



EQUIP

study guide





a place to belong

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Main Objective:

For people to acquire a deeper love and appreciation for the local church and to be faithful participants in its life and ministries

Areas of Growth:

- **Conviction:** growth in our awareness of the importance of local church involvement for spiritual maturity and increasing in godliness
- **Competence:** growth in our ability to explain who and what the church is, to embrace more fully the privileges of being part of it, and to encourage those not regularly in a church to join
- **Character:** growth in our commitment to the life and ministries of the local church for the sake of our Savior, ourselves, and others



INTRODUCTION

1. What thoughts come to mind when you think about “church?” What experiences have shaped those thoughts?
2. What have been your best experiences in the local church? What have been your worst (or most difficult) experiences?
3. What are you most looking forward to about the book? What are you most hoping to gain by being part of an Equip Group?

CHAPTER 1: BELOVED

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter 1 and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. What group(s) do you tend to think of as “your people” and why? Do you think of people in the church as your people? Why or why not?
3. How should the way God has loved his people inform the way we love others? How might you use God’s love for his people to draw people to the church who are drifting or think church is unimportant?

Memory Work:

Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. ~ 1 John 4:11

CHAPTER 2: CALLED

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter 2 and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. Share your testimony of coming to faith in Jesus with the group.
3. In what sense do we, as Christians, all have the same testimony (see Ephesians 2:1-10)? How can this truth help you connect to others in the church with whom you might have difficulty relating?

Memory Work

*There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—
one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father
of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

~ Ephesians 4:4-6

CHAPTER 3: CHURCH

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter 3 and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. Do you have a usual place where you sit in church? How might this be considered a good thing?
3. What are some of the blessings and privileges of being among those who have been “called out?” What are some of the responsibilities and duties that can be challenging? How can we encourage one another to be faithful?

Memory Work

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

~ Hebrews 10:24-25

CHAPTER 4: FLOCK

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter 4 and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. Do you think formal membership in a local church is important for Christians? Why or why not? What might you say to someone who is reluctant to become a member of a church?
3. What would you say are some of the basic duties of church elders in shepherding church members? In what ways do you feel personally cared for by your elder(s) and what could they be doing better?

Memory Work

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. ~ Hebrews 13:17

CHAPTER 5: BODY

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter 5 and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. Why do you think Paul uses the imagery of the human body to describe the church (see 1 Corinthians 12)? In what ways is the church like a human body and what are some implications?
3. Do you know what your spiritual gifts are? How can we be protected from thinking our gifts are not important or needed and from thinking that we don't need the gifts of others?

Memory Work

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ~ 1 Corinthians 12:7

CHAPTER 6: SAINTS

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter 6 and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. Do you think of yourself – and others in the church – as a saint? Why or why not? What difference, if any, do you think it would make if you thought of yourself and others this way?
3. In what way is your holiness as a Christian both a statement of fact and a calling to be pursued?

Memory Work

To the church of God that is in Corinth [Yorktown], to those sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints together with all those who in every place call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, both their Lord and ours. ~ 1 Corinthians 1:2

CHAPTER 7: BROTHERS & SISTERS

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter 7 and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. In what ways is the church similar to a biological family? In what ways is it different?
3. In an increasingly isolated and lonely culture, what benefits do you think there are to be being part of a church family – and are you personally experiencing those benefits? At the same time, what challenges accompany having the church as a family?

Memory Work

“Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?” And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, [Jesus] said, “Here are my mother and my brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.”

~ Matthew 12:48-50

CHAPTER 8: GOSPEL PARTNERS

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter 8 and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. Do you think it would make a difference if we thought of church membership more like church partnership with others in a local congregation? Explain.
3. What are some concrete ways you do (or want to) partner with the ministries in your local church? How can you encourage others who might be struggling to get involved?

Memory Work

*I thank my God in all my remembrance of you, always in every prayer of mine for you all making my prayer with joy, because of your partnership in the gospel from the first day until now.
~ Philippians 1:3-5*

CHAPTER 9: MULTITUDE

1. What thing(s) stood out to you the most in Chapter 9 and why? Was there something you found particularly encouraging or challenging? Was there anything you questioned or disagreed with?
2. What are some ways different local churches can express fellowship with one another? Do you think it is important to do so? Why or why not?
3. Given the multitude in heaven (see Revelation 7:9) and a culture that speaks often of “diversity,” do you think diversity in the local church is important and something to be cultivated? If so, why and how should we do this?

Memory Work

After this I looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. ~ Revelation 7:9

