



PASSION for the CHURCH

who we are together in Christ



Name:

PARTICIPANT GUIDE

WINTER 2019



wentzville
CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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LETTER FROM KEITH

Igniting a passion for Jesus, the Bible, the Church, and Others. In the fall of 2018, we began a series of sermons going through our passions at WCC. We began with a Passion for Jesus by looking at how we can make His habits our habits. Recently, we looked at our Passion for the Bible by understanding how to read, understand, and apply God's Word to our life so we can make His words our way. We now begin a Passion for the Church series where we will discover **who we are together in Christ**. Being a follower of Jesus is not a solo sport, and we can not sit in the stands and watch. The Church is something God instituted and He wants every Christian to have a passion for her...but what does that mean?

When people hear the word "church", all kinds of thoughts go through their minds. Some people think of traditional settings with dim lights, candles, and hardwood benches. Other thoughts might be tied to toxic experiences or memories. Still, others might think of a "country club" scenario where everyone knows one-another and there are all kinds of activities. When I think of church, I think of a mission. We are a people with a mission and a church on a mission. The Church described in the Bible is a single, united body of believers that is represented by many smaller gatherings represented by various local churches and denominations. We are all united through Christ and His Word, which gives us a common mission of making disciples throughout the whole world [Matthew 28:18-20].

Unfortunately, churches in western culture have stumbled into some bad thinking. At some point, church became less about mission and more about "what's in it for me?" We might label that as "consumerism" since church has become a product and congregations became customers. I imagine that all of us have fallen at some point into that line of thinking. Our hope for this series is to redirect our hearts and get back on mission! By looking at different metaphors that the Bible uses to describe the Church [bride, flock, family, body, salt, and light], our hope is to regain our perspective about the Church and return to the mission with a passion.

Blessings,

Keith Comp

Senior Minister

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

The purpose of this guide is to ignite a passion for the Church in your daily life. We are told that Jesus loved the Church so much that he gave his life for her. This guide will help you develop your love for the Church and lead you to ways that you can be a better member of the body.

SERMON NOTES:

Bring this workbook to church each Sunday. As you listen to the sermon, make a note when you hear something that surprises you, intrigues you, bothers you, challenges you, or encourages you. Use this as a starting point for your group discussion and personal study through the week.

CONNECT QUESTIONS:

These questions will help you and your group members become more comfortable with talking and sharing with each other. Not only will you learn more about one-another, the questions will help to steer the discussion in the direction of the topic.

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION:

These questions are the “meat” of the discussion and will point back to the sermon each week. Feel free to read and answer these questions before your group meets. They will also help you dig deeper into the Scriptures during your group discussions.

CHANGE QUESTIONS:

Passion leads people to significant actions. At the end of Jesus’ most famous sermon, he says that if you do not put his words into practice, then you are a fool [Matthew 7:24-27]. Life transformation is the ultimate goal of a follower of Christ. This happens through personal reflection and a genuine response to what you have heard from God. Feel free to answer these questions out-loud when your leader reads them or you can quietly reflect and write a response in your workbook. This is the time to go deep and make it personal!

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER:

Please focus this time on your own personal praises and requests instead of listing all of the bad things that happened to someone you know. We challenge you to get “deep” with one-another relationally, which means becoming a little bit vulnerable as you are honest with one-another.

PRAY FOR THE MISSIONS OF THE WEEK:

WCC supports many wonderful missionaries and organizations all over the world. We are committed to supporting them with our finances, prayers, and encouragement. Ask God to work in their lives and through their ministries to ignite a passion for Jesus in others.

DAILY DEVOTION:

Be consistent, honest, and intentional with this time and you will not regret it. The whole point of this workbook is to make the sermons and scriptures stick with you in your daily walk with Christ. Digging in to God’s Word and applying it to your daily life is perhaps the best way to solidify His truth into your heart and your life.

PASSION for the CHURCH



Week 1 - Bride of Christ

WEEK 1 - BRIDE OF CHRIST

CONNECT QUESTIONS

1. What are some of the differences between how men and women view weddings?
2. How have weddings changed over the years?
3. Why is a wedding an important event? Why do we invest so much time, money, and effort into weddings?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Read Ephesians 5:21-33. According to Paul, how should a husband treat his wife in a marriage? How should a wife treat her husband?
2. Read vs. 25-27 again. Paul relates husbands and wives to Jesus and the church. What does Jesus do for the church?
3. What do you like about the picture of the church described in this passage? What do you struggle with?

4. You often hear of people who do not see the church as important or necessary for their faith. How does this passage in Ephesians confront that kind of thinking?
5. Read Revelation 19:6-9. What similarities do you see in the passage with the one from Ephesians?
6. Why is there rejoicing in this passage? Based on how the bride prepares herself in this passage, how should our church prepare ourselves for Jesus?
7. What role can you play in helping the church, as the bride, be prepared for the wedding day?

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. What specifically needs to happen in your personal life for you to become a more radiant part of the bride of Christ?
2. Are you investing an appropriate amount of time, energy, and resources in this spiritual wedding? What needs to change?
3. How can you encourage others in the church to be the bride of Christ?

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

PRAY FOR MISSIONS OF THE WEEK

Team Expansion: Tim & Amy Maxson

The Maxsons work at Fellowship Dubai church in the Middle East and are making disciples of migrant workers. The Maxson family has five children. teamexpansion.org

High Hill Christian Camp

High Hill Christian Camp and Retreat Center's goal is to offer a fun, Christian atmosphere in a modern camp setting surrounded by God's wilderness — all designed so that children will leave with a closer relationship with Jesus. highhillcamp.org

Show-Me Christian Youth Home

This faith-based organization seeks to improve the lives of children struggling because of circumstances in their current home environment. showmehelpingkids.com

DAILY DEVOTION [DAYS 1-3]

DAY 1:

“For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her...”
[Ephesians 5:25, NLT]

- ▶ This is an instruction for husbands to love their wives, but what image does it give us for what Jesus did for his bride, the church?

- ▶ How does Jesus’ love for you and his church impact your love for the church? How do you show your love for Jesus’ bride?

DAY 2:

“...to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God’s word.”
[Ephesians 5:26, NLT]

- ▶ This shows what Jesus did by giving up his life for the church. What do you think it means for the church to be holy, clean, and washed by God’s Word?

- ▶ Would you describe our church as holy, clean, and washed by the Bible? What can the church [and you] do to be cleansed by God’s Word?

DAY 3:

“He did this to present her to himself as a glorious church without a spot or wrinkle or any other blemish. Instead, she will be holy and without fault.”
[Ephesians 5:27, NLT]

- ▶ Jesus’ vision for the church [His people] is that we should be a glorious church without a spot, wrinkle, or blemish. Why does he want us to be presented to him in this way?

- ▶ Picture a glorious bride walking down the aisle in her perfect dress without any wrinkle or blemish. How does this picture impact the way you treat Jesus’ bride, the church?

DAILY DEVOTION [DAYS 4-6]

DAY 4:

“³¹As the Scriptures say, ‘A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one.’ ³²This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one. ”
[Ephesians 5:31-32, NLT]

- ▶ How is the unity of a marriage similar to the way Jesus and the church are united?

- ▶ In what ways are you united with the church? How can you get to know Christ better by being more involved with his bride, the church?

DAY 5:

“Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. ”
[Revelation 19:7, NIV]

- ▶ Jesus’ return is described as a wedding union with the church. What parts of a wedding are similar to the celebration and preparation we should have for Jesus’ return?

- ▶ What does it mean that the bride has made herself ready? In what ways can the church [including you] be made ready for Jesus’ return?

DAY 6:

“Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God’s holy people.)
[Revelation 19:8, NIV]

- ▶ The bride is given bright and clean clothing to wear. What does this verse say the clothing of the church represents?

- ▶ Could your life and our church be described as a “holy people” with “righteous acts”? What can you do to present a righteous and holy garment to Jesus, our groom?

PASSION for the CHURCH



Week 2 - Flock

WEEK 2 - FLOCK

CONNECT QUESTIONS

1. Have you had many experiences with livestock? Do you have any interesting stories?
2. As a child, or now, what was your favorite pet? How would it respond when it heard your voice?
3. When have you or someone you know blindly followed a person or a group who led you astray?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think Jesus chose to refer to his followers as sheep? How is a flock a good word-picture for the Church?
2. Read John 10:1-6. How do sheep respond to a stranger compared to their own shepherd? How do Jesus' words relate to his hope for the Church?
3. Read John 10:7-10. Who are the thieves and robbers that come to "steal and to kill and to destroy"? How does Jesus provide a more abundant life for the church?

4. **Read John 10:11-15. Why do you think it is important that Jesus says he is The Good Shepherd instead of just any shepherd?**

5. **Who are examples of “hired hands” that people follow today instead of the Good Shepherd? How can this be dangerous?**

6. **Read Psalm 23:1-4. How is the rod and staff of a shepherd used? How does this relate to the way Jesus leads and loves us as a church?**

7. **The job of a shepherd is to lead, feed and protect his flock. What can happen to a church that goes astray and does not follow the Good Shepherd?**

8. **OPTIONAL EXERCISE: Read Ezekiel 34.**
 - a. Write down every single action that the bad shepherds did.
 - b. Write down the punishments that came upon them.
 - c. Write down everything that God provides as the Good Shepherd.

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. What sort of false shepherds and voices have led you astray in your life?
2. How can we [as a church and as individuals] learn to hear and know the voice of the Good Shepherd?
3. What needs to happen for you to be led and fed by the Good Shepherd this week?

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

PRAY FOR MISSIONS OF THE WEEK

Jireh India Missions

This ministry in India shares the good news of Jesus with those who have never heard His name. They provide homes and education for orphans at House of Peace, teach widows to sew so they can provide for their children, provide bread for much of their community through Five Loaves Bakery, and work with a leper colony. They strive to fulfill Psalm 82:3 — *Defend the poor and orphans; do justice to the afflicted and needy.*

HOPE Ministries Food Pantry

HOPE provides families in St. Charles county assistance with food and physical needs. You can donate non-perishable food items to this ministry by visiting the food cart in the WCC café. Take home a bag and bring it back with the items requested for the month.

Shiloh Christian Children's Ranch

Located in Kahoka and Clarence, MO, Shiloh is a safe haven for abused and neglected children, and includes six homes for children, two relief homes, and an onsite school. shilohranch.org

DAILY DEVOTION [DAYS 1-3]

DAY 1:

“I am the good shepherd; I know my sheep and my sheep know me.”
[John 10:14, NIV]

- ▶ When someone is called a sheep in our culture, is it usually positive or negative? What is meant by the comparison?

- ▶ Sheep are not known as being smart, but they are extremely loyal and obedient to the shepherd. How is it a good thing that the church is referred to as Jesus’ flock?

DAY 2:

“They won’t follow a stranger; they will run from him because they don’t know his voice”
[John 10:5, NLT]

- ▶ As a child, or now, what was your favorite pet? How did they respond when they heard your voice or saw you? How is this like our relationship with Jesus?

- ▶ What are some examples of a “stranger” who could lead a church astray? What can the church [and you] do to keep this from happening?

DAY 3:

“Then I will give you shepherds after my own heart, who will lead you with knowledge and understanding.”
[Jeremiah 3:15, NIV]

- ▶ God has appointed shepherds and pastors to lead local congregations. Why would he use a structure with local leaders instead of everyone just following Jesus directly?

- ▶ God blesses churches with local leaders who have knowledge and understanding. How does this help churches to follow the good shepherd better?

DAILY DEVOTION [DAYS 4-6]

DAY 4:

"I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep."
[John 10:11, NIV]

- ▶ What makes Jesus "the good shepherd" instead of just any shepherd?

- ▶ How should Jesus' sacrifice for the sheep impact your view and involvement with the flock/church?

DAY 5:

"So they were scattered because there was no shepherd, and when they were scattered they became food for all the wild animals."
[Ezekiel 34:5, NIV]

- ▶ What can happen if there is no shepherd for the church to follow? What can happen to a church that follows the wrong shepherd?

- ▶ Have you ever been disconnected from a church or flock? How is it different now that you are a part of a church and a small group of believers?

DAY 6:

"I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd."
[John 10:16, NLT]

- ▶ Jesus's goal is to bring in all of his sheep into one flock who all listen to one shepherd. Does this sound like the current landscape of churches today?

- ▶ Those who listen to the shepherd's voice is a part of his flock. How do you listen to the shepherd's voice? What distractions get in your way?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

WEEK 3 - FAMILY

CONNECT QUESTIONS

1. As you grew up, was there a friend who became like a part of your family? Or did you become like a part of someone else's family?
2. What one word would you use to describe your family growing up? Why?
3. What are some good and bad ways that a church is like a family?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Read Ephesians 2:11-13. What were the groups that were separated? What brought them together? How would this be like a "blended family" today?
2. Read Ephesians 2:19-22. What symbols and imagery does Paul use to describe how we are now members of God's family? How do these relate to a family?
3. How does the fact that all different kinds of people come together in the family of God highlight the power of Jesus?

4. The family of God bridges all kinds of cultural and religious barriers that kept people apart before. What are some barriers that may keep this from happening in the Church?
5. Read Galatians 3:26-29. What do these verses teach you about the nature of God's family?
6. What kinds of things make the family of God different from any other family?
7. What is our responsibility as members of God's family? What makes it difficult to contribute to the family at times?
8. Read Hebrews 10:24-25. What are we to do and what are we not to do? How would practicing this help us as a family of God?

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. What is one way you might be more supportive of God's family this week?
2. What do you most need from the family of God right now? Why?
3. What steps do you need to take to become closer to your church family?

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

PRAY FOR MISSIONS OF THE WEEK

LOVEtheLOU

LOVEtheLOU is a community development initiative that connects resources to the needs of St. Louis. During the constant process of growth and development, they strive to see St. Louis restored through transforming actions. LTL is proud of the progress in St. Louis and are excited about what will continue to happen as they grow and develop. lovethelou.org

Outreach International - Mexico | Josh & Susan Sanchez

This mission, called Me & My House Ministries, is a church plant in Colima City. Their goal is to begin a church planting movement within the region.

Team Expansion: Allen & Cherry Messimer – Taiwan

The Messimers have served as missionaries in Taiwan since 2004. Their mission is to evangelize, disciple, and provide training so every believer can use his or her gifts in a simple church ministry. This also means every church can start new, indigenous churches. Over 90% of Taiwanese people still worship idols. teamexpansion.org

DAILY DEVOTION [DAYS 1-3]

DAY 1:

“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household.”
[Ephesians 2:19, NIV]

- ▶ When have you been a foreigner, stranger, or outsider in a gathering? What type of feelings and emotions did you have?

- ▶ Christians are citizens and members of God’s household. How does this impact the way you think of your church family?

DAY 2:

“Remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.”
[Ephesians 2:12, NIV]

- ▶ When have you been excluded from a group? How did that experience impact the way you treat others who were in a similar situation?

- ▶ Gentiles had no hope and were excluded from salvation. Through Jesus, we are now accepted into the true family of God. How does this change the way you see fellow Christians?

DAY 3:

“Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”
[Galatians 6:10, NIV]

- ▶ What opportunities have you recently taken to do good to others? When have others done something good for you?

- ▶ Why would Paul want us to especially do good to those who are part of the family of believers? How can you show kindness and goodness to your church family?

DAILY DEVOTION [DAYS 4-6]

DAY 4:

“Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister.”
[Romans 14:13, NIV]

- ▶ Paul does not mean that we should stop calling out clear sin when we see it. So what kind of judgment is Paul talking about? How can we avoid this in the church?

- ▶ When have you been guilty of being a stumbling block for another Christian instead of helping them to be more like Jesus?

DAY 5:

“Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.”
[Romans 14:1, NIV]

- ▶ Paul encourages the church family to get along and accept one another. Why is this so important for a family? Church?

- ▶ What are some disputable matters that divide churches today? How can you seek acceptance and support instead of quarrelling and disputing with others?

DAY 6:

“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”
[Galatians 3:28, NIV]

- ▶ What does this diversity teach us about God’s love for ALL of mankind? How can diversity be a good thing for a church family?

- ▶ What are some groups or types of people that you would find it difficult to call a part of your church family? How can you be more inviting and inclusive to all followers of God?

PASSION for the CHURCH



Week 4 - Body of Christ

WEEK 4 - BODY OF CHRIST

CONNECT QUESTIONS

1. What is the worst injury or sickness that you have gone through? How did it affect the rest of your body?
2. Please share a story of a group effort that you were a part of in which it would not have been possible without the help of a team.
3. What is one talent or skill that you wish you had? Why?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Why do you think people tend to think about what talent or skills we can NOT do instead of what we can do?
2. Read 1 Corinthians 12:4-6. How have you seen other people using their gifts to serve God and His Church? When have you seen God at work through someone else?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 12:7. Read it again and emphasize the words “each”, “Spirit”, and “common”. Discuss how each of these words give encouragement and instruction for those in the Church.

- 4. Read Romans 12:4-8. List the different spiritual gifts from this passage. How would you describe the way that each of these can be used in the church?**
- a. Prophesying:
 - b. Serving:
 - c. Teaching: .
 - d. Encouraging:
 - e. Giving:
 - f. Leading:
 - g. Showing mercy:
- 5. In the passages read earlier, the purpose of Paul’s teaching is to have unity in the body of Christ. How can the misuse of spiritual gifts cause disunity in a church?**
- 6. What are some ways that our church body could avoid jealousy or disunity in regards to spiritual gifts and contributing to the health of the body? [See Romans 12:3-5]**
- 7. OPTIONAL EXERCISE: Take the spiritual gifts test at www.giftstest.com. Share your results with your group and discuss ways you can help each other use their gifts to build up the body of Christ.**
- a. This test takes about 5 minutes to complete. Check “no” on step 2 for all of the options if you do not want to receive promotional emails.
 - b. You will receive an email that explains your gifts. There is also a link to download an ebook with longer explanations of each gift and how you can use them in the church.

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. What spiritual gifts have you been given? On a scale of 1-10, how well do you use your gifts to contribute to the body of Christ?
2. Would you consider yourself more of a contributor or a consumer at WCC?
3. In what ways can you use your God-given gifts and talents to make the WCC body more healthy?

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

PRAY FOR MISSIONS OF THE WEEK

Central Christian College of the Bible

The goal of Central Christian College of the Bible is to raise up servant leaders for the church and to do so as affordably as possible. CCCB believes so completely in what their students will do for Christ that they want to not only equip them with a quality education, but an affordable one so their future ministry will not be burdened by financial stress. That is why CCCB offers a Full-Tuition Scholarship and will continue to do so as long as there are means. cccb.edu

Christian Prison Ministry of Mid-America

Missouri is home to 29 prisons and 2 county jails in 5 states. CPMM's goal is to evangelize, encourage, and equip the believers in all of these prisons. To date, over 400 inmates have been baptized!

christianprisonministryofmissouri.org

DAILY DEVOTION [DAYS 1-3]

DAY 1:

“There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord.”
[1 Corinthians 12:4-5, NIV]

- ▶ What are some of the different spiritual gifts that you have read about or heard about? Why does Paul want the church to know that everyone has different gifts?

- ▶ In what ways have you served God before? How does it affect your service to know that the Holy Spirit has distributed different gifts and ways of service to you?

DAY 2:

“Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.”
[1 Corinthians 12:7, NIV]

- ▶ Paul says that “each one” has been given a spiritual gift. Have you sought to discover or grow your spiritual gift?

- ▶ How can you use your skills, gifts, and experiences for the common good of your church family?

DAY 3:

“But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be.”
[1 Corinthians 12:18, NIV]

- ▶ Are there parts of your body that you wish were different? Why do you think it is so easy to compare our physical bodies to other people?

- ▶ This same comparison can creep into the church. God made you exactly how he wanted you to be, and not like someone else. How does this change your perception of your body and your value to his Church?

DAILY DEVOTION [DAYS 4-6]

DAY 4:

“But God has put the body together...so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.”
[1 Corinthians 12:24-25, NIV]

- ▶ God assembles all of the pieces that are needed for the body of His Church. How do you see this take place at WCC through our staff and hundreds of servants?

- ▶ What would it look like for a church to have no division and everyone have equal concern for each other?

DAY 5:

“If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.”
[1 Corinthians 12:26, NIV]

- ▶ When have you suffered and someone came alongside of you to help? When have you rejoiced with someone else because of a blessing?

- ▶ How can you be more connected with your church body to share in one-an-other’s sufferings? How can you rejoice with others this week?

DAY 6:

“Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.”
[1 Corinthians 13:4, NIV]

- ▶ Chapter 13 is known as the “love” chapter. Why do you think this comes right after Paul talks about unity in the body through chapter 12?

- ▶ Though this is often read at weddings, the context is talking about the church body. How can you show this kind of love for your church family?

PASSION for the CHURCH



Week 5 - Salt and Light

WEEK 5 - SALT AND LIGHT

CONNECT QUESTIONS

1. What is your favorite salty snack food?
2. What is something that you have lying around your house that has lost its usefulness? [Don't say your spouse!]
3. When a household item breaks, do you try to fix it or just buy something new?

COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

1. Read Matthew 5:13. What was the historical importance of salt in that culture? How does that relate to the church?
2. We typically think of salt as a seasoning, but the primary use of salt at that time was as a purifying agent. Why do you think Jesus talked about salt just after he gave everyone the beatitudes in vs. 1-12?
3. Read Luke 14:34-35. What happens when salt loses its saltiness? What do you think a Christian looks like when he/she loses their saltiness?

4. Read Matthew 5:14. What was the historical importance of light in that culture? How does that relate to the church?
5. Read Matthew 5:15-16. How can we find the balance of letting our light shine, but not become a blinding spotlight in someone's face?
6. According to vs. 16, what is the purpose of letting others see our good deeds? How can letting others see our good deeds become a negative thing? Positive?
7. Salt and light are similar in that too much or too little can be bad. How does this relate to how the church is supposed to be salt and light in our community?
8. What are some examples of how WCC is being salt and light to our community? What are some ways that you can be salt and light to others?

CHANGE QUESTIONS

1. What can you do to not lose your saltiness as a Christian and keep your influence with others?
2. What are some good deeds that you can do to let your light shine before men so that they may glorify God?
3. How can you help WCC be a better light to our community?

PRAY FOR ONE-ANOTHER

[Spend some time praying with your Life Group. When asking for requests, try to keep the focus on personal praises/requests that relate to people in the group.]

PRAY FOR MISSIONS OF THE WEEK

Haitian Island Ministries

Steve & Terry Smith, WCC members

This organization operates medical programs providing free vitamins, medicine, and medical care and feeding programs which provide a daily meal for thousands of Haitian children each month. They also build schools and churches in some of the most remote areas of Haiti. Their medical program has served hundreds of thousands of Haitians. haitianislandministries.org

St. Louis Christian College

SLCC seeks to educate Christians and to graduate leaders who are equipped for service to God. They seek learners who are committed to Christ and highly motivated to serve God and the church; students who are capable of completing the academic rigors of a college education; adults who are willing to acquire both knowledge and skills through service and off-campus learning experiences; and men and women who are drawn from a diversity of geographic, ethnic, and socio-economic backgrounds. stlchristian.edu

DAILY DEVOTION [DAYS 1-3]

DAY 1:

“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again?”
[Matthew 5:13, NIV]

- ▶ The primary use of salt was to preserve food from spoiling. What are the dangers of spoiled meat? What are the dangers of spoiled righteousness in a community?

- ▶ What can you do to keep from losing your saltiness as a follower of Jesus? How can you remain an effective agent of protection and purity to those around you?

DAY 2:

³⁴“Salt is good, but if it loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? ³⁵It is fit neither for the soil nor for the manure pile; it is thrown out.”
[Luke 14:34-35, NIV]

- ▶ What is something that you have lying around your house that has lost its usefulness? Why do you still have it?

- ▶ Jesus wants us to be useful and effective. What are some ways that you can be more useful to WCC and His Kingdom?

DAY 3:

“Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone.”
[Colossians 4:6, NIV]

- ▶ If you were to sum up all of the conversations you had in the past week, what words would you use to describe them?

- ▶ Our interactions with those around us should be seasoned like salt, and positive like light. How will you do this when you speak with people this week?

DAILY DEVOTION [DAYS 4-6]

DAY 4:

“Your word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path.”
[Psalm 119:105, NIV]

- ▶ Before we can light the way for others, we need to have it illuminated for us. How do you use God’s Word to light your path?

- ▶ A lamp for one’s feet keeps them from stumbling. How does God’s Word keep you from stumbling?

DAY 5:

“In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”
[Matthew 5:16, NIV]

- ▶ Does it feel weird to let others see your good deeds? Why or why not?

- ▶ What is the purpose of letting others see our good deeds? What can you do this week that will lead others to glorify God this week?

DAY 6:

“Conduct yourselves with such honor among the Gentiles that, though they slander you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.”
[1 Peter 2:12, NIV]

- ▶ When has someone spoken bad about you because you did the right thing? When has doing the right thing led to a positive conversation with a non-believer?

- ▶ How can you conduct yourself with honor this week? How will you lead others to glorify God by your actions?

KEY SCRIPTURES:

EPHESIANS 5:25-26 [NLT]

²⁵For husbands, this means love your wives, just as Christ loved the church. He gave up his life for her
²⁶to make her holy and clean, washed by the cleansing of God's word.

EPHESIANS 5:31-32 [NLT]

³¹As the Scriptures say, "A man leaves his father and mother and is joined to his wife, and the two are united into one." ³²This is a great mystery, but it is an illustration of the way Christ and the church are one.

JOHN 10:11 [NIV]

I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd sacrifices his life for the sheep.

JOHN 10:16 [NLT]

I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd.

EPHESIANS 2:19 [NIV]

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household.

GALATIANS 6:10 [NIV]

Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:7 [NIV]

Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good.

1 CORINTHIANS 12:24-25 [NIV]

But God has put the body together...so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other.

MATTHEW 5:16 [NIV]

In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

1 PETER 2:12 [NIV]

Conduct yourselves with such honor among the Gentiles that, though they slander you as evildoers, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day He visits us.

FOR FURTHER STUDY:

1 | BRIDE OF CHRIST

Ephesians 5:21-33 | Paul correlates a marriage relationship with Jesus and the Church.
Revelation 19:6-9 | John describes the perfect bride that is presented to Jesus.

2 | FLOCK

John 10:1-15 | Jesus teaches that he is the Good Shepherd and we are his flock.
Ezekiel 34 | Prophecy of what it will be like when Jesus becomes our Shepherd.

3 | FAMILY

Ephesians 2:11-22 | We become citizens and members of God's household through Jesus.
Galatians 3:26-29 | We become children of God through faith, and all are equal.

4 | BODY OF CHRIST

1 Corinthians 12 | There is unity and diversity in the body, and all have a part to play.
Romans 12:3-8 | All have been given different gifts; use them with humility and diligence.

5 | SALT AND LIGHT

Matthew 5:13-16 | Jesus says we are the salt of the earth and light of the world.
1 Peter 2:11-25 | Live such good lives that others glorify God and ignorant talk is silenced.

RESOURCES:

- Letters to the Church by Francis Chan
- I Am A Church Member by Thom Rainer
- Creature of the Word: The Jesus Centered Church by Chandler, Patterson, Geiger