

QUESTIONS FOR SMALL GROUPS AND PERSONAL REFLECTION

Personal Life:

1. Why do you think Paul frames his teaching on discipleship (learning to follow Jesus) within the context of Christian *community* rather than us doing it “on our own?”
2. The Bible reveals that followers of Christ will naturally be hated and persecuted by some. However, in the message the point was made that some of the “bad press” Christians get in America is our own fault. Do you agree or disagree? Give examples to support your answer...

Ponderings:

3. Why is Paul's “tone” so important in leading into the practical section of instruction about Christian living? (i.e. “...by the grace given me I say to every one of you...”).
4. Of the seven spiritual gifts that Paul mentions in this passage, are there any that you feel might be evident in your life? Discuss the meaning and use of each one and share your thoughts...
 - Prophecy, serving, teaching, encouraging, giving, leadership, mercy
5. Before Paul gets into the numerous practical ways to walk in love (verses 9-21), he frames everything in the context of these graces (gifts) given by God. This passage shows us that grace is not only unmerited favor, but divine enablement (power) to accomplish a goal.
 - Based upon this application of God's grace, what is “God's part” and what is “our part” in the outworking of love?

Promptings:

6. In the coming week, will you honestly evaluate whether or not you are using your spiritual gift(s)? If so, how are they being applied for the building of Christ's kingdom? If not, what opportunities are within reach for you to step out in faith and let God work through you?