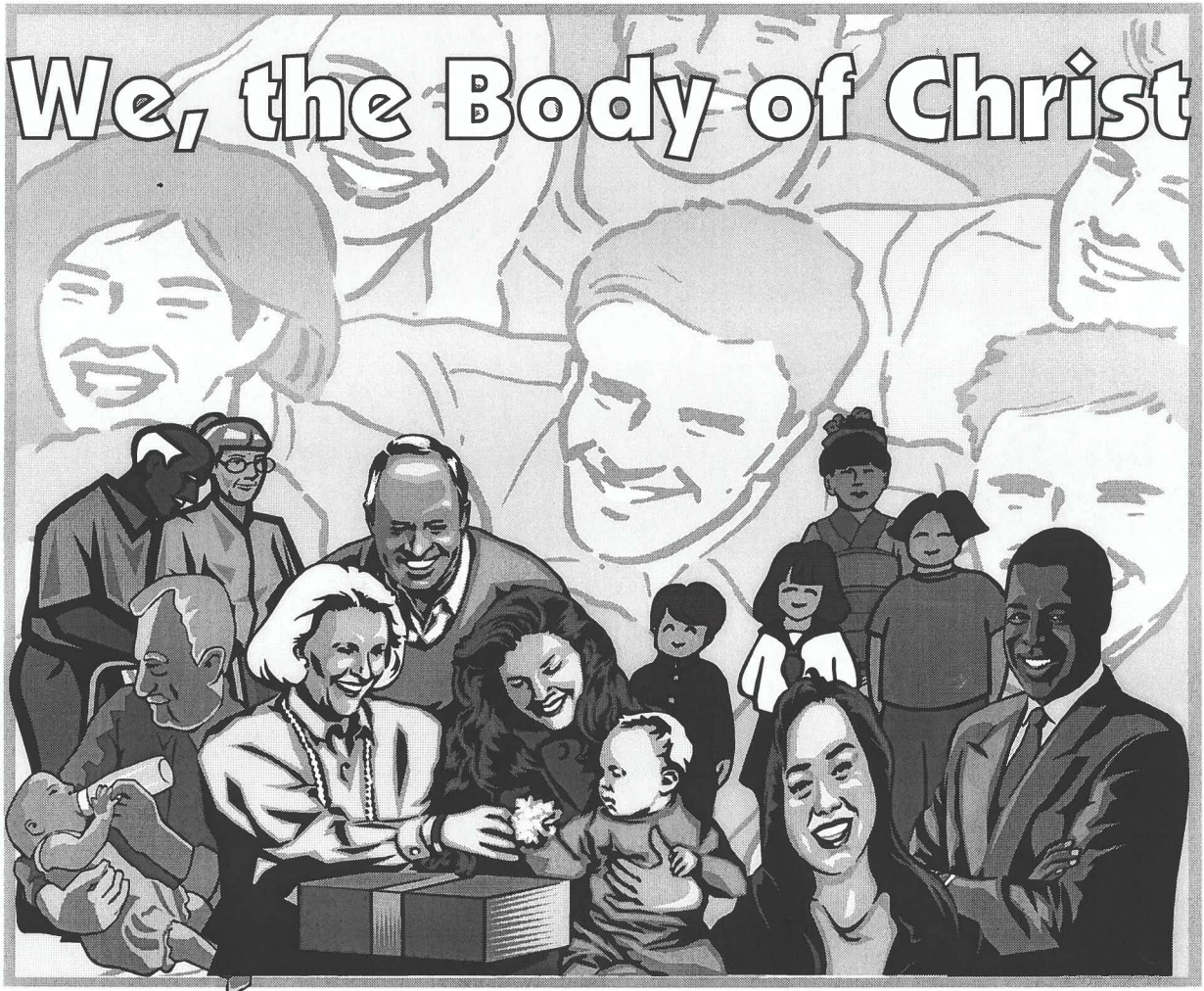


We, the Body of Christ



**A Granville Chapel
Bible Study Guide**

Spring 2000

Study Schedule

The studies in this Curriculum should be done in the Home Groups before the Sunday sermon on the same topic. The schedule of studies for this Curriculum is as follows:

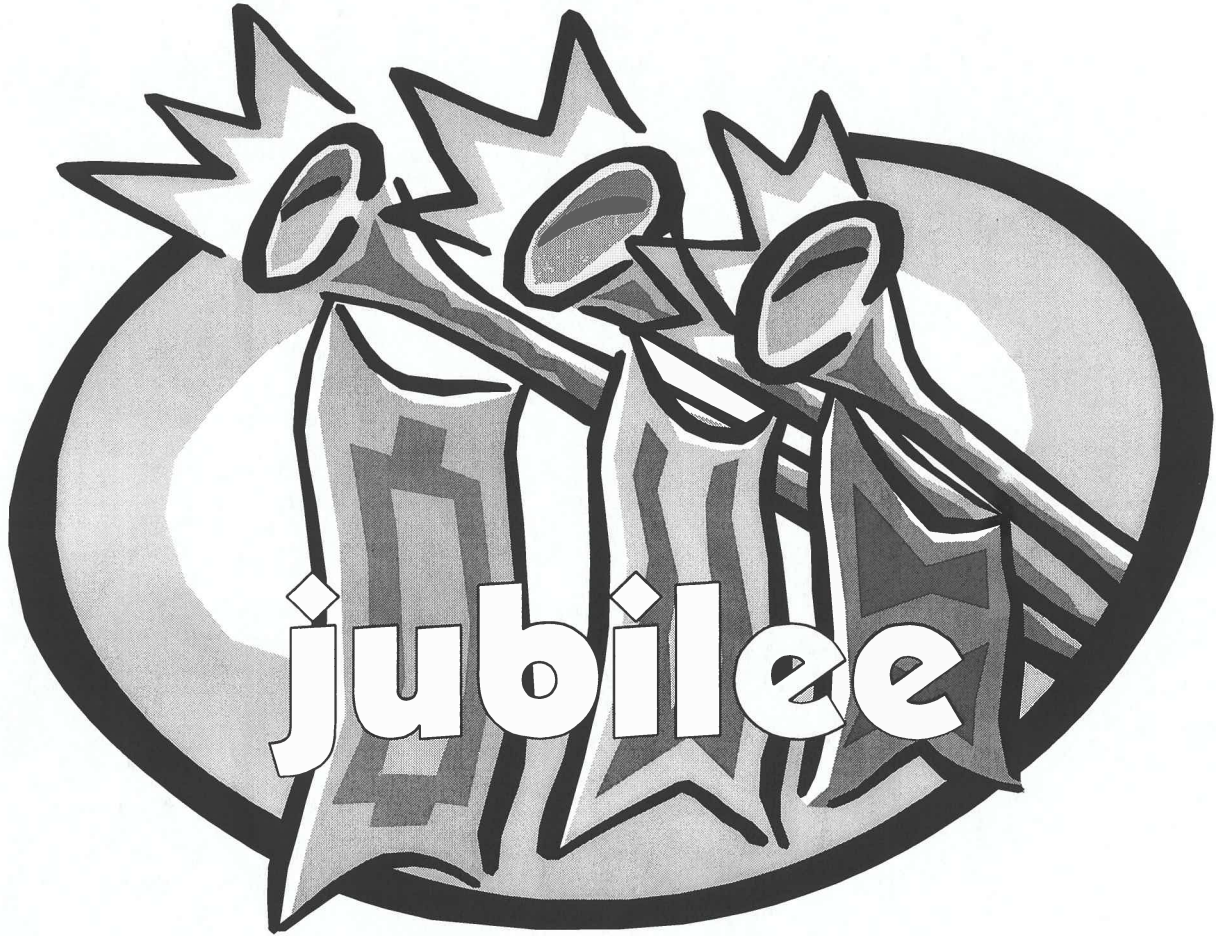
Week of

<u>We, the Body of Christ</u>			
April 24	Study #1	Leviticus 25:8-24; 25:39-43; Isaiah 61:1-3	Jubilee
May 1	Study #2	Psalms 100:5	His Faithfulness Continues to All Generations
May 8	Study #3	Psalms 100	5 Purposes: Worship
May 15	Study #4	Matthew 28:18-20	5 Purposes: Evangelism
May 22	Study #5	Colossians 1:9-12	5 Purposes: Discipleship
May 29	Study #6	Romans 12:9-21	5 Purposes: Fellowship
June 5	Study #7	1 Corinthians 12:1-13	In the Power of the Spirit
June 12	Study #8	Romans 12:1-8	5 Purposes: Service
June 19	Study #9	Ephesians 6:18-20	Undergirded by Prayer

Special thanks to

Charles & Shelley Austin, Richard Bowler, Ken Castor, Gerald Dooley, Mary Gordon, Tim MacIntosh, Claire Westlake, and Steve Williams who put much time, effort and prayer into the writing of these studies.

Ken Castor for the graphics.



Study #1

Leviticus 25:8-24, 39-43
Isaiah 61:1-3

Introduction

Granville's **Jubilee** is coming.

Granville's what?

The concept of **Jubilee** comes from the Old Testament. The word means "Year of the Ram's Horn" – the ram's horn was to be sounded at the beginning of the 50th year, setting it apart as a special year of celebration and dedication to the Lord. It was a year of restoration and of freedom for those who were enslaved.

What was done physically in the Old Testament is often to be done spiritually in the New. Restoration and freedom are vibrant, living concepts in the person of Jesus Christ. What will it mean to take **Jubilee** seriously?

⇒ **The aim of this study is to truly live out the concept of Jubilee in our world and relationships**

Group Study

Community Building

(1) Think of a time when you have been set free from some overwhelming obligation or indebtedness. How did you feel? How did you respond?

(2) Read Leviticus 25:8-24, 39-43 (if you want a more complete picture read the whole of the chapter plus 27:16-25). Try to understand the concept of Jubilee. The two most important issues involve freedom for slaves and restoration of family land. What does the Lord command in these 2 spheres?

(3) What hope would such a system give to those who were impoverished? What challenge would it provide for those who were rich? What challenge to faith would it provide for everyone?

It's not clear how often (if at all) this Year was actually faithfully celebrated by the Israelites – why might they avoid remembering to practice it?

(4) Read the great prophecy of the coming age of Messiah in Isaiah 61:1-3. Scholars point out that the Year of Jubilee serves as a background to this prophecy. How will the coming of Messiah bring about the blessings of Jubilee?

Jesus quotes this prophecy at the very beginning of his ministry, commenting that it was being fulfilled in his audience's hearing (Luke 4:17-21). What aspects of Jubilee do you see in his ministry? What aspects have you experienced?

- (5) *"The Year of Jubilee foreshadows the restoration of all that has been perverted by mankind's sin, the establishment of the true liberty of the children of God, and the deliverance of creation from the bondage of corruption to which it has been subjected on account of human depravity." (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia)*

Read Romans 8:19-23 with Jubilee in mind. What hope of Jubilee still lies ahead of us? What difference should this make for us now?

- (6) If Jesus has set spiritual Jubilee in motion, how should we then live? How can we set others free from bondage and indebtedness? How do forgiveness and reconciliation tie into this great theme? Are there practical issues of money and possessions that we need to consider?

Personal Reflection ...

Are there individuals that I have kept "bound" by not extending forgiveness?
What will I do?

Are there unresolved past situations in which I need to bring restoration?
What will I do?

Prayer



Study #2

*... His faithfulness continues through all generations.
(Psalm 100:5)*

Introduction

It's Granville's 50th Anniversary this coming Sunday! The church building was opened on Sunday, May 7, 1950 – the Lord has been very faithful in the years since. It's time to celebrate!

This study will be less **study** and more reflection. It's a time for telling stories together – from your own experience with the Lord and from the collective experience of the

church. Go for it – don't hold back. The Lord is honoured as we share the wonders, big and small, of his faithfulness through all generations.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to revel in the Lord's faithfulness in our own lives and in the life of Granville**

Group Study

- (1) There is no indication as to who wrote Psalm 100 or when they lived. Regardless, what events of Israel's history illustrate the truth of v. 5? Which would have stood out in your mind if you were the writer?

Not everything in Israel's history was positive. What events could have led the psalmist to question the truth of v. 5? How can he affirm this truth even in light of those events? How do you respond?

- (2) What about your own life? Take some time to share together key moments when you experienced (perhaps in hindsight) the enduring love and faithfulness of the Lord. Share stories together. (Take as much time as you need.)
- (3) Share stories about Granville. Each of you has been involved for different lengths of time. But share some sightings you've had of the Lord's enduring love and faithfulness towards Granville, its people and its ministries.
- (4) Granville's full Calling Statement is reprinted below. Look it over and reflect on the fact that the Lord's faithfulness will continue into coming generations as well. What longings would you have for Granville that only the Lord can meet in the years to come?

***Building followers of Jesus
together
through our every day relationships***

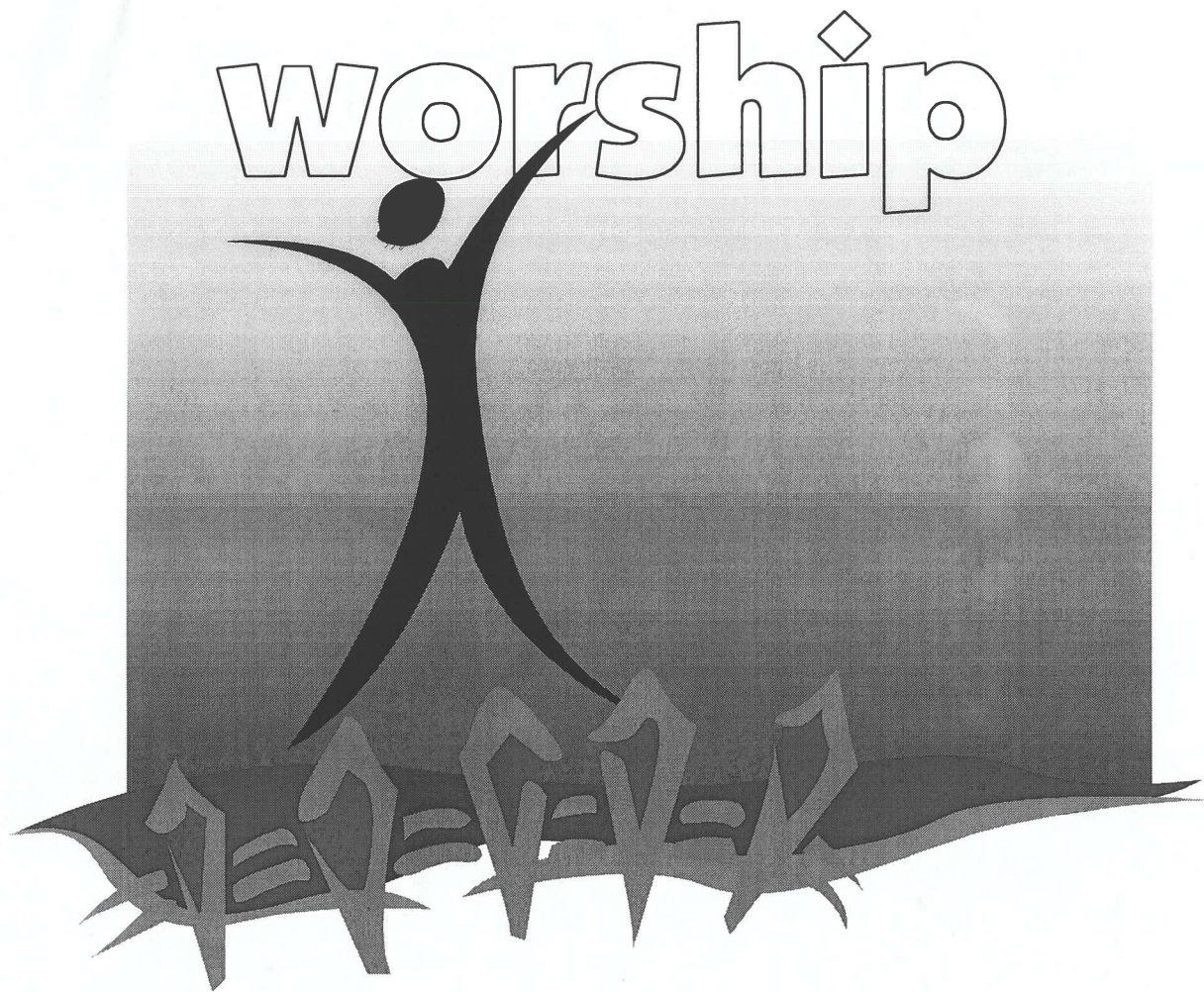
***undergirded by prayer
in the power of the Spirit
from love of the Father
fulfilling our purposes of
Worship
Discipleship
Fellowship
Service
Evangelism***

- (5) Closing options – you may want to use one or all of these suggestions:

Sing for joy to the Lord ... *Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs.* If you've got a musical group have someone lead the group in song, giving expression to your thankfulness and praise for the Lord's faithfulness through all generations.

Share Communion together. The great flow of events from Good Friday, Easter, Ascension and Pentecost show forth the wonder of the Lord's faithfulness continuing to all generations. Praise the Lord as you celebrate his faithfulness at the cross of Jesus. Serve each other bread and wine. Pray and give thanks.

Pray. Give thanks for the Lord's faithfulness – name some of the specific events you spoke of in Questions # 2 & 3 – express your gratitude to the Lord. Turn the longings of Question #4 into prayer for our future together – he has promised to be faithful, so pray with strong confidence.



Study #3

Psalm 100

Introduction

The first question of the Westminster Catechism asks: *What is the chief end of man?* The answer: *The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever.* This is as good a definition of worship as any. It is our joy, our responsibility, our command to glorify God, to praise Him for all he is and does, to boast in his works for the greater good of God's people and the world. Ronald Allen calls worship "*an active response to God whereby we declare His worth*". A worship service should be a *celebration* of the God who is worthy of our praise. The act of worship by God's people is also a part of Granville's Calling Statement, an important aspect of our life together as a community. This study will look at one of the great calls to celebratory worship, Psalm 100.

- ⇒ The aim of this study is to rediscover the joy and privilege of worshipping our God, as well as to recognize attitudes towards worship in our lives which may need adjusting.

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) When was the last time you really celebrated something? What was the occasion? What was it about that moment that made you want to rejoice? (*This doesn't have to be a spiritual event!*)

- (2) What is your definition of worship? What forms do worship take? What is your own attitude towards worship? Share your thoughts with the group.

Read Psalm 100

- (3) Here's a W5 question for you! **Why** should we praise God? There are at least six reasons given for praising God in this short psalm. What are they? (If you can come up with more than six, go for it!)

What should our attitude be when praising God? **Who** should praise Him? (Look at the first line of the psalm) **Where** should we praise God? **When** should we praise God? (You'll have to use your imagination on this one!)

- (4) Keeping the Psalm firmly in mind, take a look at these two New Testament scriptures: 1 Peter 2:9 and Philippians 4:4. How do these verses amplify what

the Psalmist says? How do these verses and the Psalm help you understand the importance of worship in the life of the church?

- (5) Verse 4. What does it mean to enter *his* gates and *his* courts? What has made it possible for us to do so? (Hebrews 10:19-22)
- (6) Something the Psalmist does *not* say is: "Come before him with joyful songs, *but only if you are feeling really good and things are going well for you*". Worship is for God, and doesn't depend on our frame of mind. Ronald Allen says, "*the real factor in worship is a heart desire for God; the reason it fails to occur in the pew is because it fails to occur in the daily routine of living*". How can we cultivate a heart desire for God in our daily living so that we are prepared for church every Sunday morning?

The following is a quote from Ronald Allen's book, *Worship: Rediscovering the Missing Jewel*, and it declares quite firmly what worship is NOT and what celebrating God IS. Read it through together and think about "worship no-nos" you sometimes succumb to. What can we do to help each other make our worship time together honouring to God and a balm for our spirits?

Worship is not the casual chatter that occasionally drowns out the organ prelude; we celebrate God when we allow the prelude to attune our hearts to the glory of God by the means of the music.

Worship is not the mumbling of prayers or the mouthing of hymns with little thought and less heart; we celebrate God when we join together earnestly in prayer and intensely in song.

Worship is not self-aggrandizing words or boring cliches when one is asked to give a testimony; we celebrate God when we boast in His name to the good of his people.

Worship is not irrelevant thoughts or fragmented elements, silly asides or unconnected directions in purpose; we celebrate God when all of the parts of the service fit together and work to a common end.

Worship is not grudging gifts or compulsory service; we celebrate God when we give to Him hilariously and serve Him with integrity.

Worship is not haphazard music done poorly, not even great music done merely as performance; we celebrate God when we enjoy and participate in music to his glory.

Worship is not a distracted endurance of the sermon; we celebrate God as we hear His word gladly and seek to be conformed by it more and more to the image of our Savior.

Prayer

evangelism



Study # 4

Matthew 28:18-20

Introduction

Christianity is an offensive religion. This is true in the simple sense that the gospel offends people – not everyone wants to hear that he needs God but cannot reach him on his own. But Christianity is also offensive in the sense that it seeks to reach out and change people, and then to have them make disciples of others, until the whole world has heard the gospel and had the opportunity for salvation. No one can hear the words of Jesus without being challenged to change his way of thinking, and no one can fully obey Christ without being willing to tell others about him. Our study tonight examines Jesus' last command to his apostles, and how it might apply to us today.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to examine our willingness to share Jesus' good news.**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) Have you ever shared your faith with someone who was not a believer? How did you feel when you did? What was the other person's reaction to your statement of faith?

Read Matthew 28:18-20

- (2) Do you think that Jesus was talking only to his apostles, or to us as well? Given the "worldwide" spread of the church today, is there still a reason to send missionaries to other countries? Given the wide-spread distribution of Christian TV, radio and books, is there still a reason to witness here at home?
- (3) If "all power in Heaven and on earth" has been given to Jesus, and God sent Jesus to "save the world through him" (John 3:17), why do we have to do anything at all?

Does the extent of Jesus' authority answer any fears you have about witnessing?

- (4) Consider cultists who may have tried to recruit you. What was your reaction toward them? What does this suggest about the way we should act toward those with whom we share our faith?

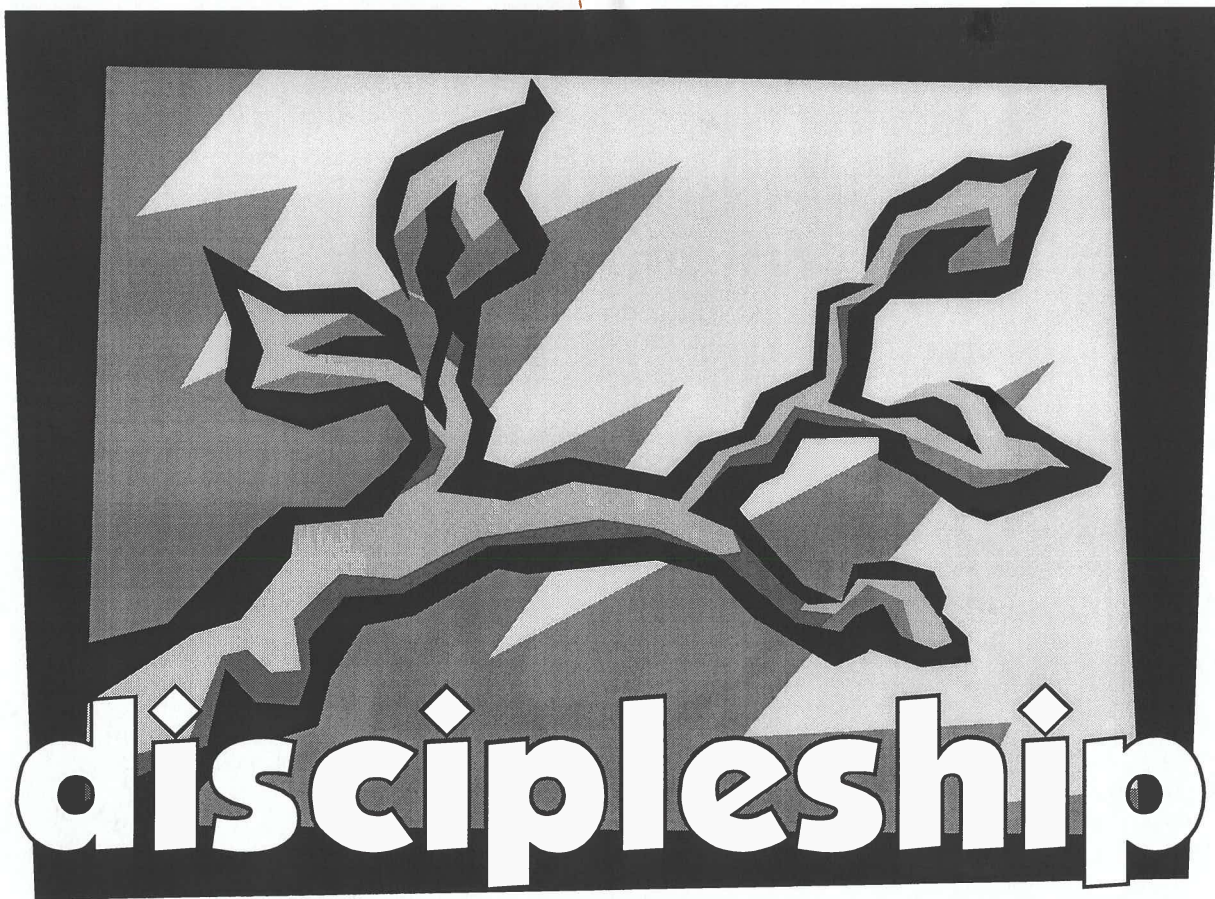
- (5) To be a “disciple” means to be under the discipline of a teacher or leader. What does it mean to be a disciple of Jesus? How does that differ from willingness to be baptized?

When dealing with people from other cultures, how do we draw the line between encouraging Christian discipleship and simply imposing our own culture on them?

- (6) Missionary work can bring personal risks as well as upheaval in our lives. What are the sacrifices that Jesus is asking of us? What promises does he make? If you are being called to missions work, do they address your fears?

If you believe that you are not being called, what can you do to help those who are?

Prayer



Study # 5

Colossians 1: 9-12

Introduction

Paul has learned from his experience as a student under the great teacher, Gamaliel, how a thorough training in the scriptures creates a lasting zeal in the student. After his conversion to faith in the risen Lord Jesus Christ, Paul found his knowledge of the scriptures connected with the Holy Spirit, who redirected his enthusiasm for truth in a new direction. He also needed the help of his fellow believers to gain a new understanding of the Hebrew Scriptures. Thus, the Holy Spirit uses his people, the Church, to train (“disciple/discipline”) each follower of Christ.

Furthermore, Paul had an excellent education in religion and philosophy which allowed him to disciple the Colossian church. He could deal with the intellectual struggles that the Colossians had over the nature of Christ and His relationship to the created order.

In this introductory passage, Paul helps the Colossian church realize that it is God who supplies the wisdom to deal with the enigmatic truths of scripture. God is also concerned with our character and behavior in response to the truth.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to explore the purpose of discipleship.**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) Has a fellow Christian ever taken an ongoing interest in your growth as a Christian? If so, did your experience help you see a connection between knowledge and behaviour?

Read Colossians 1:9-12

- (2) In verse 9, Paul tells the Colossian Christians that he is asking God to fill them with a knowledge of his will through all spiritual wisdom and understanding. What does Paul mean by this? How does this happen? Why is this an important part of the discipleship experience of the Colossian church?
- (3) Think about what happens when you water a garden. In verse 10, what is the result of being filled with “the knowledge of his will”?

Can you think of a time when the truth of scripture made a marked change in your behavior and fruitfulness?

- (4) Endurance reveals the practice of effective discipleship. What in verse 11 helps create this characteristic in the follower of Christ?

What things in our life may cause us to stop growing? What can we do to counteract this?

- (5) Verse 12 Who is qualified to share in the inheritance of the saints and why? How does this inspire us to help disciple our fellow Christians?

Prayer

Take some time to thank God for his concern to help you enjoy the inheritance you have been given in the Kingdom of light. May this meditation lead you to consider what discipleship means to you. How can you make your life available to God in such a way that he can encourage and train one of his children through you?



Study # 6

Romans 12: 9-21

Introduction

Fellowship is a crucial part of our calling statement. If we are to build followers of Christ together, our fellowship must model Christ. In this study we will examine Paul's instructions to the church regarding how we should love one another within the church and how we should respond to persecution from outside. Paul's commands are clear, but putting them into practice is challenging.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to be challenged to take action in the area of fellowship with those at Granville and with the world, that they may know us by our love.**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) What is the popular view of love today?

Read Romans 12:9

- (2) How would you describe sincere love? Genuine love must be discriminating. (see Proverbs 6:16-19 for seven things God hates)

Read Romans 12:10-13

- (3) Paul mentions 9 ways we can demonstrate love in our lives. What are they? Which of these commands is hardest for you to obey? Why?

Discuss amongst your group ways we can put these commands into practice.

Read Romans 12:14-16

- (4) Paul now exhorts us to love our enemies. This is radical teaching. How can we practically bless our persecutors? (see Matthew 5:44 and Luke 6:28) How does this apply within the church fellowship?
- (5) What four characteristics of true Christians do you find in verses 15 and 16? How do these strengthen fellowship?

Read Romans 12:17-21

- (6) Verses 17 & 19 says that fighting back is not Christian. Instead we are to be peacemakers (v.18 & Matthew 5:9).What are the results of peacemaking in a community? Give examples from your experience.

- (7) How would doing good to one's enemy "heap burning coals on his head"? What specific acts can you do today to overcome evil with good? Again, how does this foster fellowship?

Prayer

Pray that we would strive to stay close to Jesus, study his example, and always remember with gratitude how God has treated us.

"I can do everything through him who gives me strength."



Study # 7

1 Corinthians 12:1-13

Introduction

The passage we're looking at today is from a letter by the apostle Paul to a church in the ancient city of Corinth (in Greece). These were real words to a real church with real people. Corinth was an important trading city for the Roman Empire, but it also was a centre of pagan worship and immorality. When Paul first visited the city however, a church began strongly, with many believers. Sadly though, after Paul left, the Corinthian church fell into a pattern of quarrelling, division and sexual immorality (much like the city of Corinth itself). Paul heard about this (1:11) and was deeply saddened and disturbed. So he responded to them with this very serious letter.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to understand how we can accomplish unity in our church through the practice of our spiritual gifts in the power of the Spirit.**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) Do you think/feel that Granville Chapel is a church of unity? Why or why not?

- (2) Read Acts 18:1-18. From these verses, what do we learn about the beginnings of the church there? (Try listing all of the people who were part of the foundation of the Corinthian church: Acts 18:1-12).

- (3) Now take turns reading 1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:3 ; 4:18-21; 5:1-2; 6:1; and 11:17-19. From these verses what do we learn about how the Corinthian church had developed?

- (4) Now read 1 Cor. 12:1-13. Make a list of all the spiritual gifts that Paul mentions in vv.7-10.

- (5) With the Corinthian church people in mind, why do you think Paul focussed on these spiritual gifts? What purpose does he have?

- (6) Where do you see the concept of unity in these verses? How could spiritual gifts help unity in their church?

- (7) What role does the Spirit have in all of this? How could gifts and unity be strengthened by cultivating an awareness of “the fellowship of the Holy Spirit” (2 Cor. 13;14)? How could this awareness be cultivated?
- (8) APPLICATION: If among the people at Granville Chapel, our church had all of these gifts....how would you feel? ...would Sunday service or our small groups be different?

* In other words, what can we learn from 1 Cor. 12:1-13? What is the lesson Paul tried to teach the Corinthian church that we should pay attention to?

Prayer

Pray for unity at Granville. Pray for:

Reconciliation where it is needed
Repentance where it is needed
Cooperation and love (1 Cor. 13)
Spiritual Gifts

IF YOU HAVE TIME AND/OR WANT TO DO FURTHER STUDY:

How do the sections following this passage help us better understand it?

1 Cor. 12:14-31 = One body, many parts

1 Cor. 13:1-13 = Love

1Cor. 14:1-25 = Gifts of prophecy and tongues

1 Cor. 14:26-40 = Right worship



Study #8

Romans 12:1-8

Introduction

This week's study topic is Service: the duty Christians owe the Lord and one another in the Church. "Service! Oh, but how unpleasant," we may be tempted to conclude. "Another appeal for ushers and cash, with the Scriptures giving the shove".

Yet, hold on. Such a conclusion, even if in some sense accurate, is too hastily arrived at if in that jump the very heart and soul of Service is in danger of being missed. It would be like skipping to the end of Dicken's A Christmas Carol to see there a bubbly Ebenezer Scrooge dispensing kindnesses to servants, Crachets and nephews but having no grasp of the reason for Scrooge's behaviour or the extent of the transformation it represents.

And so we make a return to the book of Romans to discover the basis and goal of Christian Service. We look to the Bible to find not only what we are called to do, but what we are called to be. And in that looking may the Lord open our eyes to the

loveliness of this fifth and final purpose of being the body of Christ, to which we at Granville Chapel aspire.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to be encouraged to participate wholeheartedly in the life of the Body.**

Group Study

Community Building

(1) You are sipping coffee one day after the service and an elder comes over to you, as if to chat, but instead offers you a carte blanc opportunity to do that secret thing which has been on your heart to bless the congregation. What special thing would you do?

(2) vv.1-2. The “therefore” in verse 1 marks a transition between chapters 1-11 and chapters 12-16, between a statement of doctrine (what we are to believe) and a statement of response (what we are to do/be). How are both of these aspects summed up in this opening verse? What are God’s mercies (see Romans 5:1 & 8:1)? What is a “living sacrifice”?

(3) Paul calls this response our “spiritual (or “reasonable”) act of worship”. In other words, apart from how any particular church is organized, this is what God expects from us. How does verse 2 teach us to make this sacrifice? What will the results be?

What questions or thoughts arise from these verses about a) “worship” b) “this world (or “this age”) c) “the renewing of your mind” d) “God’s will”? Feel free to answer any or all of these.

- (4) The image of the body reappears in the New Testament again and again. It illustrates unity in diversity, of each member being an essential part of an organic whole. What privilege and responsibility do you find in the statement “each member belongs to all the others” (v.5)?
- (5) Granville Chapel has its roots in the Brethren movement which was a 19th C reaction in Great Britain to the hierarchical formalism of the Church of England, where the clergy were often part of a different social class and everyone else had limited involvement. Harkening back to New Testament times, the Brethren sought to emphasize the priesthood of all believers, where individuals were free to exercise their God-given gifts in meetings based around the Lord’s Supper and the preaching of the word.

Do you have a sense of what your gifting is yet? Is there perhaps a logical order in having the contents of verses 1-3 precede this section? In the meanwhile, are there opportunities available to you to serve in various capacities?

- (6) Since it is the Spirit of Christ which indwells us and we give Him all the glory, when was the last time you felt blessed by Jesus through someone? When did you feel that Jesus was using you as a channel of blessing/service to another?

For homework, rent the 1951 movie version of “A Christmas Carol”, starring Alastair Sim.

Prayer

The words of a prayer by St. Theresa: “Christ has no Body now but yours/ No hands, no feet on earth but yours/ Yours are the eyes through which He looks/ Compassion on this world/ Yours are the feet with which he walks/ To do good/ Yours are the hands with which He blesses/ All the world”. * *Lord, we thank you for your tremendous mercy, for dwelling in us through your Holy Spirit, may we be daily transformed into your image and give ourselves entirely to our Heavenly Father, to do the good things he has prepared in advance for us to do. Amen*

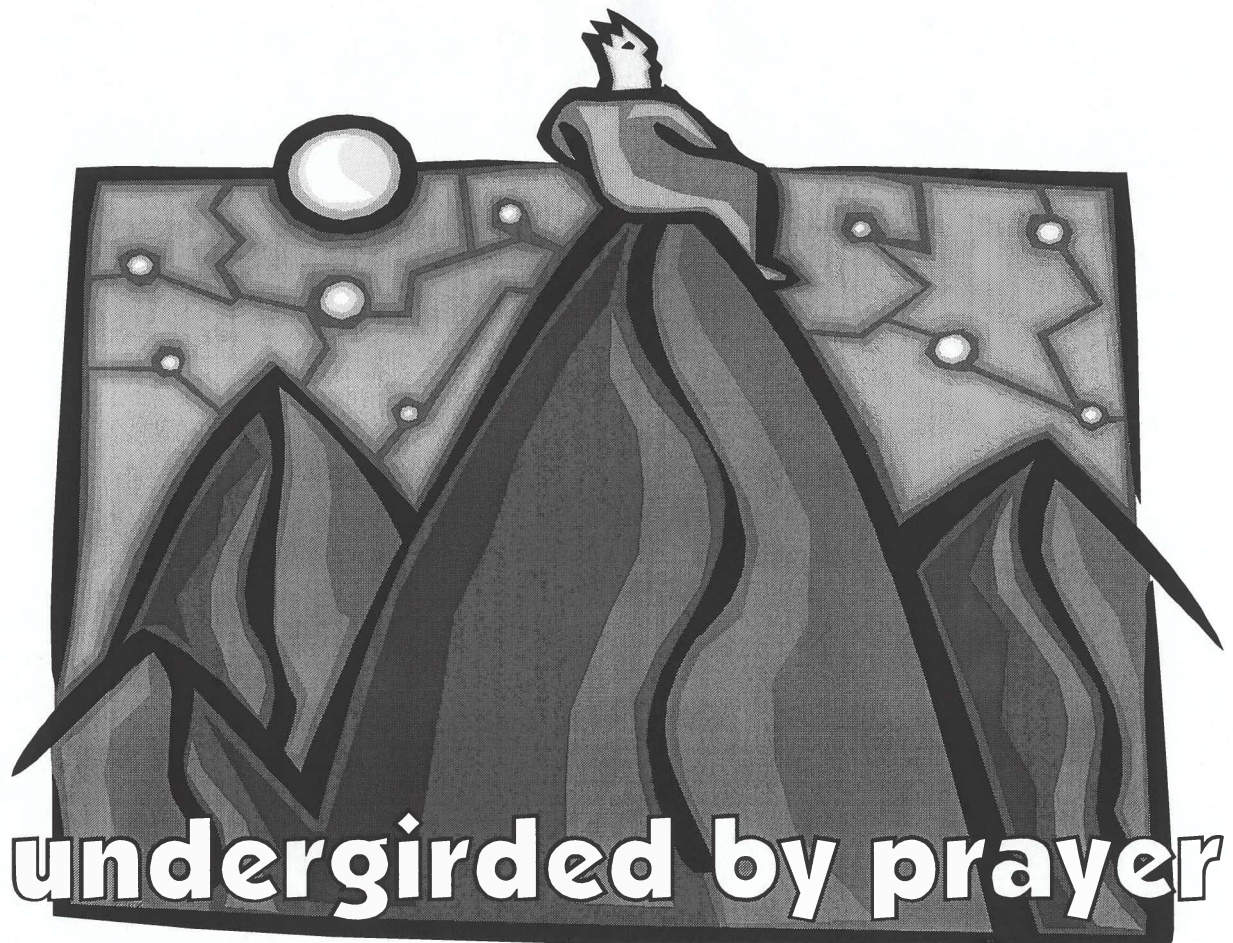
(*as appearing in a song by John Michael Talbot)

Notes

Martin Luther wrote concerning this passage: “The true sacrifice to God is not outside us or outside what belongs to us, nor is it a matter of time confined to a certain hour of the day, but we ourselves are this sacrifice.”

Similarly, theologian Karl Barth wrote: “No matter who they are or what they are, they are exhorted to place no more but also no less than themselves at the disposal of the One who in his mercy regards them as worthy of belonging to him, whose good pleasure it is to claim them for himself and to accept them – their whole person – as a gift.”

Ephesians 2:1-10 is another passage in which Paul deals with who we were, what God has done, who we are now and how we are to live.



Study #10

Ephesians 6:18-20

Introduction

Paul has been talking about Christian behaviour, relationships within the family of God, and how we should arm ourselves against the opposition we may encounter. Now he speaks of the attitude with which we should relate to God and fellow Christians and prepare to withstand opposition.

⇒ **The aim of this study is to appreciate the importance and necessity of prayer and to be more consistent in its practice.**

Group Study

Community Building

- (1) How important is prayer in your life? Can you tell of an instance when it helped you use the armor of God?

Read Ephesians 6:18-20

Verse 18: The word order in the Greek is somewhat different than in the NIV translation. It goes something like this:

“With all prayer and supplication pray on all occasions in the Spirit, and in this (exercise) be alert in all perseverance, and pray for all the saints”.

Prayer is not to be an occasional or casual activity – it’s to be all-encompassing! With this in mind, reflect on the following questions:

- (2) Verse 18: *“all prayer and supplication”*. There are different kinds of prayer. The word *“prayer”* means *“calling on God”*. *“Requests”* (*“supplication”*) is rooted in the idea of need.

How do these ideas relate to your own prayers? What other kinds of prayer can you think of? (See Note 1) How can we promote variety in our prayer-life?

- (3) Verse 18: *“on all occasions”* (*“always”*). When should we pray? In times of crisis? Or oftener? How can we cultivate this habit of *“all occasions”* prayer?
- (4) Verse 18: *“be alert and always keep on”*. In other words, keep at it and don’t fall asleep! What gets in the way of alertness? What promotes drowsiness for you?
- (5) Verse 18: *“for all the saints”* – that is, for all Christians. This command is written to a whole community, not just to an individual – praying for *“all the saints”* is a group effort. How can this practically be accomplished?

- (6) Who helps us in our praying? See Romans 8:26-27. What practical differences should this make in our prayers?
- (7) Verse 19. For whom does Paul ask special prayer? What is his specific request? What would be the equivalent need at Granville?

Paul is a prisoner in Rome, chained to a guard. How does he see his presence and activity there? What role does prayer play?

Prayer

Just do it!

Notes

Note 1

Verse 18: *“all kinds of prayers and requests.”* There are a number of words used for different kinds of prayer in the New Testament.

- ◆ *“Prayer”* is the commonest of these words in the New Testament, meaning simply *“calling on God.”*
- ◆ *“Request”* (*“supplication”*) is the second most common word, rooted in the idea of need.
- ◆ The Apostle John doesn't use either of these words in his writings, preferring to use words usually translated *“ask”* in the ordinary sense.
- ◆ There is another family of words based originally on the idea of two people meeting and something being obtained – they are usually translated *“intercede, intercession.”*
- ◆ Two other words signify more a wish than a prayer.
- ◆ There is also a word which means *“giving thanks.”*

Note 2

Jesus often spent time in prayer before serious responsibilities (Luke 6:12, before choosing the twelve apostles) or just to be with his Father (Luke 9:18).

Note 3

Verse 18. The word for “*alert*” means staying awake (Romans 13:11), and is translated “*watch*” or “*be alert*” (Mark 13:33, Luke 21:36). The word for “*persevere*” speaks of continuing, giving oneself to an action (Acts 1:14, 2:42,46, 6:4, etc.)

Note 4

Verse 19. The “*mystery of the Gospel*” is God’s plan of salvation for both Jew and Gentile, which was hidden in the past but was fulfilled in Christ (see Ephesians 3:4-6).