



Week 18 - May 4

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

-Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV

Don't Miss the Meeting

We live in a climate where social media has redefined how humans engage with one another. Digital connections are accepted in the same manner that face-to-face interactions were embraced in years past. We are replacing in-person human interaction with digital encounters such as Zoom meetings, conference calls, and group chats. In many cases, our motive for virtual gatherings has more to do with how we serve ourselves and ensure our convenience than with how we serve the needs of others.

However, Jesus Christ did not intend this for his church. Certain things can only happen, be detected, or be discerned in spaces of physical interpersonal interaction. When we gather, we can engage, hear the stories of, and immediately serve the needs of those around us. We also position ourselves to experience the same care and concern from others.

This gathering space allows the entire congregation to improve as we support one another's families, homes, and communities. Be intentional about adding worship to your schedule to ensure you don't miss congregational gatherings, so your impact and the impact you receive can be present, giving life in ways that wouldn't be realized if you hadn't shown up.

Family Question: How has our gathering attendance been? How can we be more present in gathering spaces?

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, grant me the grace to be more intentional in being present during corporate worship spaces and events. In Jesus' name, I ask this. Amen.



Week 19 - May 11

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

-1 Corinthians 12:7-10 ESV

Called to be Co-Workers

It is not uncommon nowadays for people to attend worship experiences while simultaneously focusing only on themselves. With the widespread growth of on-line worship, becoming self-centered in congregational life is easy.

Paul reminds us that, as believers, we were never intended to focus solely on our personal faith but to be conduits of the love and power of God so that others are made better. In this passage, Paul reminds us that the Holy Spirit has been given to empower us with unique gifts, called spiritual gifts, that will benefit those around us. Not only are we beneficial to them, but they are also gifted to be a blessing to us.

This means congregational life is designed to be a space for interpersonal enhancement. We are called to work together to accomplish the church's mission internally and externally. It is through working together and being a blessing to one another that we truly see Jesus' mission and plan lived out in the world.

Family Question: How have you been intentional in ensuring that you are using the spiritual gifts you've been given to bless others?

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, grant me the grace to consider ways to use my spiritual gifts to better the lives of others. In Jesus' name, I ask this. Amen.



Week 20 - May 18

As each has received a gift, use it to serve one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace: whoever speaks, as one who speaks oracles of God; whoever serves, as one who serves by the strength that God supplies—in order that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ. To him belong glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.

-1 Peter 4:10-11 ESV

Be a Blessing!

If there is one word that speaks to the heart of Christ in the congregational context, it is the word “hospitality.” The ability to look beyond oneself and consider how to meet the needs of others is the greatest picture of the Lord that we can show this world.

Such hospitality becomes even more magnified when, in difficult situations, there is no emotional, spiritual, or mental variation in how the service is rendered. If there's one word people should walk away with from an encounter with a Christian, it would be the word “welcomed.” They should feel as though they have not only been treated kindly but also been seen, heard, and genuinely considered before being served.

Moreover, it is important that we do not serve for the sake of being seen by others, but rather that they may see Jesus through us. Our gifts, time, and resources are shared to point others to Jesus Christ and his great love for them. Just as a concierge service reflects the hospitality and mission of the company, Christian service should embody and reflect the culture of our Lord.

Therefore, we must be very intentional about ensuring that we are a blessing to others as an extension of the love of Christ.

Family Question: How can you show hospitality to others this week in a way that reflects the love of Christ?

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, allow my heart to be an extension of Yours in this world that they see Your great love. In Jesus's name I ask this. Amen.



Week 21 - May 25

Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

-Philippians 2:3-4 ESV

Look Beyond Yourself

In 2012, a technological advancement took place that would change how we viewed ourselves forever. It was the invention and release of the front-facing camera, ensuring it was the birthplace of selfies. For the first time, the camera that would normally be used to point at others allowed us to see ourselves.

With the invention of the front-facing camera came a social revolution of self-centered attentiveness. Slowly, we were introduced to a culture in which the world revolved around us.

In this passage, Paul reminds us that, although our worldly culture teaches us to place ourselves at the center of our attention, the culture of the Kingdom of God does the opposite. In the same manner that Jesus became selfless and came to bring us a new version of life, we are called to have the same heart toward those around us.

We are called not only to look after our homes but also to consider the homes of others and how we can best serve them. Therefore, we should make room in our hearts and habits to serve not only ourselves but also this present age. A successful day should be redefined as a day when someone is grateful that you woke up because of your impact on his or her life.

Family Question: How can you live to ensure that someone else is grateful when you wake up each day?

PRAYER: Heavenly Father, grant me the grace each day to look beyond myself and consider how I can be Your hand in someone else's life. In Jesus' name, I ask, Amen.