

# Small Group Discussion

## Week 5



### Chapter 5 – The Local Church

Remember, teach what you learn and share life, not just information.

#### Coaching Conversations:

This week's chapter is about showing an unbelieving world that a community of believers can be a warm and welcoming environment, full of Christ's love. While group time is an amazing time to discuss this, it's not a time where the world can actually witness this taking place. Consider planning a group activity outside-of your regular meeting time to enjoy friends, spouses, or neighbors. Do something fun! Do something that will allow your group members lives to collide. Go to dinner; go on a hayride; think of an activity where you can enjoy spending time together while getting to know each other better outside of your study time. You can even ask another group member to plan this. Chances are, someone in your group will jump at the opportunity to be the social planner. Pray over this outing and catch yourself having a good time.

#### Starting the Conversation:

What comes to mind when you hear the phrase, "the local church?" Describe it and then talk about what your experience with the local church has looked like over the course of your spiritual journey.

#### Life Group Questions

1. Would you say that our church is more inwardly focused or outwardly focused? Why do you say that? Do you view this church more as a service provider or as your family?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 13. Would you say that the life of our church is characterized by love? Why or why not?
3. What steps can you take to be an example of love in our church? Whether you are an official leader in our church or not, how can you lead others in being more loving?
4. Read John 17. Pay careful attention to Jesus's desire for His followers. Would you say that our church could be characterized by this kind of unity? Why or why not?
5. Take some time to think about our church and your unique cultural setting. What would it take for our church to be united, and for that unity to be displayed to the unbelieving world?
6. Do you ever feel like a salesperson when sharing your faith? What steps can you take to change this?

7. What would it mean for our church to live as a compelling community—a group of people who demonstrate love, unity, and hope in such a way that the unbelieving world is compelled to find out what is going on?

8. Read 1 Peter 2:4–12. How should Peter’s description of our calling as the church affect the way we think about and interact with our surrounding community?

**Continuing the Conversation (optional):**

- **How to Treat “...One Another”** - “...we cannot fulfill our mission unless we serve one another in love.” (pg. 66). Whenever the New Testament mentions “...one another,” it’s referring to how we are to treat other believers. Using the “One Another Passages” handout (found online) read through and discuss some or all of the one another Scriptures that teach us how we should treat each other, in order to be a witness to the world around us.

- **Assessing the Needs of Your Community** – In order to bless the community around you (pg. 74) you need to be present in your surrounding community. Use the “Listening to your community” handout (found online) to help group members think about how they can be more present in their community to better assess the needs around them.

- **Additional Related Passages:** (see the “One Another...” passages handout)

- **Memory Verse:** John 13:34-35

**Prayer Assignment:**

Spend some time in prayer. God’s calling for our church is too important to neglect, and it’s too important to take on without the power of the Spirit. Ask God to so fill the life of our church with His Spirit that your community notices a difference. Ask Him to equip you for the role He has called you to play in His plan of redemption.