



**GRACE COMMUNION**  
INTERNATIONAL

**Living and Sharing the Gospel**

**Weekly bulletin**  
**October 10 , 2021**

**Because of the Covid-19 pandemic, we will continue to have worship services online through the Zoom platform, until further notice. You are welcome to worship with us on Sunday at 10:30 a.m. If you need information about how to join with us for worship services, please contact Mr. Vautour, minister. The contact information is at the bottom of the bulletin.**

**If you have friends or acquaintances who want to join in the worship service, please do not hesitate to share with them the Zoom links to join with us in the worship our great God.**

**Please note that audio and video sermons and other materials are also available on our local website at [www.gcine Brunswick.org](http://www.gcine Brunswick.org); Mr. Greg Williams' sermon during the 2021 Denominational Celebration should be posted on our website this week in the section sermons, 2021, October.**

**Offerings:**

You can make your donation by cheque; Address: Grace Communion International- Canada, Suite 203A, 2121 Airport Dr., Saskatoon, SK 7S1 6W5.

You can call 1-306-653-2705 (GCI Canada main phone number) and make credit card donation.

E-transfers to [khorwood@gcicanada.ca](mailto:khorwood@gcicanada.ca) (her full name is Kathleen Horwood). There is no need for a password as the donations are deposited directly into the GCI banking account. In the subject or message line, write the name of your church and your member number. Most banks send an immediate confirmation of successful deposit. If you do not know your member number, please write to Mr. Vautour at the email address below.

You can also donate to our GCI Canada website at [Grace Communion International - Canada \(gcicanada.ca\)](http://Grace Communion International - Canada (gcicanada.ca)); click on Donate. In the donation box detail, and under **Fund**, make sure you click on General. In the message box, make sure that you identify your church and your church member number. If you don't know your church number, please contact Mr. Vautour.

**Prayer Meeting:** The next Bible Study will be on Thursday October 21, 2021 @ 7:30 p.m.

***There are new prayer requests on our local website – [www.gcine Brunswick.org](http://www.gcine Brunswick.org) under "Members Only"***

**To see specific prayer requests from the church, please go to [www.gcine Brunswick.org](http://www.gcine Brunswick.org) under "Members Only" and type the password. If you do not know the password, please contact Mr. Vautour at [evautour47@outlook.com](mailto:evautour47@outlook.com)**

Let us pray according to God's will and as per his instructions: **"1 ¶ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, 4 who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."** (1 Ti 2:1-4 ESV)

- We will be celebrating the **Thanksgiving** this coming Monday. In a fallen world filled with so many overwhelming problems and challenges that are beyond our human capacity to fix, let

us thank our heavenly Father for the gift of His Son, Jesus Christ, in whom lies the sure hope of a renewed world where sin and death will no longer be factors.

- Let us praise and thank him that he is working with his church in particular and with the whole world generally.
- As his beloved children, let us thank God the Father, “**who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light. 13 He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of our sins.**” (Colossians 1:12-13 ESV).

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## Life in the Kingdom: Joy and Peace at the Next Level

(From gci.org October 6, 2021)

***For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval – [Romans 14:17-18](#)***



By Charles Fleming  
GCI-USA Southeast  
Regional Support  
Team Member

The recent [Denominational Celebration](#) fed my soul at many levels. Seeing and hearing of God’s kindness and generosity to his people around the world was a high point. But what has stayed with me longest was the reminder that we are already citizens of the kingdom of God. We are already enjoying some of the greatest blessings that await the entire human family when that kingdom is established in all its glory. In our Covid-weary, disaster-riddled world, I needed that.

It’s been too long since we have had any teaching on the present reality of the Kingdom of God. So, I thank God for inspiring our President, Greg Williams, to devote his keynote address to the subject. As he introduced his message, he called on us *to think and talk* about the present reality of the kingdom. Here is a sampling of some of what he said.

*(As I was preparing for this sermon) “it just kept coming back to me that we need to talk about the kingdom of God and the reality of the kingdom of God... seeking first the kingdom of God and his righteousness is the priority... the kingdom and what that means.”*

He did not just call on us to reflect on our new reality. He set the tone by highlighting three kingdom realities that the apostle Paul says are already available to us – righteousness, peace and joy.

I decided to take Greg’s encouragement to think deeply on the kingdom as a personal challenge. And now I want to take the second step he recommended. I want to talk about it with the hope of encouraging you to similarly think and talk about the kingdom. I gave more thought to what Paul wrote in **Romans 14**. Here are two things that I found particularly inspiring.

First, I was struck by the fact that the joy and peace Paul is talking about are not just the natural peace and joy we humans experience. **Verse 18** shows there are two dimensions to this peace and joy. On the horizontal level we have right relationships with fellow humans. He says that when anyone “serves Christ in this way” the result is he or she “receives human approval.” And what does he mean by “in this way”? In the context Paul is writing in, it is following Christ’s example of accepting and not judging others (**vv. 1-4**) as well as joining Jesus in giving up personal rights to meet the needs of others (**vv. 13-15, 19-23**). There is a natural experience of joy and peace when we do the right thing.

But – and this is the truly inspiring part – there is more!

There is also a vertical dimension. What makes this version of peace and joy hallmarks of the kingdom is that the King himself is filled with joy. In **verse 18**, Paul also said that when anyone **“serves Christ in this way (that) is pleasing to God.”** What makes Paul declare the presence of the kingdom is that the King himself is filled with joy when he sees his people living true to their calling. And his joy is contagious. We get to experience it.

Living lives of inclusive, sacrificial love leads to the fulfillment – in this life – of promises of joy that Jesus made to his disciples. In one of his parables of the kingdom, Jesus promises the **“good and faithful servant”** that she or he will enter into or experience **the very joy of his or her master** ([Matthew 25:21](#)). Our ultimate reward is that for all eternity we will participate fully in the joy that Jesus experiences. But we do not have to wait for the resurrection to begin experiencing some of King Jesus’ joy. In **John 17**, he prayed for us to receive and experience, not just our (horizontal level) human joy, but his very joy even now!

***And I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, and I am coming to you.... But now I am coming to you, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have my joy fulfilled in themselves*** ([John 17:11, 13](#)).

The same can be said of peace. Jesus promised us not just our human-level peace, but an experience of his very own peace.

***Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.*** ([John 14:27](#)).

My first great encouragement from thinking of this scripture is that when we are under the reign of King Jesus, we even get to participate in his emotions. He gives us a capacity for joy and peace that is beyond our natural, human ability to generate. Oh, how we need that just to keep going in our broken world!

My second reason for being encouraged is that we also get to share that joy and peace with others by participating with the Spirit in helping others know and accept the loving rule of King Jesus. Dallas Willard has a definition for the kingdom of God that captures what Paul says in Romans 14, *“The Kingdom of God is God reigning. It is present wherever what God wants done is done.”*

The kingdom of God is present wherever what God wants done is done. The kingdom is present whenever we allow the love of God shed abroad in our hearts to move us to serve others. In doing so we are bringing to others an experience of life under the rule of the King of love. It’s as if a new reality flashes into the conscious life of another person. And – wonder of wonders – we get to be loving, walking, talking representatives of that kingdom because Jesus lives in us by his Spirit!

Why should we actively think and talk about the kingdom of God? There are lots of reasons, but here are two. In a world that can lead us to despair and high anxiety, we are “hooked up” with a source of joy and peace that not only sustains and emboldens us but makes us beacons of hope for others.

Dear brothers and sisters, I urge you to take our President’s encouragement as a personal challenge to think and talk about the kingdom of God. Having an imagination shaped by Jesus’ kingdom gives us eyes to better understand the new creation life that Paul says is now ours ([2 Corinthians 5:16-21](#).)

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### The Gospel Offers Hope

By [Ted Johnston](#) - [October 04, 2021](#) (From the [GCI Surprising God blog](#))

*This post is by Dr. Michael Morrison, Dean of Faculty at Grace Communion Seminary.*

If you are completely happy with your life, and completely happy with the way that people treat one another in society, then you may not be interested in the gospel. But if you think that life should be better, that life can be better, that your own life can be better, then ***the gospel offers hope.***

### **Created for love**

The story begins long ago when humans first came on the scene. *Why did God create human beings?* The answer is, in one word, *love*. God could see ahead of time the creatures he would make, and he wanted them. He did not want them for himself, as if he needed them, but he wanted to give good things to them. His love overflowed beyond himself to want to give to others.

He therefore made "others" so he could love them. He also wanted these creations to experience the greatest good of all, which is the ability to love, to enjoy giving. As part of his creation, God created people who are able to love. He wants us to share in the kind of life that he has.

The problem and the solution

However, people are not living up to this potential. Some people are good examples; some are not; no one is perfect. If there were no police, if there were no personnel assigned to keep order, society would degenerate. There are enough good examples around for us to see what the potential might look like, but we also see that goodness is not an automatic virtue for anyone. This did not take God by surprise – he knew ahead of time that humanity would not live up to his desires, but he created us anyway. God cannot die, so he takes a long-range view. He is patient, willing to wait for us to learn.

**First, we need to learn that we cannot do this on our own.** If a person thinks, "I am able to be a good person myself, even though most people cannot," then that person has an attitude of superiority, of thinking themselves better than others.

**Second, we need to learn that God wants to help** – not just to increase what we already have, but willing to wipe the slate clean of all past failures, to work in us, to change our internal nature so that we can start all over. Our old inclinations need to be eliminated, replaced with new approaches to life and relationships, approaches not just modeled on but rooted in God, so that it is God working in us. It is the reverse of cancer – instead of dysfunctional cells taking over our body, it is properly functioning ways of thinking gradually taking over all dysfunctional ways. We have to consciously feed the good ways and shut down the bad thoughts, and this is done only with God working in us.

**Third, we need to learn that this is a life-and-death matter.** It should be no surprise that if we fail to live in the right way, that we will cease to live. But something more profound is involved, something that we were unable to figure out on our own. Just as we are not able to live exactly as we should, to do all the things that we believe are right, so also we humans are unable to figure out on our own the nature of the problem and its solution. It is not something we can put into a test tube or a microscope – it is not something we can see, hear, touch, smell or taste. It is not physical – it is, for lack of a better word, spiritual.

Because the problem is *spiritual*, the answer too is *spiritual* – it must come from the spiritual realm. It must be revealed by God. What has he revealed? That our failures can be "wiped clean" only by the death of Jesus Christ. Humanity's failures can be removed and we can be given a new start only if someone who is God by nature becomes human (without ceasing to be divine), starts the human race anew, and dies on our behalf. We might think of this as an example of love, as an example of paying a debt, suffering a penalty, of providing a gift to appease a broken relationship. All such ideas touch on some aspect of the truth, but none of the metaphors is able to explain everything. What we do know is that God has provided this gift, at extreme cost to himself, presumably because nothing else would be effective.

Even before he created us, God knew that such a painful and personal sacrifice would be necessary – but he created us anyway. The better we understand what God has done in Jesus Christ, the more we can see what love actually is (our own definitions are distorted by self-interest) and the depth of his love for us. The better we understand Jesus as the perfect example of love, and the perfect response

to our failures, the more that we are inspired by this example, the more that we want to be like him, and the more that we realize that we cannot do this on our own. We need God himself to live within us – we need the Holy Spirit to live within us.

**Fourth, we need to learn that life is more than what we can see.** Not only is there a spiritual dimension to life – attitudes and dispositions that cannot be measured with physical instruments – there is a future dimension to life that we cannot see. If the life we see is all there is, there is little reason to be good, little reason to love. It's just about short-term survival. However, there is life after death, and that changes all the calculations. Future life gives us reason to learn to live in a better way, a way that makes short-term sacrifices more sensible, because they have long-term benefits. We can take a long-range view. Belief in a future life was essential to Jesus' willingness to die to help us even when we were failures; belief in a future life is needed for us to love others, too, especially when death threatens us.

### **God's desire**

God wants people who see a reason for living that goes beyond maximizing their own pleasure until they die. God wants people who love, who let him empower their lives, who let him transform their life goals and ways of life. God can do this in individuals, one person at a time, but since love is a social skill, it works best in community.

God gathers into community people who accept his diagnosis of the problem, who accept his solution to the problem. They admit their inability, they welcome his help, they are motivated by a vision that a better life is possible not just for themselves, but for society as a whole. They see the love that led Jesus to die for their failures, and they are motivated by that love to use their lives to help others, to give, to love. They form a subset of society as a whole, a microcosm in which a new way is learned and lived out. This is the church.

This does not always go smoothly. If the transformation is compared to a journey, we find that some of the people have barely begun, some are dawdling along the way, some go backwards for a time, while some are further down the road. Most people have habits of self-reliance, which means they keep making mistakes (different mistakes for different people). People find it hard to trust God, to accept his definition of love, to give to others without expectation of short-term benefits. They become impatient at the failures of others, even when their impatience is evidence that they also fail. They may be miles ahead in one area of life, while laggards in another.

### **God's method**

Believers form a community, an incubator for a new way to live, a new way to hope for a better world and a better future. Believers gather to learn, to encourage one another, and to practice together what they learn. (Some believers do not gather – some think they already know enough; some are frustrated at the failures of others; some have no commitment to others – all of these are failures to love.)

What do we learn in this alternative community? We learn and are reminded of God's love for us, of the promises he has given to us for our future, of his patience toward us in our failures, of our need for him and his generous supply to us of what we need. We learn his vision of what life is for, of how good it can be, and we are assured that it will indeed be that good in the future. We are inspired to live this way now, even if it is not in our short-term benefit. We are given a long-range view.

How do we live? We love one another, despite our various flaws and failures. We help one another. We sometimes fail, so we need to be patient with one another's failures. At least we have the right goal and are in touch with the driving force of that goal. Church is messy. It's not perfect. It requires patience and long-term vision.

Our love is not just our love – it is God's love at work within us, and his love means that the church is more than a mutual friendship society – we love people who are not part of us, too. God's overflowing love causes us to serve others; we are being changed so that we are living more like God does. We

take no credit for this – it is God living in us, using the circumstances to help us learn the joy of giving. We take a long-range view, without requiring short-term benefits for ourselves, although we know that God may well use us and the love expressed through us to bring more people into the service corps, to join the community where we are learning together more about love.

God inspired Paul to write, "**Christ's love compels us, because we are convinced that Christ died for all people... And since he died for all, we who are convinced should no longer live for ourselves but for Christ**" ([2 Cor. 5:14-15](#)). We are to live for him, to let him live in us, and just as he loved us when we did not deserve it, so also when he lives in us, he moves us to love people who do not deserve it, either. We do not ask whether they deserve it – it is a pointless question. We love them whether or not they respond to our love. We take a long-range view, seeing life after death not only for ourselves but also for them. We see beyond the short-term failures because we have a long-term vision of success. Life can be better, and will be better, through the love of Christ. We rejoice when people join us, but we love them even if they do not. We are patient, just as God is, even if they never respond. Do we want them to join us? Yes – God also wants them to respond to his love, but his love is not dependent on their response – it is given whether or not they respond. Christ died for all.

### **Our response**

We are motivated by the conviction that Christ died for them, just as he died for us. We are stunned by his love for us, moved by his goodness, and we want to share his goodness now as well as in eternity. So we proclaim his goodness, proclaim his death for us, proclaim the promise of a life that never ceases to enjoy God's love – being loved, giving love. But we do more than talk – we also try to live it out. We love others, we give to others, we learn to enjoy God's way of life.

However, what might motivate people who are not yet convinced of Christ? What might motivate them to join us? How will they want to learn more, to see how it works out in life? Perhaps it is the vision that life could be better – a better life is possible not just for themselves, but for society as a whole. We are convinced that the way of love is indeed better, and that it is possible, and that it is a rewarding way to live in this age and in eternity. We are convinced that Christ makes it possible – no, not just possible, but guaranteed for now and for eternity.

A society centered on love is possible – not from our own good intentions, because they cannot be trusted to last, but made possible by a power outside ourselves, a power stronger than all of us put together. We can have a society centered on love only if we are centered on Christ and letting him live in us. We do not preach ourselves, but Christ who gave himself for us and continues to give himself for us.

If there is no God, there is no definition of goodness. Human definitions of goodness keep changing; different cultures have different ideas of what is best. If there is no Christ, then we are stuck in our failures. If there is no Holy Spirit, we are powerless to improve. If there is no life after death, all our improvements will be cut short. Without God, Christ and the Spirit, we have no hope.

But we are convinced that God not only exists, but that he also loves. He uses his power to help others. We are convinced that Christ not only exists, but he also loves, and he died for us, to help us. We are convinced that the Holy Spirit is God helping us, working in us to bring about his grand plan for the people he created. We are convinced that Jesus rose from the dead and that through him, we will also rise from the dead to live forever. And it's not just living forever – it's living forever with God and Christ and the Holy Spirit and with one another, all in the way of love.

We are convinced that eternal life will be enjoyable – far more than this life – because it will be lived in the way of love, of giving and helping others. We are convinced that this is the only way to live forever in joy – and it starts now, in words and in action. This is not from ourselves – it is Christ living in us.

We are persuaded that a better life is possible, not just for us, but for all, because Christ died for all. His love inspires us, motivates us, compels us to let him change us to be more like he is. Life could be

better, people could be better, and we will be better, through Christ. It starts now, in words and in action.

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*For a wealth of helpful articles about God, grace, and his plan for salvation, who we are, etc., please see the GCI.org website. Contact Information: Pastor's contact information: email—[evautour47@outlook.com](mailto:evautour47@outlook.com)*