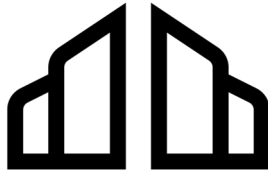


ALWAYS READY.

Know what you believe.





LOVING **GOD.**
LOVING **PEOPLE.**

MISSION

Making More and Better Disciples

CORE VALUES

KNOW

Developing relationships with God and people

GROW

Becoming more like Christ

SERVE

Demonstrating our Faith

SHARE

Producing New Followers

VISION

Through the ministry of Greece Assembly, we see people knowing Christ, growing in Christ, serving the body of Christ, and sharing the Gospel of Christ.

STRATEGY

Strategy is the “how” of vision. There are several components to our strategy, but in this booklet we’ll highlight **EQUIP: For a Life of Ministry**. It is our desire to equip believers to unequivocally know who they are in Christ and reach their full potential serving Christ as disciple-makers. This booklet shares the purpose, vision, and structure of EQUIP at Greece Assembly.

A Message from Pastor Pat

Praise God, we have completed our first year of EQUIP! It was an amazing year of learning and growing! A very special thank you to everyone who served to make EQUIP possible - from the dinner team to the greeters, those serving on the safety team, the nursery and teaching teams - THANK YOU!

2 Timothy 2:15 says, *"Be diligent to present yourself approved by God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."*

EQUIP is committed to communicating the truths of Scripture in a biblically accurate, clear, and practical way. These nights EQUIP young and old alike to unequivocally know who they are in Christ to reach their full potential serving Christ in everyday life.

EQUIP is an "apologetics" discipleship track. Apologetics is not, as it might sound, apologizing for one's faith. Rather, apologetics comes from the Greek word *apologia*, which means: a defense of one's beliefs based on clear evidence. In a court of law an apologetic was the making of a defense for the defendant at trial.

In Acts 7 Stephen made a defense before his accusers in Jerusalem. Several times in the book of Acts Paul set out a defense before his accusers, not only for his actions as he traveled the world preaching the gospel, but also a defense for the gospel itself. He wanted people to see the reasonableness (evidence) for their faith in Christ. Paul referenced prophetic passages of the Old Testament and showed how Jesus, in the days of the incarnation, was the exact fulfillment of these prophecies. Furthermore, Paul appealed to the historical authenticity of the resurrection of Christ from the dead and the remarkable number of eyewitnesses who validated having seen the resurrected Christ. These were apologetic proofs of faith. Jesus was raised from the dead and His resurrection validated both His deity and His message - how the death and Resurrection of Christ puts us right with God. Paul used apologetics to validate His message that Christ's sacrifice is the means whereby God forgives sin, reconciles lost humanity to Himself, and provides the hope of eternal life.

If theology is the study of what one believes about God, apologetics is the study of WHY one believes what they believe about God. The truth is all Christians are apologists! We all have some reason why we are Christians. The important questions are: What are those reasons? And are we equipped to give a defense?

The apostle Paul understood the importance of apologetics. Acts 18:4 says, *"And he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath and tried to persuade Jews and Greeks."* Paul knew that reason is a powerful tool, and so he took advantage of it for the kingdom of God.

Peter makes it a point to emphasize defending the faith in 1 Peter 3:15, *"But sanctify the LORD God in your hearts, and always be ready to give a defense to everyone who asks you a reason for the hope that is in you, with meekness and fear."* Peter not only commands us to "always be prepared to give a defense," but he also tells us how to do it—with meekness (gentleness) and fear (respect).

The purpose of being equipped "to give a defense" is not to win an argument, but to win a soul to Christ. It is not to prove someone wrong but to point them to the ONE who is right – our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Effective apologetics helps people see the Savior in His beauty.

Every follower of Christ is instructed to be an apologist. The apostle Paul says, *"Walk in wisdom toward outsiders, making the best use of the time. Let your speech always be gracious, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how you ought to answer each person"* (Col. 4:5-6).

Second Corinthians 10:4-5 is a good support verse for apologetics, *"For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ"* (2 Corinthians 10:4-5).

The culture is deeply saturated in three dominant philosophies: relativism, pluralism, and naturalism. Relativism says there is no absolute truth. Religious pluralism says there is no exclusive truth in religion (all views are equally true). Naturalism says there is no supernatural truth.

Do you see a problem in sharing the Gospel in this cultural climate? We are presenting an *absolute* truth to a relativistic culture and an *exclusivist* message to a pluralistic and naturalistic culture. It is no surprise that Christians are confronted with questions like, "How can Jesus be the only way?" "Who are you to force your morality on me?" These questions grow out of the soil of a secular worldview. Apologetics gives a biblical response to these questions at the worldview level. Not only does the Bible command apologetics, but culture demands it.

This fact cannot be overstated: arguably, the most important generation of the church is the next generation. Yet, all the research shows that approximately three in five young people disconnect from their church by the age of 15. The book, "Already Gone" unpacks this statistical data and it's alarming.

This isn't a new phenomenon. In Judges 2:10, after the Israelites finally enter the Promised Land and Joshua dies, we read, *"And all that generation also were gathered to their fathers. And there arose another generation after them who did not know the Lord or the work that he had done for Israel."* It took one generation to abandon God and turn to idols.

How do we help curb the next generation's drift away from God? Apologetics. We must help them to know why they believe what they believe and be EQUIPPED to share, with unwavering conviction, their deep belief in Christ and the Bible.

The more children and students can understand about their faith at a young age, the better equipped they'll be to stand firm when their beliefs are challenged during their teens and college years.

"ALWAYS READY" is our 2023-24 EQUIP theme. "ALWAYS READY" to present in a clear, concise, and convicting way the truth of the Gospel of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

It's true - God doesn't call us to argue another person into heaven, but the apostle Peter did tell us in our hearts to set apart Christ the Lord as holy, READY at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you.

Making you "ALWAYS READY" is the goal and purpose of EQUIP: For A Life of Ministry.

Much love and care,
Pastor Pat

EQUIP TOPICS

⇒ Salvation 101

- Why it happened: Redemption
- What has happened: Regeneration
- How it happened: Justification
 - Past - Freed from the penalty of sin
- What is happening: Sanctification
 - Present - Freed from the power of sin
- What will happen: Glorification
 - Future - Freed from the presence of sin

⇒ The Two Ordinances of the Church

- Lord's Supper
 - Why did Jesus institute it?
- Water Baptism
 - Why did Jesus command it?

⇒ The Church

- The birth of the church
- Ecclesia – “called-out ones”
- Root meaning – of people, not a building
- The body of Christ– He is the head
- The church universal
- The local church

⇒ Understanding the Bible

- The structure of the Bible
- The purpose of the Bible
- The message of the Bible
- The importance of the Bible
- The application of the Bible
- How to study the Bible

⇒ Theology 101

- The doctrine of...
 - the Bible
 - God
 - Mankind
 - Christ and Salvation
 - the Holy Spirit and the Church
 - the Future

⇒ Apologetics

- Understanding the Times
 - A Survey of Competing Worldviews
- Understanding the Faith
 - A Survey of Christian Apologetics
- Understanding the Culture
 - A Survey of Social Challenges
 - * Same-Sex Marriage
 - * Homosexuality
 - * Gender
 - * Abortion
 - * Social Justice

⇒ The Holy Spirit and You

- Work of the Holy Spirit in Creation
- The Holy Spirit in the Old Testament
- Work of the Holy Spirit in the Believers Life
- The fruit of the Spirit
- The baptism of the Holy Spirit
- The gifts of the Holy Spirit
- The Spirit-filled life

⇒ Prayer and Fasting

- Builds spiritual intimacy
- Helps your spirit to hear the voice of God
- Brings clarity and direction
- Breaks demonic strongholds

⇒ Eschatology – Study of End Times Prophecy

- Significant theme in Scripture
- Reveals God's purposes
- Shapes our view of Israel
- Shapes how we view the world
- Gives hope

⇒ Effectively Communicating the Gospel

- What is the gospel
- The purpose of the Old Testament Law
- Understanding grace
- Relying on the Holy Spirit
- The power of your personal redemption story
- How to share respectfully

All topics offered will be age-appropriate.

EQUIP CLASSES

ADULTS: *NO REASON TO HIDE*

It is no secret that our culture has changed dramatically over the past few decades. We are bombarded with ideological propaganda at every turn, from entertainment, to social media, to news coverage, to what is expected in the workplace. The gap between what the Bible teaches and what the culture expects continues to expand, with Christians feeling the tension every step of the way. How do we stand firm in what we believe, while obeying Jesus' teaching to love our neighbors? What about His teaching to love our enemies?

During EQUIP on Wednesday nights starting in October, our series, *No Reason to Hide*, will help you to defend your biblical beliefs with confidence and compassion. We will help identify the current flow of the culture, comparing it to what the Bible teaches while identifying strategies to help navigate it. We will cover topics like:

- DEI (Diversity, Equity, Inclusion) – promoting unity or driving division?
- Gender – God given blessing or social construction?
- Fake Love – How does a false view of love determine our actions?
- Raising Children in Babylon – Are we overreacting to the small things and missing the big ones?

Our goal is to equip you for a life of ministry. Come grow with us!

REFUGE STUDENTS: *LIVING UNASHAMED*

Bible Studies For Life is an impactful teaching series. Each session takes us through a section of scripture dealing with a specific topic. It breaks down the context of the scripture as a group and allows for practical application to life. It is designed to ask personal questions, which spurs great discussion during class time and allows for students to grow together.

Each session ends with the section *Live it Out*, which really embodies the heart of EQUIP – being equipped for a life of ministry. It has three sections in *Live it Out*: *Christ*, *Community*, and *Culture*. These sections challenge the students to consider how they can apply what they learn in their personal relationship with God (*Christ*), within the context of their church family (*Community*), and to the lost world (*Culture*).

We will be going through the fall edition of *Bible Studies For Life*. We're going to take a deep dive into the life of Daniel, where we will see him, even as a young man, developing deep convictions, praying with passion, boldly speaking the truth, and living with incredible courage. Throughout this series our prayer is that the students will learn from the life of Daniel and put into practice many of the principles we see Daniel live out.

6TH GRADE: *LIVING UNASHAMED*

Pastor Pat and Tina, along with Pastor Dan and Cathy, will spend one year with our 6th grade students – laying a strong foundation of truth as these students prepare for their passage into middle school.

Biblical Worldview

- Builds a framework for living biblically in every area of life

Apologetics

- Teaches 6th graders how to defend their faith

Real-Life Application

- Applies what kids are learning to today's world

Engaging Activities

- Games, Videos, and projects that bring the Bible to life.

Critical Thinking Questions

- Questions that connect a student's mind and faith

In the summer of 2024, the 6th grade students and their parents will be provided the opportunity to go on a field trip to the Ark Encounter in Kentucky. More details coming!

AGES 0 - 5TH GRADE: *TRUST & OBEY GOD*

Our kids' classes will be as follows:

- Nursery (Ages 0-3)
- Preschool & Kindergarten
- Girls' Ministry: 1st & 2nd grade; 3rd-5th grade
- Boys' Ministry*: 1st & 2nd grade; 3rd-5th grade (**Royal Rangers*)

All kids' classes will be going through a discipleship journey with Bible Studies for Life. This fall they will learn the incredible stories of Rahab, Deborah, Esther, and a widow—fascinating examples of people who chose to respect, trust, and obey God even when it was difficult. Kids will then begin to understand God's plan for families. Romans 12:10 says, "Love one another deeply as brothers and sisters. Take the lead in honoring one another." They will learn to love, respect, value and pray for families. This will lead into the life stories of Moses, Jonah, Daniel and David, and how God is in control, has the power to do anything, and that there is no one like Him.

There will be practical opportunities for them to "live it out!" They will learn what it means to love one another, serve the body of Christ, and share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

WEDNESDAY NIGHT FORMAT

SCHEDULE:

6:00 PM – Dinner (pizza, chicken fingers & salad served in the gym)
6:45 PM – Transition to classrooms
7:00 PM – EQUIP Sessions Begin
8:00 PM – EQUIP Sessions Conclude

CLASS LOCATIONS:

Adults: Sanctuary

Refuge Students: Room 106 (*Girls, 7th-12th Grade*)
Room 201 (*Guys, 7th-12th Grade*)

6th Graders: Room 217

Girls' Ministry: Room 102 (*3rd-5th Grade*)
Room 101 (*1st-2nd Grade*)

Boys' Ministry: Room 104 (*3rd-5th Grade*)
(*Royal Rangers*) Room 105 (*1st-2nd Grade*)

Pre-K & K: Room 219 (*ages 4 - Kindergarten*)

Nursery: Room 218 (*ages 0-3*)

RELAUNCH DATE:

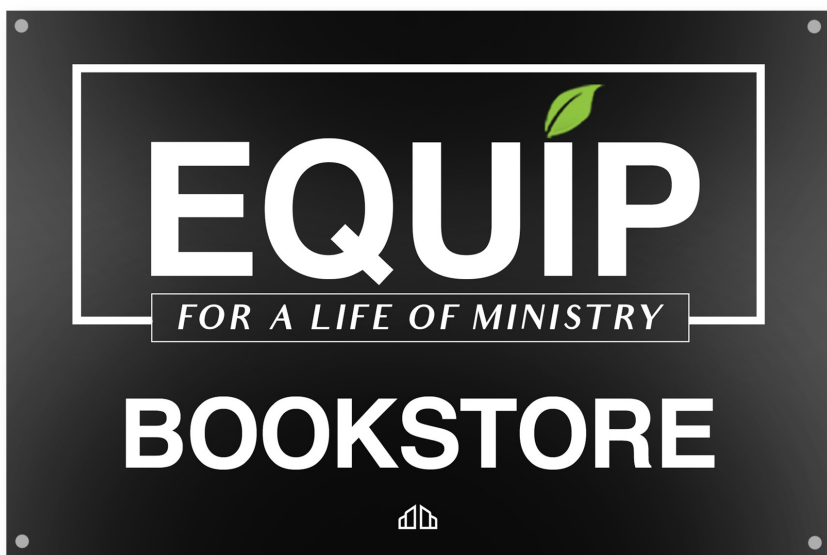
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11

*"PUT ON the full ARMOR OF GOD, so that you will be able to
STAND FIRM against the schemes of the devil."
Ephesians 6:11*

*"Be STEADFAST, IMMOVABLE, always ABOUNDING
in the WORK of the Lord."
1 Corinthians 15:58*

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOSPEL PROJECT & EQUIP?

Our **Core Values** at Greece Assembly are: *Know Christ; Grow in Christ; Serve the Body of Christ; Share the Gospel of Christ.* While **Gospel Project** emphasizes the core values of *Know* and *Grow*, **Equip** emphasizes the core values of *Serve* and *Share*.



LOCATED IN "THE COVE"

(THROUGH BACK DOORS OF SANCTUARY)

Be sure to check out the EQUIP Bookstore in The Cove. Resources available are sold at our cost. You can purchase a book by using the QR code displayed next to each book. To see what is currently available, visit: greeceassembly.org/equipbookstore. Our goal is to provide you with reading material that will help you grow and develop a life of ministry—being "always ready" to give a reason of the hope you have in Jesus.

A great book for students being offered is "A Student's Guide to Culture". This is an invaluable resource for helping students understand the culture, but equally important, how each of them can play a significant role in influencing it for Christ.

Another great book is "The Jesus Storybook Bible" for children. Beautifully written and illustrated, this children's Bible invites young hearts to discover for themselves that Jesus is at the center of God's great story of salvation—and at the center of their story too!

NEW T-SHIRT!



FREE @ RELAUNCH NIGHT!

**BE SURE TO JOIN US FOR EQUIP ON
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11TH
& RECEIVE A FREE EQUIP SHIRT!**

(MUST BE PRESENT TO RECEIVE A FREE SHIRT)

SHIRTS WILL BE \$10 AFTER RELAUNCH NIGHT.



LOVING **GOD.**
LOVING **PEOPLE.**