

# Personal/Small Group Study

Week of February 25, 2024 A.D.

## Jesus Calls Me to Belong, Not Just Believe

As children of God through faith in Christ, we have been created for community, fashioned for fellowship, and formed for a church family. None of us can fulfill God's purposes by ourselves. We need each other. The church is God's plan for all of His children - both now and for eternity.

(Note: For every question which appears in this study, always give the reasoning and/or the explanation for each of your answers.)

### **Read Ephesians 2:19-20**

1. Verse 19 states that all Christians are "members of God's household." Please identify various relationships and resources that family members of the same household share in common. What does it mean to you personally to be a member of God's household?
2. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "No believer in Christ should ever refer to the church as an organization. The church is a family."

### **Read Acts 2:40-47**

3. As Christians, God is our Father. Jesus is our brother. We are family. Based on these verses, please describe the extent to which God expects the church to be involved in the lives of one another.
4. What are the obstacles that keep Christians from experiencing the fellowship which is described in Acts 2:42-47? What are the reasons for and/or causes of those obstacles? How can church members overcome those obstacles?

### **Read Romans 12:4-5 and 1 Corinthians 12:27**

5. Why does God command the church to function as a body? Does God expect every member of the church to participate in the work of the church in the routine of everyday living?
6. Does God expect every Christian to (a) be a member of a church body? (b) do work within a church body? (c) have a close connection and relationship with other Christians?
7. A body must have healthy body parts in order to function properly. What is the state of health of (a) the typical American church body? (b) your church body? Please explain the reasons for your response and be honest and objective in doing so.

### **Read Galatians 3:26-29**

8. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Following Jesus includes belonging to a church family - not just believing in Jesus for salvation."

### **Read Matthew 16:13-19**

9. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "The church is God's agenda for the world. The church will outlive you, your career, and your personal achievements. The person who says, "I don't need the church" is either ignorant or arrogant."

### **Read Ephesians 5:25-27**

10. The church is the bride of Christ; and Christ died for his bride. Can a person love Christ without loving Christ's bride? If so, please explain how. If not, how is a person to demonstrate his or her love for the bride of Christ? Please cite any Bible verses that support your answer.

### **Read John 13:34-35 and 1 Corinthians 12:12, 21, & 27**

11. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "A genuine believer in Christ will faithfully participate in the life and ministry of a local church family."

### **Read Romans 12:4-5 and 1 John 3:16-18**

12. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Active participation in a local church family moves you out of self-centered isolation and makes you more like Jesus."

### **Read Ephesians 4:14-16**

13. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "You will never grow to spiritual maturity only by attending worship services. Participation in the full life of a local church is essential if you want to develop your spiritual strength."

### **Read Hebrews 3:12-13**

14. Please analyze, critique, and discuss this statement: "Daily fellowship with one or more members of your church family will keep you from backsliding into a life of sin and it will keep your heart open to the Spirit of God."

**Consider:** Does my level of involvement in my local church demonstrate that I love, and am committed to, Jesus and His family? "You think about that." Amen.

*Note: This lesson was adapted from Chapter 17 of The Purpose Driven Life by Rick Warren. We encourage every follower of Christ to read that book. You can receive a copy for free at the table in the lobby. Please take one today.*