



OPEN HOUSE: WHY DOES THE CHURCH MATTER? DISCUSSION QUESTIONS


EPHESIANS


1 **Imagine that you are moving to another city, and you don't know any Christians there.** Your first order of business is to find a church. So what are 5-10 things that you would look for in a church?

 *What are some ways that consumerism could be part of some people's church search? What are some practical ways we could reject consumerism and seek the common good in how we relate to: the church's corporate gatherings, listening to sermons, older members of the church, young mothers, widows, singles?*


 *How could the imagery of 1Corinthians 12:12-26 impact someone's church search?*


2 **Have you ever thought about how becoming a Christian means becoming part of a new people, the people of God?**

 *In light of 2Corinthians 6:14-18 and Ephesians 2:17-22 how should this truth that God is saving not only individuals but also a people, change your relationship to other Christians and to non-Christians?*


 *How should the concept of "a people" impact some of the autonomous, independent tendencies some Christians have? How is a "Lone-Ranger Christian" who tries to live out his or her discipleship to Christ independently of others misguided?*

3 **What difference do you think it makes whether a Christian is a member of a church?** How does Ephesians 2:19-22 contribute to the conversation?


 *What are some of the reasons you've heard people give for not joining or church, or maybe reasons you have given yourself?*

 How would you respond to these reasons: *The church just wants my money. I'm too busy to be a member of a church. Why should I join the church when I don't know if I'll still be living here in 2-3 years? Membership is just a needless formality. What matters is that I'm serving in the church.*

4 In some churches, there seems to be little expectation that people will actually grow in the knowledge of Christ, in obeying him and sharing the gospel with others. Have you ever been in a church where Christians seemed to be living on auto-pilot? Perhaps they were nominal, stagnate or stale in their faith.


 In Luke 22:20, Jesus explained that his death would bring about the new covenant which Jeremiah spoke about (Jer. 31:31-34). Given the realities of the new covenant, what's wrong with saying that someone can be a Christian and never grow spiritually?


 What expectations do Peter and Paul place on every member in 1Peter 2:5 and Ephesians 4:16? Do you notice anything else about the nature of this growth? Does it occur in isolation from other Christians?


 How should the expectation that members are growing spiritually shape the purpose of community group gatherings, what you do on Saturday nights in preparation for Sunday, how the pastors shepherd the church, conversations after church, etc?

PRAYER REQUESTS

5 The church is meant to display God's glory in the world by reflecting his character.

 The church is supposed to display God's wisdom (Ephesians 3:10-11). What is it about the church that enables it to display the wisdom of God (hint: look at Eph. 2:11-16; 3:4-6).

 The church is supposed to display God's love (John 13:14-15). How does our love for one another display God's glory?

 The church is supposed to display God's oneness (John 17:20-23). What result does Jesus see happening when God answers his prayer for his disciples' unity (hint: look at John 17:21, 23).