

A Heart to Sacrifice

Loving and Living for What Matters Most

How Has God Equipped You to Serve?

2 Corinthians 2:14 – 3:6

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Brad Bigney / January 8, 2017

Big Rocks

Rock #1 | BIBLE-BASED in all that we do

Isaiah 40:8 says, “The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.” We want our preaching, teaching, counseling, and discipling to stay anchored in God’s eternal truth, and not our opinions or preferences.

Rock # 2 | GRACE-BASED in all that we do

We don’t want to ever get over grace. We believe the Bible teaches it’s all grace from start to finish. We need saving grace to justify us and save us from the penalty of our sins. We need empowering grace to grow us and free us from the power of remaining sin in our lives. Grace is not just pardon for my sin; grace is the power to say ‘No’ to that same sin. So we expect everyone who claims to have experienced the grace of God to be changing and growing by His grace year after year after year.

Rock #3 | MISSIONS-MINDED

We won’t just sit on this message of grace. We’re not going to run from the world. We’re going to run headlong into this world with this message of grace, Praying and working to connect real people to the glory of a real God in our own backyard and overseas. We also want to keep the glory of God high and lifted up as the only effective and lasting motivation for missions, rather than simply compassion or pity for people.

Rock #4 | EQUIPPING Every Believer to do Real Ministry!

Yes, this is a hospital for sinners, but it’s also a training and equipping center for saints. We’ve structured our church so that you can actually get equipped with the tools and training and encouragement that you need to actually do real ministry. We’re convinced it’s our calling from Scripture – to equip you to do the work of ministry for the edifying of the body of Christ! (Eph. 4:11-12)

Rock #5 | PRAYING CHURCH!

We believe in prayer because we recognize that without it, the ministries of the church will just grind along in the arm of the flesh, regardless of how good they look on the outside. We want to see lasting fruit, real changes, breakthroughs, and an outpouring of God’s presence and power in our midst and that only comes by prayer. So we pray as desperate people who recognize that apart from God we can do nothing.

Rock #6 | Staying CONNECTED & GROWING through Small Groups

We want to be growing bigger and smaller all the time. We want our small groups to be growing and birthing at a rate that is keeping pace with the overall growth of our church. Small groups are the very heartbeat of our church because we think the Bible teaches that people change and grow best at close range with other believers who can speak into their life and by using their own gifts to speak into someone else's life.

Rock #7 | GOD-FOCUSED WORSHIP

We do everything we can to see that our worship leads us to thinking right thoughts about God – changing our lives and attitudes to fall in line with what He's revealing about Himself to us. We're not going to use a lot of solos and choirs to sing on Sunday. You are the choir each Sunday. We want the congregation to come ready to enter into worship rather than watching the 'professionals' do it for them.

Rock #8 | Exalting and Proclaiming the SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD!

This rock, which might be considered the cornerstone of Grace Fellowship, is critical and it's presence bleeds over into every other area of our church life. We try to promote and exalt the sovereignty of God in every way that we can, because we're convinced that a proper understanding and appreciation for the sovereignty of God will absolutely change your life, the way you see the world around you, and the way you respond to what takes place in your life. We believe that God limits, orders, and controls all things for His glory and our good.

Mission

Gathering together in truth to worship God

Growing together by grace to become more like Christ

Going together with the Gospel to the tri-state and the world

And You!

I. His Power Leads You into Every Ministry Moment

2 Cor. 2:14 "But thanks be to God who always leads us in His triumph, and manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Christ in every place."

- God leads us into every situation. He doesn't herd us from behind or shout instructions from above.
- He does something through us that is so much bigger than what we're DOING or what we're SAYING.
- He manifests through us the sweet aroma of the knowledge of Christ!

II. His Spirit Works Through You in the Hearts of Others

2 Cor. 3:3 “You are manifestly an epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written now with ink but by the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of flesh, that is, of the heart.”

- Yes, we serve and use our gifts, but we don't have to press on the outside of people to try and get them to conform.
- The Spirit of God is at work on a heart level doing more than we could ever accomplish and doing it in a way that produces lasting change from the inside out.
- Notice how it's worded in v. 3 that the people you are serving are actually epistles or letters of Christ. He's writing their story and working in their lives on a heart level – while we serve.

III. His Spirit Works In You to Compensate for All of Your Inadequacies

2 Cor. 3:5-6 “Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think of anything as being from ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God, who made us sufficient as ministers of a new covenant, not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life.”

- So how does that change the way you LIVE and SERVE others?

2 Cor. 3:4 “And we have such trust through Christ toward God.”

Just like you trusted Christ to save you and to satisfy His Father's holy standard and demands, you can TRUST Him to take your feeble efforts to serve, even with your mixed motives and remaining sinfulness, and to use it to change the lives of other people around you!