

## **WE ARE THE BODY OF CHRIST #4** **Called into God's Mission**

**THEME:** The Bible tells the story of the Loving-Creating-Redeeming God who ultimately makes himself known in history as Jesus of Nazareth. God is always on a mission! His *mission* is “the remaking of the original [ideal] creation, not abandoning it [to the ravages of sin]” (N.T. Wright).

### **ICE BREAKER**

1. Since this is an organizational week, does everybody here know all the people in the small group?
2. Take time for each of you to tell the group something you suspect no one in the group knows about you! (This isn't meant to be a confessional or embarrassing moment. It's just a way to tell something unusual about your background, hobbies, work, etc that will help people know you better.)

### **THINK**

1. Did you know the term (Latin words) *missio dei* before it was used in last Sunday's sermon? If so, where had you heard it?
2. In your own words, define the “mission of God” in the world.
3. Does this statement make sense to you: “The church doesn't ‘have a mission.’ Its task is to join with God in *his* mission.” Explain.
4. What is your primary contribution to God's mission through Grace Chapel?

### **EXAMINE**

Read [Matthew 5:13-16](#) as background to the following questions:

1. This text is so familiar that it is easy to miss its challenge. Read it aloud in your small group from two or three different translations.
2. Why is the *light* metaphor significant to explaining the function of the church within the mission of God to the world?
3. Think more deeply still about the *light* metaphor in view of Isaiah 42:6 and 49:7. In what sense is Jesus calling the church to take up the mission of ancient Israel?
4. What about the *salt* metaphor? When you eat salty popcorn, for example, what happens? What should happen when people are around Christians?

Read [1 Peter 2:9-12](#) and [2 Corinthians 5:16-20](#) as background for discussing the following questions:

1. 1 Peter was written to Christians on the eve of a persecution – one in which Peter himself would be martyred. What is the special challenge you see in 2:9-12 for people in that situation?
2. Do we sometimes get our goals and values too tangled up with “this world”? Can you name a specific situation that challenges you?

3. Paul's statement from 2 Corinthians 5 needs to be interpreted against his personal background as a Pharisee who classified and ranked people in a variety of ways. Why is his claim here such a startling contrast to his past?
4. What is the role of an "ambassador"? (Think, for example, of the role of the United States Ambassador to France, China, or Russia.)
5. How does the ambassador role describe Christian presence in the world?

**THIS WEEK:** Get ready for a great adventure with your Small Group for the coming year! And think about the "Empty Chair Ministry" that was mentioned Sunday. Do you think of someone who might respond to your invitation to be part of your group? Someone who might be reluctant to seek out a group?

Finally, remember the "family meeting" on *September 6* (5:00-7:30 pm) to begin the congregational process of seeking the Father's guidance to find Grace Chapel's next preaching minister. First, be sure to mark your calendar and plan to be present. Second, begin praying now for the selection process. Third, pledge to participate in the information-gathering that will begin on that date – and in the selection process as it unfolds over the next few months.