

Community Group Discussion Guide

Because You
ASKED

Sunday, August 13, 2023

Topic: The Gathered and Scattered Church

THIS WEEK'S FOCUS

The local church is a community/gathering of regenerated believers under the headship of Christ and the authority of Scripture who believe and confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. They organize under qualified biblical leadership, gather regularly for preaching, teaching, and worship; observe the biblical ordinances of baptism and communion; give of their finances, time, and abilities; they are unified by the Spirit, disciplined for holiness, and scatter to fulfill the Great Commission as disciple-makers/missionaries to the world for God's glory and their joy.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION (Use along with Reading: *Ante Faciem Dei*)

- What is the origin of community? What does it mean to be made in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 2:18)?
- If God created us for relationships and all he created is good, why is community messy?
- What is the purpose of community (Isaiah 43:6; Psalm 96:3; 1 Corinthians 10:31)?
- What is the local church, and why do we gather (1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10)? How is the Church unique from any other community?
- Discuss the following attributes of the Church:
 - Gospel-centered communities gather around common truth (Romans 12:1-3)
 - Gospel-centered communities express a common attribute (Romans 12:9)
 - Gospel-centered communities relate in the context of family (Romans 12:10; Acts 2:42-47)
- What is the Church's divinely given mission (1 Peter 2:11-12; John 20:21; Acts 1:8)? How do we avoid *escaping* from and *emulating* culture and instead *engage* the culture for the cause of Christ?
- Where do we see evidence of church membership in Scripture (Acts 2:41, 47; 5:14; 6:5; 9:26; 14:23; 15:17; 16:5; 18:27; Romans 16:1; Colossians 4:10)? For Christians, why is membership in a local church not optional?

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Church Membership: How the World Knows Who Represents Jesus by Jonathan Leeman