

# 3

We Support One Another

WHEN HAS BEING A PART OF A GROUP HELPED YOU ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING BIG?



## The POINT >

God gives the church spiritual gifts to accomplish His work.

### > EPHESIANS 4:1-7,11-16

<sup>1</sup>Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to live worthy of the calling you have received, <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, <sup>3</sup> making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to one hope at your calling— <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

<sup>7</sup>Now grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.

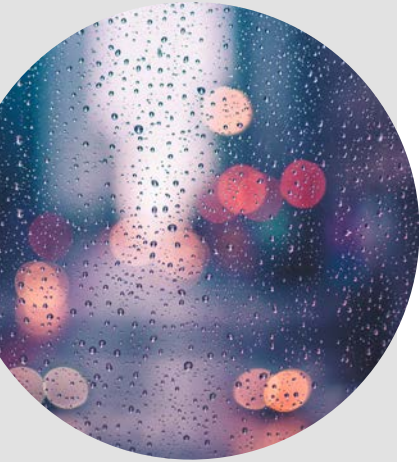
<sup>11</sup>And he himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> equipping the saints for the work of ministry, to build up the body of Christ, <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of God's Son, growing into maturity with a stature measured by Christ's fullness. <sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be little children, tossed by the waves and blown around by every wind of teaching, by human cunning with cleverness in the techniques of deceit. <sup>15</sup> But speaking the truth in love, let us grow in every way into him who is the head—Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body, fitted and knit together by every supporting ligament, promotes the growth of the body for building up itself in love by the proper working of each individual part.



# THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

## FACT:

When working with others, we often value “good chemistry.” However, this dynamic often makes teams less effective. When we think alike we often end up in predictable ruts, and a little conflict helps any group to be more dynamic.<sup>1</sup>



## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // CHURCH

The church is a community of believers who are called to meet together regularly to study Scripture, pray, worship, serve and encourage one another, and proclaim the gospel to the world.

We live in a culture that is radically individualistic. We are taught to think in terms of me, me, me and with little thought spared for others’ perspectives. But this simply doesn’t work in the real world.

For anyone who’s ever been a part of a team or group, we know very clearly that success depends on cooperation and even looking past what’s best for me. If the band is supposed to play something smooth and textural, but a few of the saxophones decide to improvise a few bars, the sound will be nothing short of a train wreck. For a group of people to be successful, everyone has to do their part, and more times than not it means giving up my selfish perspective for the sake of the group.

Those around us may make their decisions with this question in mind: *What’s best for me?* But God has called us to consider how our lives and choices impact others. When we come to Christ, we don’t come to Him alone—we are joined with other believers in His church. Our individual lives and relationship with Christ are not just about *me*, but *we*. When we join with Christ’s church, we must leave selfishness and individualism at the door, because God saves us not only for our own benefit, but also to bless others.

## EPHESIANS 4:1-7

**1** List some ways division can be harmful to a church.

**2** Why is it so difficult to maintain unity in the church?



*The heart of the church's ministry is done by its people—not just those with official titles. #BSFLtheChurch*

## EPHESIANS 4:11-13

**3** What gifts do you think God has given you to serve the church?

**4** How have you seen church leaders serve in a way that cultivated unity in the church?

**5** How has your participation in ministry helped you mature in Christ?

## EPHESIANS 4:14-16

**6** Why are all parts of the church body so important?

**7** What keeps us from experiencing unity in the church today?

**8** What does speaking the truth in love look like?



# LIVE IT OUT



## LEVELS OF BIBLICAL LEARNING // CHURCH

*The church is a community of believers who are called to meet together regularly to study Scripture, pray, worship, serve and encourage one another, and proclaim the gospel to the world.*

Every Christian, when they come to faith, receives a spiritual gift from the Holy Spirit. These gifts are to be used primarily for serving and building up others—first, those within the church, but also to reach the lost and bring them into church. When we use our gifts to teach Scripture, pray in faith, encourage others, and many other things, we are building up the church as God intended.

## > CHRIST

When we come to faith, the Spirit comes into the lives of all believers and gives us a spiritual gift meant for serving the church and honoring God.

**9** This week, ask a leader to help you identify your spiritual gift, and determine how you could use this gift to serve the church.

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

**CHURCH**

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY  
& WORLD

**Pray every day that the Spirit would help you to understand your gift.**

## > COMMUNITY

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Many people come to church because they believe it will benefit them. However, Scripture teaches that we are to prioritize serving others. Think about this—if everybody came to be served, then no one would be served; if everyone came looking to serve, all would be served.

**10** How have you bought into a how-can-the-church-serve-me mentality?



**11** How will you prioritize serving others first this week?

## > CULTURE

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We are called to live with a “one another” perspective not only in relation to those in the church, but we are also called to love those outside the church.

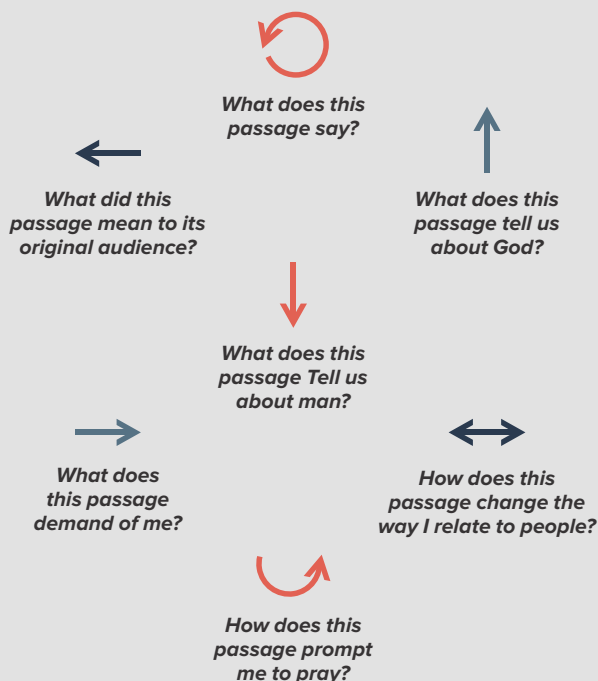
**12** In what ways have you seen the church treat non-Christians as “outsiders”?

**13** How can the church do a better job of serving and loving the lost? Make it a point, this week, to put into practice some of these things.

# DAILY DEVOTIONS



## The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



## Day One GALATIANS 6:1

We would all like for the Christian life to be a straight, easy path, but this just isn't the way it works. There are ups and downs, seasons of joy and of difficulty. At times, we'll find ourselves in the position of needing help, and at others, we'll be in the place to help those who are struggling. As we live in the context of the church, we will certainly come to find out that people we care about are struggling with sin. Paul taught the church that, when this happens, we certainly shouldn't gossip, and we shouldn't criticize the ones who struggle. Instead, we should work patiently to gently restore them to a healthy way of living. After all, this should be our natural response toward those we love. When we do this, however, we must make sure to be careful not to be drawn into their sin. Helping those in need may involve our being exposed to temptation. Restoring the one who has fallen may be a messy business, but it's worth it.

- **When has someone helped you when you've struggled with sin?**
- **Why can helping others sometimes lead to temptation?**

## Day Two

# GALATIANS 6:2

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If you carry a backpack filled with books to school, you'd probably agree that it's pretty heavy. However, it's not so much that you can't handle it. Though it may be a bit of a pain to carry around school, it doesn't constitute a "burden" according to the idea here. A burden refers to a load that is too heavy to bear alone. When we see a friend struggling, there are times he or she can handle it, even though it may not be easy. However, at other times, fellow Christians will deal with problems that are too much to bear alone. When we encounter these situations, it's our responsibility to step in and help others deal with their heavy burdens. The law of Christ calls us to love others in real ways—bearing others' burdens is an important way we can show real love.

- **What burden have you had trouble dealing with on your own?**
  
- **How did someone help you work through it? How can you help someone in a similar way?**

## Day Three

# GALATIANS 6:3

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Pride is expressed in many forms. Originally, in the garden, it was expressed through Adam and Eve's choosing what they wanted as opposed to living in obedience to God. This verse speaks about a different kind of pride. Sometimes, even in our efforts to minister to others, we can fall into pride. When we have a friend who struggles with sin and we work to help them, we may be tempted to think we could never fall into what our friend is dealing with. Other times, we may believe we're the ones to save them from their foolishness. Either way, when we think more highly of ourselves than we should, we've lied to ourselves. The truth is that apart from God's grace, we'd fall into sin. If our helping our friend makes a difference, it's not because of any moral virtue in and of ourselves, but God's using us as His instruments. We need to be careful to remain humble, especially when helping others deal with sin in their lives. There's only one Savior.

- **Why are we often tempted to be prideful?**
  
- **When have you deceived yourself, believing things about yourself that weren't true?**

## Day Four

# GALATIANS 6:4

Sinful pride is often expressed when we accomplish things that are meaningful, but compare ourselves to others, thinking we are somehow better. This sort of self-elevation goes against everything Jesus modeled for us. Though He is God, Jesus humbled Himself in the ways He interacted with others. He served tirelessly, associated with the lowliest of society, and ultimately gave His life on the cross, even though He'd never sinned and was the only person ever to have lived who didn't deserve death. Yet we do one thing we think is pretty good, and we're swollen with pride. This couldn't be any more unlike Christ. However, when we obey God and He works through us, there is a kind of holy pride that is appropriate. We can take pride in the work God has done through us, boasting in the Lord (Jer. 9:24; 2 Cor. 10:17), for it is His strength working in and through us that accomplishes good things.

- **What is something you've accomplished you're proud of in a good way?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **How can we know the line between boasting in God and sinful pride?**

## Day Five

# GALATIANS 6:5



Some days, we carry our backpacks. Other days, it's necessary that we carry a refrigerator. It makes sense that, when we carry items that are too big and heavy to deal with ourselves, we ask others to come alongside us. But with the smaller items, we should carry those ourselves. Here's the issue: people are sometimes tempted to refuse carrying responsibilities they should be able to handle. It's not the church's responsibility to rescue people every time they struggle, particularly when those struggles are the result of their refusing to be responsible. We should certainly show grace to one another. However, it's also important that we help others grow in being responsible. This is part of maturing in Christ.

- **How do we know when to help someone carry their burden and when to allow them to carry their own load?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- **Why is it important to always focus on grace?**