



Welcome to this devotional guide for our “Life Together” sermon series, which aims to help us become more deeply rooted in our understanding of the priority of the church and the foundational values of community, serving, and giving.

These questions are designed for you to use with your small group, your friends, or your family. They are aimed to help you draw out the meaning of the biblical text, spark application and discussion, and suggest ways to talk about these truths with children at home.

In Community

Before meeting with your small group, ask yourself a few basic questions about the passage of scripture and the sermon. Ask yourself questions like: “What does this passage teach me about God? What does it teach me about myself and the church?” Then ask response questions. “What can I praise or thank God for in this passage?” “What is God calling me to believe or do?”

At Home

Families are encouraged to discuss these topics together at home. God has established the home as a primary place where our children learn the gospel and see what it looks like to faithfully pursue God and his ways. And when we are grown, whether we are single or married, we continue to influence and be influenced by those we live and “do life with.”

You may want to start by simply reading the passage of Scripture together (or even a portion of it), and talking about what it means. Pray that each member of your household would come to know and love God and understand how this passage applies to their life. Pick a few questions you can go over together at a meal, in the car, or during another time you’re usually together.

KNOWING OUR IDENTITY AS THE CHURCH

Scripture : Ephesians 2:11-22

Week : November 2 - 8

Discussion Starter

When you think of the church, what first comes to mind?
(People? A building? Ministries?)

What do you love most about the church?

Understanding and Applying God's Word

Read Ephesians 2:11-22.

What words or images are used to describe the church in this passage? How do these images inform the way we should view ourselves as a church?

In this passage, what were the barriers that kept people apart?
How were those barriers destroyed by Christ?

Today we aren't regularly divided into groups called "the circumcision" and "the uncircumcision." But there are others ways we can be divided. What are those ways, and how can Christ break these down?

What is a cornerstone? Why is it important that Christ is the cornerstone of the church?

How does this text inform how we "do life together?"

Are there any things in your life that prevent you from greater involvement in the church?

Prayer

Give thanks that God has made us a part of his church.

Ask God to help us understand and walk in our new identity as God's people – citizens of the kingdom, members of Christ's body, and a temple where God dwells.

Ask God to knit us together in our mission to worship God, love one another, and make disciples of Jesus Christ.



What is the church? Is it a building?

Do you like going to church? Why is it important to go to church?

How does someone become a member of the church?
(Repent, believe, be baptized.)

LOVING ONE ANOTHER

Scripture : Hebrews 10:19-25

Week : November 9-15

Discussion Starter

Describe a time in your life when a fellow Christian stirred you up to grow in your Christian faith.

Understanding and Applying God's Word

Read Hebrews 10:19-25.

How do verses 19-21 motivate Christians to respond to the exhortations in verses 22-25?

What does it mean "to draw near to God with a true heart in full assurance of faith" (v. 22)? Are you ever tempted to believe you are not able to "draw near to God" because of your sin? How can the truth found in this text help you overcome your temptation and help you come with confidence? (See also Heb. 4:14-16.)

What does it mean to "hold fast the confession of our hope"? Have you ever been tempted to waver in holding fast to the gospel? Are you willing to share how/when that happened? What is the basis for your hope found in this text? How does this truth encourage you to keep going when you are tired or unmotivated?

What does it mean to "consider how to stir up one another to love and good works"? How do we do that? Are you surprised that Scripture exhorts us to think about how to do this?

Why is it important for Christians to meet together regularly? What are the effects if we stop meeting together?

Who are you meeting with to encourage you?

Prayer

Thank God for our access to him through Jesus Christ.

Ask God to help us as a church hold fast to the confession of our hope.

Ask God to help you stir up others to love and good works.



What does it mean that Jesus is our high priest?

After you have sinned, how can you draw near to God?

Did you know that you can help other people love and obey God? How can you do that? How might you encourage others to love and obey Jesus?

SERVING ONE ANOTHER

Scripture : 1 Peter 4:7-11

Week : November 16-22

Discussion Starter

Share an example of how someone else in the church or your small group has used their gifts to serve you.

Understanding and Applying God's Word

Read 1 Peter 4:7-11.

We have each received gifts. What gifts have you received?
Are there gifts that others have noticed about you in the past and said are a blessing to them?

What does it mean to serve in the strength that God supplies?

What does this passage say is the goal of our service?

Prayer

Thank God for the people God has used to serve you and help you grow in your faith.

Ask God to help you use the gifts he has given you.

Ask God to help each member of Covenant Life to be a good steward of their gifts.



What are some of the gifts that God has given each person in our family? How do they serve? Parents, be sure to highlight your children's gifts, and let them highlight yours.

What is a "steward" (v. 10)?

Who can you help today? Is there anyone you haven't been helping or serving you should apologize to? How can God help you obey?

GIVING OUR RESOURCES

Scripture : 2 Corinthians 9:6-15

Week : November 23-29

Discussion Starter

In general, conversations and decisions regarding money can be difficult to have. Why is that?

Understanding and Applying God's Word

Read 2 Corinthians 8-9 together, focusing on 9:6-15.

Because of Paul's ongoing relationship with the churches in and around Corinth, he anticipated them giving generously (as they said they would) to the needs of the saints in Jerusalem. What does Paul point them to as the motivation for their generous giving?

What spiritual blessings accrue as the result of sowing bountifully and being a "cheerful giver"(see 2 Cor. 9:6-11)?

Christ-honoring stewardship means using our property, possessions and gifts in ways that honor and please God and are faithful to his purposes. In what ways are your thoughts and actions associated to your money and possessions aligned with the teachings of Scripture?

In what ways would you like to grow to be those who "sow bountifully" (2 Cor. 9:6)?

Prayer

Thank God for all the ways he has blessed you financially.

If you are in need, ask him for help.

Pray that God would give you his heart as you consider how you use your financial resources.



Discuss with your children the areas in which you are currently giving (they may not be aware).

Discuss with your children ways that they can give of their possessions and gifts to help others know Jesus or meet practical needs.