

Covenant Community

DEAREST PLACE ON EARTH

COVENANT COMMUNITY | WEEK ONE | THE CHURCH

“Give yourself to the Church. You that are members of the Church have not found it perfect and I hope that you feel almost glad that you have not. If I had never joined a Church till I had found one that was perfect, I would never have joined one at all! And the moment I did join it, if I had found one, I should have spoiled it, for it would not have been a perfect Church after I had become a member of it. Still, imperfect as it is, it is the dearest place on earth to us”

– Charles Spurgeon

GETTING STARTED

When you hear the word “church”, what images come to mind? Positive or negative experiences? Good or bad times?

QUESTION 1

The Bible uses all types of metaphors to describe the church. Which of these¹ listed below do you most identify with? Which seems most difficult to understand? Please explain your answer.

- The Family of God.
- The Household of God.
- The Temple of the Spirit.
- The Pillar and foundation of truth.
- Christ’s flock.
- Bride of Christ.

QUESTION 2

The Greek Word for church used in scripture is **ekklesia**. This word defines those in the church as “the called-out ones.” In your own words, describe who these people are, where are they called out from, what they are called out to, and what they are called out for.

For additional insights read: Mark 3:13 | 1Peter2:9 | Matthew 5:13-16

QUESTION 3

By committing to a local expression of God’s church we confront the idols of individualism, push back on the tendencies of polarization, combat the sway of secularization, step out of the trap of consumerism, and receive the blessing of community by knowing and being known². How does committing to a local body help with these things?

Follow Up: Getting personal, which of the idols above (individualism, polarization, secularization, consumerism, etc.) do you find yourself struggling most with? How does the church help protect your heart and course correct that tendency in us?

QUESTION 4

On pg. 11 of the Covenant Community workbook, it states: “You do not need to belong to a church to be saved. However, you do need to belong to a church to be obedient.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Why or why not?

Follow Up: What are some of the benefits of belonging to a specific local church rather than just identifying with the “universal church”?

¹ For Scripture references, see pg. 8 of Covenant Community workbook.

² See Pg. 10 of Covenant Community Workbook

Covenant Community

DEAREST PLACE ON EARTH

COVENANT COMMUNITY | WEEK ONE | THE CHURCH

QUESTION 5

Read Hebrews 10:24-25. These verses urge us not to “neglect meeting together”; what difference do you feel it makes in your life personally to actively belong to and do life within a local body of believers? How does your life and spiritual journey suffer when you “neglect” those relationships and opportunities?

APPLICATION & PRAYER

Take some time to read through Ephesians 1:17-21 as a group. In these verses, we find Paul’s prayer for the church in Ephesus that illustrates how we can also pray for our church. In your remaining time...

- ...reflect and discuss the specific things Paul asked for.
- ...pray the same for your group, your campus, and for Summit View as a whole.
- ...conclude by briefly discussing your insights and what God has revealed to you about your relationship with Himself, each other, and Summit View through His word and this week’s content.