

## Belonging to the Body of Christ

### Small Group Discussion Questions

Join our congregation for worship in-person or online at 10:30 am each Sunday via our [Grantham Church YouTube Channel](#). If you ever miss a message, the sermons are always posted to the [recent sermons page](#) at our website and at the [Grantham Church Podcast](#) the following day, along with the sermon slides and small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for staying connected with us!

**Sunday, September 10th, 2023**



**Sermon Title:** Belonging to the Body of Christ

**Scripture Reading:** Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:42-47; 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

**Sermon Focus:** It's quite clear that millions of Americans are lonely, lacking in purpose, searching for meaning, and looking for a place to belong. As a result, we often try to discover our identity and find fulfillment in all kinds of things that ultimately leave us empty, and then our idols, anxieties, fears, and frustrations fuel the breakdown of American society and culture. As followers of Jesus, how should we respond to this? In today's message, Pastor David invites us to reflect on how *truly* belonging to the Body of Christ will not only change our own hearts, but it will also bless the world around us.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group in person or by video call. Use the following questions to help *guide* your small group discussion:

1. Pastor David began his message talking about an article by David Brooks that was recently in *The Atlantic*: [How American Got Mean](#) (8-14-23). Have you read the article? Brooks says that we live in a culture devoid of moral education and shared values, and this moral vacuum has created a crisis of identity, purpose, and meaning. And this void is being filled with politics and tribalism.

Brooks writes: "The Manichaean tribalism of politics appears to give people a sense of belonging. For many years, America seemed to be awash in a culture of hyper-individualism. But these days, people are quick to identify themselves by their group: Republican, Democrat, evangelical, person of color, LGBTQ, southerner, patriot, progressive, conservative." Brooks says, "People who feel isolated and under threat flee to totalizing identities."

How have you seen this at work in you and in the culture around you?

2. Pastor David said that the time of Jesus is like our own in many ways. This was when God sent Jesus to build the Church. And it's through the planting of churches that people began to discover an identity that transcended politics and tribalism; people found meaning and purpose (and hope after death); and people glimpsed a new way to be human and live in community with others. What does the Church need to do to recover her gospel power and influence in society today? What should we repent of, do differently, and pray?
3. A major difference in the first century and in 21<sup>st</sup> century America is that Christianity is not novel in our cultural context. Folks usually have at least some ideas about what our faith entails. This can create an added challenge for us, especially when people think the Church is part of the problem. So, Pastor David said that the Lord is currently "sifting" the Church in America. Do you agree? And if so, what should we be doing during this *sifting* of the Church?
4. Read Acts 2:42-47 together. Discuss this summary of the rich community and explosive growth of the early church. What can this teach us today? Also, how can we live these things out in our own context at Grantham Church?
5. In Ephesians 2:19-22 and 1 Corinthians 12:12-27, the Apostle Paul uses two metaphors (i.e., a building and body) to describe the growth and functioning of the local church. How are you being intentional in your spiritual growth and in the building up of our congregation? How is the Spirit inviting you to receive, but also to regularly give, engage, and serve in this fall season of ministry?