

Dear Grace Church,

This Sunday, we begin a new series of messages under the heading: “How to Build the Perfect Church.” By perfect church, we mean what the Scriptures mean in passages like Ephesians 4:11-16, which I’ve pasted below for you to read and think about. Perfect in Ephesians 4:13-16 means, mature, complete, properly grown up as a body in proportion to Christ who is our head, lacking in no good gift or act of service to build the church up in love.

I will seek to make use of the Bible’s own big picture theologies for the life and growth of our church: covenant theology, biblical theology, and systematic theology. We’re beginning with the last picture of the church on the last page of the Bible to inform and outfit Grace Baptist for greater mutual communion, faithfulness, obedience, service, and witness.

I encourage you to read Revelation 21 and 22 in preparation for worship, and in particular Revelation 22:12-17 and Psalm 87:2-3 which gives greater prominence, power, and fruitfulness to the corporate life, worship, service, and witness of the church than the individual believer. Revelation 22:12-15 is clear on the happiness of the reward of the individual believer’s obedience, but the closing exhortation for a faithful witness of the gospel of Christ is given to the church.

Seeking to grow in happy obedience and mutual service and witness together with you,

Murray

### **HOW TO BUILD THE PERFECT CHURCH SERIES, MESSAGE 1**

#### **“Ready to Serve Christ At Any Cost? Or, The Church’s**

#### **Last Call to Faithfulness to Offer Christ Freely to All” Revelation 22:12–17**

KeyWords for Kids: Obedience and Reward, Disobedience and Judgement, The Church’s Life and Voice, Free Offer of the Gospel

<sup>12</sup>“And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work. <sup>13</sup>I am the Alpha and the Omega, *the* Beginning and *the* End, the First and the Last.” <sup>14</sup>Blessed *are* those who do His commandments, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. <sup>15</sup>But outside *are* dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie. <sup>16</sup>“I, Jesus, have sent My angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the Root and the Offspring of David, the Bright and Morning Star.” <sup>17</sup>And the Spirit and the bride say, “Come!” And let him who hears say, “Come!” And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely. (NKJV)

## I. The Bliss of Happiness and Obedience to God's Commandments (12-15)

## II. The Church in Communion with the Triune God (12-17)

## III. The Church's Life and Voice in Communion with the Spirit (17)

Psalm 87:1–7 <sup>1</sup> His foundation *is* in the holy mountains. <sup>2</sup> The LORD loves the gates of Zion More than all the dwellings of Jacob. <sup>3</sup> Glorious things are spoken of you, O city of God! Selah <sup>4</sup> “I will make mention of Rahab and Babylon to those who know Me; Behold, O Philistia and Tyre, with Ethiopia: “This *one* was born there.’ ” <sup>5</sup> And of Zion it will be said, “This *one* and that *one* were born in her; And the Most High Himself shall establish her.” <sup>6</sup> The LORD will record, When He registers the peoples: “This *one* was born there.” Selah <sup>7</sup> Both the singers and the players on instruments *say*, “All my springs *are* in you.” (NKJV)

### Ephesians 4:11-16

<sup>11</sup> And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; <sup>14</sup> that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, <sup>15</sup> but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—<sup>16</sup> from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love. (NKJV)