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Committed to His Church

WHAT IS
YOUR FIRST
MEMORY
OF
CHURCH?

The
POINT ➤

Commitment to Christ includes a
commitment to His body, the church.

➤ ROMANS 12:3-16

³For by the grace given to me, I tell everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he should think. Instead, think sensibly, as God has distributed a measure of faith to each one. ⁴Now as we have many parts in one body, and all the parts do not have the same function, ⁵in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another. ⁶According to the grace given to us, we have different gifts: If prophecy, use it according to the proportion of one's faith; ⁷if service, use it in service; if teaching, in teaching; ⁸if exhorting, in exhortation; giving, with generosity; leading, with diligence; showing mercy, with cheerfulness.

⁹Let love be without hypocrisy. Detest evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰Love one another deeply as brothers and sisters. Outdo one another in showing honor. ¹¹Do not lack diligence in zeal; be fervent in the Spirit; serve the Lord. ¹²Rejoice in hope; be patient in affliction; be persistent in prayer. ¹³Share with the saints in their needs; pursue hospitality. ¹⁴Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. ¹⁵Rejoice with those who rejoice; weep with those who weep. ¹⁶Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud; instead, associate with the humble. Do not be wise in your own estimation.



THE BIBLE MEETS LIFE

FACT:

You may not let anybody else pick on your younger brother or sister, but siblings tend to fight each other a lot! In fact, younger siblings argue or fight up to once every 10 minutes they're together.¹



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.

If someone said to me, “I love you, but I can’t stand your brat of a kid,” then I simply wouldn’t get along with that person. I love my family with all that I am, and they are a central part of my life. The truth is that someone can’t truly love me while refusing to love those I love. This kind of negative attitude toward my family would always be a barrier in our relationship.

We hear a similar statement in our culture—*I love Jesus, but I just can’t appreciate the church*. Maybe those with this perspective have been hurt by people in the church, or they’ve found commitment to the church to be too demanding or difficult. Whatever the reason, this perspective keeps people from a close relationship with God. After all, those in the church are the children of God. We are His family!

We are called to love the things which God loves, and be assured, He loves the church.

ROMANS 12:3-5

1 How do we benefit by being a part of the church?

2 How have you seen the church function as a unified body?

ROMANS 12:6-8

3 How have you seen others using their gifts within the church?

4 What obstacles often prevent us from using our gifts as God intended?

5 Why is diversity important in the church?



Regardless of whether you are young or old, rich or poor, male or female, you are a critical part of the body of Christ! #allinBSFL



ROMANS 12:9-16

6 How does genuine Christian love differ from the world's idea of love?

7 Which of these commands seems easiest to obey? Most difficult? Why?

8 What would your church look like if all of its members loved each other in the ways described in these verses?



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.

In Scripture, the church is called the body of Christ, which means we are joined together with other believers for the purpose of serving one another and accomplishing God's purposes in the world. If we're not continually together, then it's as if the body is missing a part, and therefore, won't function in a healthy way. Further, if we're not together, then our gifts aren't being used to bless others within the church. This is why it's necessary that we're connected with the church.

> CHRIST

Jesus, though He is God, was characterized by a life of humility. This was ultimately demonstrated on the cross.

9 How are you sometimes tempted to think more highly of yourself than you should?

10 How is God calling you to live more humbly? What will you do this week to live this out?

GOD

JESUS

HOLY SPIRIT

BIBLE

SALVATION

CREATION

CHURCH

PEOPLE

FAMILY

COMMUNITY
& WORLD

> COMMUNITY

In this passage, Paul listed several ways we're to relate to others. One, specifically, is sharing in others' experiences—celebrating successes and grieving difficulties.

11 Who do you know in your church family who is celebrating? Who is hurting?



12 How, this week, will you share in the experiences of those you care about?

> CULTURE

In verse 14, Paul says that we are to bless those who persecute us for our faith.

13 In what ways do you experience persecution from non-believers?

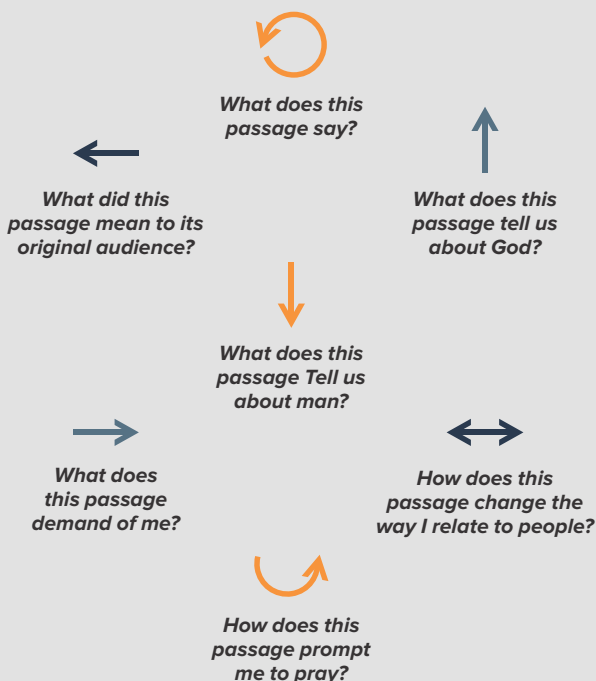
14 How are you naturally inclined to respond?

15 How will you intentionally treat others this week who have given you a difficult time about your faith?

DAILY DEVOTIONS



The 7 Arrows of Bible Reading



Day One

1 PETER 4:7

The end refers specifically to Jesus' second coming, which is the time all Christians are to look forward to. Peter had earlier referred to the suffering the church currently endured, and even through hard times, they had hope in Christ, knowing that when Jesus returned they would receive their eternal reward (1 Peter 1:3-6). As long as we're in this life, we'll struggle with the curse of sin, and we'll face many difficult things. Because of this, we should never be too comfortable in this life, but longing for the time when Jesus will return for God's people. This is what it means to be sober-minded—to have an eternal perspective and not an earthly one. When Jesus comes back, we don't want Him to find us with the proverbial hand in the cookie jar. Instead, we want Him to find us diligently doing the work of the Father.

➤ **How are you tempted to love the world instead of longing for eternity?**

➤ **If Jesus came back today, would He find you working for the kingdom? Why do you think so?**

Day Two

1 PETER 4:8



Above all—that’s strong language. Jesus said that the greatest command is to love God with all that we are. And the second is like it: to love our neighbors as ourselves. This “constant love” refers specifically to love that stretches us. True love is sacrificial in nature, and it means that even if I’m going through difficulties myself, I’m willing to meet the needs of others ahead of my own. Further, Peter reiterates a principle earlier taught by Jesus, that we should love even those who offend us, whom we may see as enemies. Jesus prayed for those who put Him on the cross, and in the same way, we should be willing to forgive and forbear offenses others commit against us. By doing this, sin is covered and others see a picture of the gospel.

➤ **Why is constant love so important?**

➤ **How would you describe Jesus’ love for those who mistreated Him?**

Day Three

1 PETER 4:9

Hospitality refers specifically to warmly and generously receiving guests among us. In the early days of the church, God’s people didn’t have big buildings and lots of money. They knew that the church wasn’t a building, but the people, and for them to function in a healthy way required that they open their homes to one another. Christians, who are called to be known for the ways we love others, must see that hospitality is an essential part of our lives. Today, it may be easy for you to be friendly to people you are close with, but hospitality means much more. True hospitality involves warmly receiving those who others have rejected and who may not be easy to love. Further, it means being generous to others, even to the point of making major sacrifices. When other religious leaders wouldn’t, Jesus showed genuine love to tax collectors, prostitutes, and lepers—those society had rejected. Further, He made great sacrifices that others would be received into His presence.

➤ **In your own words, how would you define hospitality?**

➤ **How will you commit to showing hospitality to someone who needs to feel welcomed?**

Day Four

1 PETER 4:10

Scripture teaches that every person who comes to faith in Christ receives a gift from the Holy Spirit which is to be used for serving others. Stewardship means taking care of something that belongs to someone else, and with this in view, we must see our spiritual gifts as ultimately belonging to God, but entrusted to us. We must use our gifts for His purposes. The church only functions as it should when every member uses his or her gifts to benefit the church. Whenever we don't use our gifts, the whole body suffers! As a member of the body of Christ—the church—it's absolutely essential that we do our part, because when we don't, the church fails to function as it should.

- **What spiritual gift do you think the Spirit has given to you?**
- **How are you using it to benefit the church?**

Day Five

1 PETER 4:11



Certain members of the church are gifted to speak, teaching God's Word and leading others. Other people are gifted to serve, handling the details of daily life in the church and ministering to the practical needs of their church family. At times we may be tempted to think those gifts are about us—either about the one leading or serving, or even more commonly about the ones being served. However, Peter makes it very clear. All gifts and all service are ultimately for the glory of Jesus! When we serve in the power of the Spirit, we reflect the nature and character of Jesus. This must always be our heart, no matter the ways we serve. When we see it this way, Jesus will be glorified.

- **Why are teaching and leading gifts so important? Why are serving gifts just as important?**
- **How do our spiritual gifts ultimately glorify Christ?**