

THE ANATOMY OF A CHURCH, Part 3 "The Internal Systems--b"

Introduction and Review

In this study on "The Anatomy of a Church," we've divided the human body into four basic elements: the skeleton, the internal systems, the muscles, and the flesh. A body must have all those things. The church, which is the body of Christ, must also have those elements.

I. THE SKELETON

A church must have a skeleton, or it will be a shapeless blob. There are certain nonnegotiable, foundational things that form a church's skeleton:

A. A High View of God

In order for a church to become all God wants it to be, it must focus on the Lord. It is possible to focus on many other things and forget about focusing on God. When a church focuses on Him, then everything else falls into place. A church cannot compromise on its view of God, because the Lord is supreme and everything is to be done for His consummate glory. Whatever you do is to be done for the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31).

Next, a church must believe in...

B. The Absolute Authority of Scripture

We cannot focus on God unless we know who He is, and we cannot know who He is unless we read His revelation of Himself in the Word of God. A church must affirm the absolute authority of Scripture.

A church must also be committed to teaching...

C. Sound Doctrine

A church must learn about God and the basic truths about everything from His Word.

The people of a church must be committed to...

D. Personal Holiness

Everybody should be applying to their lives the truths they learn from the Bible.

Last, everyone in a church should be in submission to...

E. Spiritual Authority

The leaders of a church are to hold people accountable for living the truths they learn from the Word of God.

Those things make up the framework of a church. A church must have a high view of God, which makes it committed to learning about Him in the revelation He has given in His Word. The truths of His Word must be taught in a clear, practical way so that people can apply them to their lives. The application of those truths leads to personal holiness. The people of a church are to submit to those God places in positions of spiritual authority. Since all those elements are to be present in the framework of a church, they must be modelled and preached repeatedly to the people of a church.

The next element of a church that we've talked about (and will continue to talk about) is...

II. THE INTERNAL SYSTEMS

A body must have internal organs to give it life. If a body just had a skeleton, muscles, and flesh, it wouldn't be alive. The same thing is true with a church: There can't just be the affirmation of solid doctrinal foundations; there must be life flowing through it. That life comes from proper attitudes. We must battle for our minds to have proper attitudes, "*for as [a man] thinketh in his heart, so is he....*" (Prov. 23:7). The goal of ministry in a

church should be to get people to have proper spiritual attitudes. You should learn to cultivate the right kind of thinking so that you may be *"renewed in the spirit of your mind"* (Eph. 4:23). Paul told the Philippians to think about certain things (Phil. 4:8), so that they would be spiritually minded--that they would have the mind of Christ.

Don't try to control your behavior; try to control your thoughts. When your thoughts are under control, you are able to produce proper behavior. You would be a hypocrite if you tried to produce right actions with wrong motives and attitudes. That's why at Grace Church we emphasize that people have proper spiritual attitudes rather than try to conform their outward behavior. If a person thinks right, he will act right. That's why we're not interested in conforming people to a set of external rules. We're interested in cultivating proper attitudes that honor God and make the church what it should be: a whole, healthy, productive representative of Jesus Christ.

Let's review the attitudes that we've already studied. The first and most important attitude that needs to be cultivated is the attitude of...

A. Obedience

Obedience is the sine qua non of all attitudes. It is an all-pervasive attitude. It means obeying God at any cost and not compromising. An obedient person does whatever God tells him to do. He doesn't try to justify his sin; rather, he always seeks to do the Lord's will. Internal obedience is better than any external act of worship (1 Sam. 15:22). When a person is obedient, then he will have all the other right spiritual attitudes. If a person is not willing to obey God, then he is going to experience trials and negative circumstances.

The second attitude that we studied was that of...

B. Humility

A person with the attitude of humility sees other people as more important than himself. The needs, wants, happiness, joy, and reputation of another person are more important than his own. Humility was expressed by the Lord as selflessness (Phil. 2:5-8). Humility is an essential attitude for the people of a church to have because pride is devastating.

Third, we talked about the attitude of...

C. Love

Love is humility in action. Humility and love are inseparable. Only humble people can love. I can't give of myself to you unless I care more about you than I do about myself. I can't abandon myself to your needs unless I am really humble. Humility is the launching pad for love. If humility is selflessness, then love is selfless service.

Fourth, we talked about...

D. Unity

When the people of a church are committed to obedience, and act with love because their hearts are humble, then they will have unity. Humility leads to love and love leads to unity. When people meet each other's needs, then they will have the kind of interchange that builds the true one-heart, one-mind, one-soul unity that the Bible speaks of. It's always important to remember that unity comes from humility.

Let's go on now to talk about more attitudes that the people of a church should have. The fifth attitude I'd like to discuss is the...

E. Willingness to Serve

1. EXPLAINED

People have said to me, "We don't go to Grace Church anymore. We've gone to another church where we are needed." It's possible that some of those people were led by God to go to another church. However, some people leave because they think that Grace Church has so many people that they're not needed anymore. But if a church has a large number of people, then there are going to be a large number of needs. Some people leave to go to another church because there is a need for someone to

run a program. That's okay, but serving others isn't necessarily related to church-designed programs. You say, "I don't sing in the choir, teach a class, or sweep the floor; therefore, I'm not needed. I don't have anything to do." Look at the people around you in your church. There are all kinds of people with needs!

a. **A Look at Servants**

1) *Their Position*

In 1 Corinthians 4:1, Paul said, "Let a man so account of us, as the ministers of Christ..." In other words, "When the time comes to render a judgment about my co-workers and me, let it be said that we were servants of Christ."

There are several words in the Greek language for **servant**, and Paul used the one that best conveyed the idea of a lowly servant (Gk. **ὑπηρετῆς**="an under-rower"). In those days, large wooden three-tiered ships called **triremes** were propelled by slaves chained to their oars in the hull. The slaves on the lowest tier were called "under-rowers." Paul and his co-workers did not want to be exalted; they wanted to be known as third-level galley slaves who pulled their oars.

2) *Their Motives*

Many people want to be hotshots, but God just wants people who will be obedient servants. In 1 Corinthians 4:2 Paul said, "...it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful." God doesn't want a person to come up with a clever new way to pull his oar and shear off everybody else's oars in the process. He wants faithful rowers who see themselves as willing servants.

In verse 3, Paul continued, "...with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you, or of man's judgment..." He was saying, "I'm not asking for your opinion on my service. I'm not serving you to get praise. I can't accept your judgments about my service to the Lord Jesus Christ."

People can't always tell the motive of a servant. You can do something that appears to be right and be praised for it, even though you did it with corrupt motives. You can do something with pure motives and be cursed for it. Sometimes I'll preach from my heart and the sermon will turn out terrible, yet some dear person will come to me and say, "That was the greatest sermon you've ever preached." But there have been times when I've preached well from good motives and someone came up to me and said, "You didn't seem like yourself today. You seemed to be fumbling around during the sermon." A servant will be criticized, praised, evaluated, blessed, and cursed by people. But Paul didn't let that affect him. He told the Corinthians, "I'm not going to let your judgments bother me. I just want to serve the way I should. I'm not interested in what you think, because you don't understand my motives." He even added at the end of verse 3, "...yea, I judge not mine own self." In other words, "I can't even trust my own judgment because I'm so biased in my own favor." Then in verse 4 he said, "For I know nothing against myself, yet am I not hereby justified; but He that judgeth me is the Lord." Just the mere fact that we're doing something good doesn't justify us. We shouldn't judge anything before the Lord comes and manifests the attitudes and motives of our hearts.

So, God has called us to be third-level galley slaves. We are to be faithful servants. We shouldn't try to make a reputation for ourselves or evaluate ourselves favorably; let the Lord do the judging. We're to serve the Lord "with all humility of mind" (Ac. 20:19a). Humility and the willingness to serve are inextricably woven together. In fact, if you cultivated in your life just one of the attitudes that we've discussed so far, the result would be that you would have all the other attitudes present in your life. You wouldn't be able to have love unless you had humility, and you wouldn't be able to have humility unless you had love. You wouldn't be able to have unity with others unless you had love and humility. You can't have a servant's heart unless you have love and humility. All of those attitudes are interwoven. If each of us would concentrate on cultivating at least one of those attitudes in our lives, then everything else will find its proper place.

b. **A Look at Service**

1) *The Need for Your Giftedness*

Service to others doesn't necessarily have to be related to church-designed programs. In Romans 12 Paul talks about the function of servants, using the human body as an analogy: "*For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office [function], so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy...or ministry, let us wait on our ministering; or he that teacheth, on teaching; or he that exhorteth, on exhortation; he that giveth, let him do it with liberality; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that showeth mercy, with cheerfulness*" (vv. 4-8). Paul is saying, "Use the God-given ability you have to minister to others!" You don't need to have a program to be able to minister to others. Let the abilities God has given you flow from your life, whether it be in a structured program or in personal interaction. A believer is indwelt and empowered by the Holy Spirit for the purpose of serving others; so not to serve is to create a bottleneck. Don't go to your church and say, "There are too many people; I don't know where I can serve." If you're filled with the Holy Spirit, God wants to cultivate through you a ministry that is essential for that church.

2) *The Nature of Your Giftedness*

Paul mentions in Romans 12:6-8 some categories of ministry: prophecy (preaching), ministry, teaching, exhorting, giving, ruling, and mercy (see also 1 Cor. 12:4-11). Each of those categories is very broad. Within the category of giving, there are many ways to give. Within the category of showing mercy, there are many ways of showing mercy. There are many different styles of preaching and teaching. Each of us is gifted uniquely by the Lord with a different amount of giftedness from each of the categories above. The Lord has given each of us the blend of gifts that is necessary to enable us to minister the way He wants us to. Looking back on my own life, I can see that God has called me to preach, teach, lead, exhort, and perhaps demonstrate the gift of knowledge. He blends certain gifts in different ways in each one of us so that we're like spiritual snowflakes--no two of us are alike. That's why it's important that every one of us serve in the way we are gifted. God doesn't want us to be spectators.

* ***Everyone Is a Minister!***

A few years ago, Moody Monthly magazine published an article about Grace Church. At that time, we were in a smaller building and bursting at the seams with people. After surveying the church and interviewing different people, the writer decided to entitle his article, "The Church with Nine Hundred Ministers." He did that because we had nine hundred people at the time, and everyone was actively serving. We didn't have many formal programs at that time, but everybody was ministering their gifts. People were always calling the church and asking if they could visit someone in the hospital, if the nursery needed more helpers, if someone was needed to clean the restrooms and windows, if help was needed to evangelize others, or if someone was needed to teach a class. Everyone made himself available. People would also share with each other how God was blessing their ministry, and they would give God the glory for what was happening. That's the way a church should be.

Sometimes when a church becomes big, people will think, "Let other people take care of the needs." But the bigger a church becomes, the greater the need for everyone to be serving. Remember too that serving isn't always related to completing specified program goals. Every Christian in the body of Christ is meant to serve. If you want to be obedient and experience joy and blessing, then use your gifts. Don't worry about not being able to analyze the blend of giftedness God has given you. I don't know exactly how I am gifted; I do know I've been gifted to preach and teach. Don't let a computer analyze your gift. A computer isn't going to know anything about that. The only way I've been able to figure out how God has gifted me is by looking back at

what God has done through my life. When you use your giftedness to serve others and allow the power of the Spirit to work through you, then you will also be able to look back at your ministry and see how God is using you.

* **A Specific Area of Ministry**

There are always needs to be met. I found out that seventy percent of the people over eighteen years old in the area around Grace Church are single. Those single people are comprised of divorcees, single parents, and swingers. They have needs. The single people at Grace Church have needs, too.

Let me say this to Christians who are single: Don't think that you have to get married. In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul said to get married only if you don't have the gift of singleness (v. 9). If you can stay single, then do it. I believe that the single people in Grace Church are a great resource for spiritual ministry because they're not encumbered. In 1 Corinthians 7:32-35, Paul said that single people have more time to serve the Lord than married people, who have to care for the needs of their spouse and family. It's not wrong to get married; it's just that if you can be single, then take advantage of your singleness for the sake of ministry.

There are many other areas of ministry a person can get involved in. Cultivate the giftedness that God has given you and become active in whatever ministry God leads your heart to.

2. EXEMPLIFIED

a. **By Epaphras**

In Colossians 4:12, Paul wrote, "*Epaphras...is one of you, a servant of Christ...*" Notice that Paul didn't say anything like, "Epaphras, the seminary graduate," or "Epaphras, the Phi Beta Kappa member with a Ph.D." He just said, "Epaphras, is one of you, a servant of Christ." Isn't that beautiful? I used to think it would be wonderful to be able to say on a Christian's tombstone, "One of us, a servant of Christ." Being a servant of Christ is a very high calling!

Paul continued, "*...[he] greeteth you, always laboring fervently for you in prayers...*" (v. 12b). Was Epaphras a great orator or preacher? No. His ministry was to pray for the Colossians. What was he praying for? He prayed that the Colossians "*may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God*" (v. 12c). Epaphras had a burden in his heart for everybody's spiritual development. I believe that he had the gift of faith, because that gift is linked to prayer (Mt. 21:22). I don't know what other categories of giftedness Epaphras had, but he certainly made the most of his gift of faith. He prayed fervently for the Colossians

b. **By Epaphroditus**

Paul wrote about another man with a true servant's heart in Philippians 2. In verse 25, he said, "*...Epaphroditus, my brother and companion in labor, and fellow soldier, but your messenger...ministered to my need.*" Epaphroditus was a companion to Paul. Do you know how valuable a companion is when you're in a battle defending the gospel? Many people need that kind of support. Paul continued, "*...he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because ye had heard that he had been sick*" (v. 26). Epaphroditus' heart was heavy because the Philippians were sad about him being sick. He wasn't concerned about the fact that he was sick; he was distressed because the Philippians were sad that he was sick! The relationship between Epaphroditus and the Philippians must've been a loving one. He wasn't the kind of missionary who writes to his church, "Pray for me; I have a hangnail." According to verse 27, Epaphroditus "*was sick near unto death.*" Verse 30 says that "*for the work of Christ, he was near unto death.*" He was so busy meeting Paul's needs that he didn't regard his own life.

People like Epaphroditus are going to be noticed in heaven. It's hard to find people like him. Paul

said to the Philippians in verse 29, "*Receive him...and hold such in reputation.*" Why? Because he was a helper and companion.

A willing servant is spontaneous in what he does. If you have a willingness to serve, your ministry will flow from you. You can either sit back and say, "I don't know if I want to get involved in that; I don't know if I want to work with those people," or just get involved and serve.

The sixth spiritual attitude that is important for a Christian to have is...

F. Joy

1. DEFINED

What is joy? It's an outward exuberance. It's the response of the heart, soul, and mind of a person to his relationship with Jesus Christ. One of the things the leaders of Grace Church have endeavored to cultivate in the congregation is joy.

There is a seriousness in the Word of God and in being before the infinitely holy, all-wise, sovereign God. There is a great seriousness in struggling with the terrible anxieties of life and death, and all that our humanness brings upon us. There are many things that fill us with pain. But at the same time, we are filled with joy. We have a knowledge deep in our souls that all is well and that ultimately, everything will be glorious.

When we study the Word of God and obey God, we will experience joy. First John 1:4 says, "*...these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*" Romans 14:17 says that the Kingdom of God is "*righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.*" Jesus said in John 17:13 that He came to give us joy. Paul said, "*Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice*" (Phil. 4:4).

I'm convinced that joy is linked to a willingness to serve. When people get involved in serving and using the gifts God gave them, then they experience joy. There is joy in giving yourself away. People who are introspective are always trying to meet their own needs and solve their own problems; consequently, they become ingrown, self-contemplating, miserable human beings. It's people who give of themselves that are filled with joy.

2. DEFENDED

I don't let things steal my joy. I fight to maintain the joy I have. There are some people that try to take away my joy. They'll come to me and say, "John, we've got a very serious problem." I'll say, "What is it?" Often the problem will be some insignificant thing. So I'll just say, "We'll see if the Lord will solve that problem, and do what we can." For the occasions that there really is a big problem brought to my attention, I have cultivated in my heart the ability to say, "That's really exciting! That's terrific!" When I say that, some people look at me as if I were not very bright. Why do I say that? Because if I know about a problem, then I can go to God and He'll help me solve it. But if I don't know about a problem, then I won't be able to do that. I won't have any trouble if I know about a problem, and I have joy because I know the One who solves problems.

A person can choose to lose his joy. He can look for the manure pile in every meadow if he wants. It's a choice everyone makes. I choose to be joyful and excited about what God does. With the strength the Holy Spirit has given me, I won't let anyone take away my joy, because the Bible commands that I rejoice always (Phil. 4:4). I tell myself, "Rejoice in the God who redeemed you and loved you in spite of your sin. Rejoice that you are going to heaven someday." I will have problems, but there is coming a day when we'll all be in heaven and everybody will be perfect.

Don't let anybody take away your joy. If you don't have the joy of the Lord, it's because you're looking at things with the wrong perspective. Joy is available to all of us. We can rejoice in anything. Romans 8:28 says, "*...all things work together for good to them that love God*"; therefore, whatever happens in our lives should be a source of joy. The happiest people I've seen are those who have just solved a problem.

The next attitude I'd like to talk about is...

G. Peace

That's a beautiful word, isn't it? Jesus said, "*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid*" (Jn. 14:27). Jesus gave us His peace. First Corinthians 7:15 says that "*God hath called us to peace.*" Philipians 4:7 says to let the peace of God rule your heart. Second Corinthians 13:11 says to "*live in peace.*" First Thessalonians 5:13 says "*to be at peace among yourselves.*"

1. A CONTENTMENT IN PEACE

Whereas joy is an outward exuberance, peace is an inward contentment that senses everything is under control. If there is sin in your life, then you won't experience peace. But when your life is cleansed of sin and you're walking in the Spirit, you'll have peace. We should never allow anyone to take away our peace.

At Grace Church, we try to cultivate in the hearts of people an attitude of peace, rest, and confidence in God. There is no reason to be troubled. Paul said to "*be anxious for nothing,*" and let the peace of God rule your souls (Phil. 4:6a, 7). All of us experience trials that make us anxious. We don't live in perfect peace, yet we are to have an attitude of peace.

2. A COMMISSION FOR PEACE

In Matthew 5:9 our Lord said, "*Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the sons of God.*" Christians should be peacemakers. You couldn't do anything more wonderful for the Kingdom of God and the church of Jesus Christ than to be a peacemaker. Human nature tends toward conflict. Job said, "*Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward*" (5:7). People continually experience personality conflicts. Yet we are called to be peacemakers. We're to help soothe conflict, not foment it. Sometimes an insignificant problem can be taken out of proportion by people and become a tidal wave. People are more inclined to increase trouble than be a peacemaker. We've all done that.

3. A COMMITMENT TO PEACE

We must have in our hearts a commitment to always say, "I am at peace, God is in control, and I'll be a peacemaker." Every time you get into a conflict, be a peacemaker. When you see two people in a conflict, make them embrace each other in peace. Don't take sides with anyone against another person. Try to find the good in a person instead of focusing on the bad. Cultivate proper relationships and be a peacemaker. Start in your own family. If you know that saying a certain thing will irritate someone, then don't say it. Sometimes when I'm right about something and someone else thinks I'm wrong, I won't assert that I'm right because I don't want to disrupt the peace that's between us. I won't compromise my convictions, but I'm also not going to defend my rights if I'll end up disrupting peace. Peace is more important to me than having my own way. However, if someone denies the truth of God, then I will battle for what is right. With the people in the family of God, though, we are to be peacemakers. How simple life would be if we were all peacemakers!

Another attitude we should all cultivate is...

H. Thankfulness

First Thessalonians 5:18 says, "*In everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you.*" People say, "If only I had a better job," or "If only I had a better spouse," or "If only I didn't have problems." However, we're to be thankful.

1. THE CHARGE FOR THANKFULNESS

Giving thanks can be a powerful thing. If you can cultivate a thankful heart, then you will solve many of your problems. Offering thanks and praises to God helps you to stop focusing on your problems. That was true for the psalmist. Whenever a problem developed, he would cry out to the Lord in despair. He would say, "Why are the wicked allowed to prosper?" King David had that attitude when he started fleeing from his son Absalom, who wanted to take over his throne. But eventually he would start thinking about all the good things God had done for him. He would start saying things like, "God, you are so mighty and glorious." An attitude of thankfulness and praise would develop. When that happened, his perspective would change; he no longer dwelled on the negative things happening

around him. When King David cultivated an attitude of thankfulness in the midst of fleeing from Absalom, he was no longer in despair.

If you are experiencing problems and grumbling all the time, it's not because of your circumstances; it's because of your inability to be thankful for the positive things God has brought into your life. Cultivate an attitude of thankfulness. Let your lips be filled with praise!

2. THE CAUSES FOR THANKFULNESS

There are many things to be thankful for:

- a. **Psalm 30:4**--"*...give thanks at the remembrance of His holiness.*"
- b. **Psalm 106:1**--"*...give thanks unto the LORD, for He is good; for His mercy endureth forever.*"
- c. **2 Corinthians 9:15**--We are to be thankful for the gift of Christ.
- d. **Revelation 11:17**--We should be thankful for Christ's power and His coming Kingdom.
- e. **1 Thessalonians 2:13**--Be thankful for those who receive and apply the Word of God.
- f. **Romans 7:23-25**--Be thankful that Christ has delivered you from the power of indwelling sin.
- g. **1 Corinthians 15:57**--Give thanks to God for the fact that He has given us victory over death.
- h. **Daniel 2:23**--Daniel expressed thankfulness to God for the wisdom and strength that was given to him.
- i. **2 Corinthians 2:14**--We should be thankful for the triumph of the gospel.
- j. **Romans 6:17**--Be thankful for the conversion of people.
- k. **Romans 1:8**--Give thanks to God for people that exhibit their faith.
- l. **2 Thessalonians 1:3**--We should be thankful when we see believers working hard for the sake of the Kingdom and showing love to one another.
- m. **1 Corinthians 1:4**--Thank God for the grace that He bestows on believers.
- n. **2 Corinthians 8:16**--Be thankful for those who have a zeal for Christ in their lives.

Don't complain when you're in bad circumstances; cultivate a heart of thankfulness. You say, "I could be thankful if my circumstances weren't so bad." That's no excuse. If you're not a thankful person, it's because you think you deserve better circumstances than those you currently have. But if you got what you deserved, you'd be in hell. So, don't think you deserve good circumstances. Cultivate a heart of thankfulness for whatever God gives you. That will take all the sourness out of your life.

Thankfulness, peace, joy, a willingness to serve, unity, love, humility, and obedience are all simple attitudes. If you have just one of those attitudes reigning in your life, then you will have all of the others. If you are obedient, then you will naturally have all the other attitudes. If you are humble, then you will love others and bring about unity. If you have that kind of love, then you will want to serve others. Serving others out of love is what gives joy and a deep sense of peace. When you have that kind of joy and peace, and your life is filled with meaningful service, then you are going to offer thanks to God.

If your life is totally dominated by love, you'll be obedient, because if you love God, you'll obey His commandments (Jn. 14:15). If you love God, you're going to be humble. That humility will bring about unity. Having that kind of love in your life will also motivate you to serve others, which in turn will give you joy, peace, and thanksgiving for the One you love. If you seek unity with other believers, then you'll be loving, humble, and obedient.

Notice that Galatians 5:22-23 says, "*...the fruit [not `the fruits'] of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, self-control....*" Either all or none of the fruit is present in your life. You can't say, "My life is full of a true love for God that is generated by the Holy Spirit, but I'm miserable and have no joy in my life." A life filled with love is also going to have joy, peace, gentleness, and goodness.

Cultivate in your life just one of the attitudes that we've studied, and the others will be present. Those are the attitudes that change a church, and a church with those kinds of attitudes is what changes a world.

Focusing on the Facts

1. Why do some people leave a church? Must service always be related to church-designed programs? Explain.
2. Discuss the word servant (Gk. **ὑπηρετῆς**) that Paul used in 1 Corinthians 4:1.

3. According to 1 Corinthians 4:2, what is required of a steward?
4. What was Paul telling the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 4:3a?
5. How are we to serve, according to Acts 20:19?
6. In Romans 12:4-8, Paul encourages us to use our ability to minister to others. Explain how it is that each of us is uniquely gifted.
7. What is the best way to figure out how God has gifted you?
8. Why are the single people of a church potentially the greatest resource for spiritual ministry? (1 Cor. 7:32-35)
9. What was Epaphras' ministry to the Colossians? How did Paul describe that ministry? (Col. 4:12)
10. What did Epaphroditus do for Paul (Phil. 2:25)? Why was his heart heavy (v. 26)? What happened to him as a result of the way he ministered to Paul (vv. 27, 30)? As a result, what did Paul command the Philippians to do to Epaphroditus (v. 29)?
11. A willing servant is _____ in what he does.
12. Define joy. What is joy linked to? What happens to a person who is always focusing on his own needs?
13. What should be our response to problems? Why?
14. If you don't have joy, then what is probably the problem? Why should everything be a source of joy, according to Romans 8:28?
15. What did Jesus tell us in John 14:27?
16. Define peace. How can we experience peace?
17. What should you do when you see two people in a conflict? Should you always defend yourself if you are right about something and someone else is wrong? Explain.
18. What is the command of 1 Thessalonians 5:18?
19. What is wrong with a Christian who has problems and grumbles all the time?
20. Mention at least five things we should be thankful for.
21. What will happen if you cultivate one of the spiritual attitudes that we've studied? Explain the different ways that can happen.
22. Explain the significance of the singular form of the word "*fruit*" in Galatians 5:22.

Pondering the Principles

1. Are you involved in some form of service at your church? What attitudes do you have when you serve? Why do you serve? It is important for you not only to be serving in your church, but to have the right attitudes and the right goals when serving. Would God be able to say that all of your service comes from a loving, humble, and willing heart? Would He be able to say that you served for the sake of others and for His glory? Think about how God would describe you as a servant. Find your weaknesses and work on them so that you may become a true servant of Christ.
2. Paul commanded that we "*rejoice in the Lord always*" (Phil. 4:4). Read Psalms 5:11; 28:7; 63:7; 119:111, 162; and Luke 10:20. Explain what caused the people in those verses to be joyful. Read Luke 6:22-23; 2 Corinthians 12:10; James 1:2; and 1 Peter 4:13. Using those verses, explain how we should respond to negative circumstances. What are some things that God has done for you that give you joy? Do you have joy even in the midst of negative circumstances? Ask God to help you have a joyful perspective in every circumstance, because "*all things work together for good to them that love God*" (Rom. 8:28).
3. Are you a peacemaker? Look at the conflicts that you've had with other people in the past. How did you handle those situations? Did you make a conscious effort to be a peacemaker? Are there better ways you could have handled those situations? Use your ideas to help you in your future relations with people. If you have children, teach them the importance of being a peacemaker when conflicts arise.
4. According to 1 Thessalonians 5:18, it is God's will that we be thankful in every circumstance. When you pray to God, how much of your prayer time is devoted to focusing on your problems? How much of your prayer time is used to thank God for what He has done in your life? Write a list of the things you can thank God for. Cultivate an attitude of always seeking things to be thankful for. Make a commitment to always devote a part of your prayer time to giving thanks to God.