

## Grace Community Bible Church

I have to tell you, it is so nice to finally have a name. After referring to us as the new work, the new church, the church plant, etc. for so long it is finally nice to have a name. Names were so important during biblical days. Names were carefully chosen to represent the child's life, birth circumstances or hopes and dreams of the parents. For example my parents chose to name me Anthony, which means, "priceless one" and the name Buckeye means "dominating winners." You can see how these names are so apt for myself and the Ohio State Buckeyes. ☺

There is so much significance to our name and what it represents. Think about it for a minute, grace is living in the free, merciful and compassionate love of God. Grace is what we are to extend to others, freely giving them what they may not deserve but doing so because we have been the recipients of so much ourselves.

Community is how we will live together. We cannot let ourselves live separately as if there were no connection. We must realize that because of the blood of Jesus and the indwelling Holy Spirit there is a *common-unity* that does exist and must exist.

We are so blessed to have the Bible. So many believers around the world are without Holy Scriptures. We are a people of the Book, and as a great from church history said, "Cut us and we will bleed bibline."

Finally, we are the church. The word church is derived from the Greek word, *ekklesia* which means to be called out. We are the called out ones. We are the ones God has called out of this world to be, "... a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy." (1 Peter 2:9-10)

What a privilege it is and will be to wear this name as an identity of who we are as a people. But remember, for this to be an identity for "us" it must be "your" identity. So take a minute and look closely at who we are, Grace – Community – Bible – Church. As you dwell on that, is the Holy Spirit poking your soul about anything? If He is, spend some time in prayer, meditation and/or repentance.

I am going to let you go now, but let this thought linger in your mind for a while: Jesus Peter and Andrew were fishing one day. He yelled out to them to follow Him and He would make them "fishers of men." Our new work is going to be blood-earnest about reaching out to our community and to the lost people you are around all the time. There is nothing that compares to catching men for the kingdom of God. We will not be seat-sitting consumers; we will be actively baiting our hooks and casting for the lost ones. Does that intimidate you? That is o.k. Is that new to you? That is o.k. Are you wondering how to do that? That is o.k.

Jesus told Peter and Andrew, “follow me” and then I will make you fishers of men. You know what? I bet they were intimidated, scared and had no idea not only how to do that or what that meant. But we are told that they left their nets, what they were most used to and most comfortable with, and followed Jesus. You ready to follow?

All My Love,

*Tony*