

Lesson 70: Wednesday February 8, 2017

DISCUSSION GUIDE

**Q108. What is the *local church*?**

The local church is a group of professing believers who have covenanted to unify together to worship and glorify God by fulfilling the commands and mission God has given to the body of Christ.

**Q109. What are the primary duties of the local church?**

The local church is to submit to the authority of the Bible, follow the leadership of qualified elders, regularly gather together, serve one another, practice higher levels of accountability, and live missional lives together.

1. Was there anything in tonight’s lesson that was challenging or new to how you understand the nature and importance of the local church?
2. What are some differences between the local church and the universal church?
3. Why is it important for us to be committed to a local church?
4. How does the unity we are called to as the body of Christ differ from the world’s version of unity?
5. We've learned in past teaching, such as our lesson on accountability, that some divisions are commanded in Scripture (like when someone is preaching a false gospel), but there are other divisions that shouldn't happen (such as over Christian liberty issues). Read 1 Corinthians 1:10. In what ways can we practice this command to agree with one another and to not have any divisions that dishonor Christ?
6. How does Covenant Membership assist us in fulfilling the duties of the local church? Have you embraced the value and benefit of Covenant Membership by becoming a Covenant member? If not, why not?
7. Case Study: Let’s say you have a friend who you know is a professing Christian and used to be a part of a local church, but is now convinced that they are more effective for God by serving meals to the homeless rather than being committed to attending and serving in a local church. What would you say to them?
8. Look at the 6 distinct duties of the local church. Share which duty you practice the best and which could use the most improvement.
9. Scripture teaches that serving one another is a primary aspect of membership. Share why this is important in God's design for Christians and share how you currently serve as a member of Disciples Church. Are there new commitments to serving that should come out of tonight for anyone? If so, please talk to someone in leadership about how you can get more involved in serving.
10. Case Study: Your job is offering you the big promotion you have been waiting for, but they want you to move across the country. How important would it be for you to find a good local church before making a decision and why? How would you go about making that decision?
11. Why is it important for us to have elders in the church?
12. Read Ephesians 4:15-16. Spend some time in thankful prayer for God’s gift of the local church. Pray for unity and for the growth of each member contributing to the building up of the church in love.