

# SMALLL GROUP CURRICULUM

---

## ACTS 1:12-26 – *The Culture of the Church*

### Ice Breaker Question

---

What is your typical approach to making decisions? How confident do you typically feel toward decision-making?

### Acts 1:12-26 – The Culture of the Church

---

- What stood out most to you from the message or the passage that was studied?
- What lessons can we learn from observing the disciples movements and decisions at this time?
- Why is it important for Christians to consider the formation of various cultures in life?
- What is one way you can respond in greater obedience this week?

### Additional Study

---

- How do disciples ***make the mission their mindset*** and not leave it up to church leaders and elders to accomplish the mission?
- How can the church today stand with greater unity and fight against any ***differences that divide*** us?
- How does the early church model the practice of prayer? What can you do to ***push the pulse of your prayers***?
- Why does it matter that our hearts are ***centered in scripture*** like the disciples in this passage? How can this become true of your heart?
- What is eclipsing your ***obedience*** to Jesus? What is in your way? What needs to change in order for you to obey Jesus to a greater degree

## SMALLL GROUP CURRICULUM

### ACTS 1:12-26 – The Culture of the Church

#### Day 1: Shaped by the Mission

Matthew 28:19-20 - "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations..."

*Every team, every business, and every person have a mission.* That mission is the driving force in behavior and attitude. I remember working at a bank for a few years, and we were trained on the mission of the bank. We learned what the bank valued, and what is cared about most. We not only learned the job we were assigned but we learned the mission that we were a part of. A mission often gives greater purpose to the work that we do. The mission of the church is not merely a task but a calling that shapes our very culture. As we embrace the Great Commission, our focus shifts toward reaching, teaching, and serving others. The mission impels us to reflect Christ's love, fostering a church culture rooted in outreach and compassion.

Perhaps disciples in today's church can use more of a mission mindset. A mindset that is centered and focused on the mission of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Could it be that we'd see greater response to tragedy from the church if the mission was our mindset? Could it be that we could even positively influence an entire generation behind us if today, we made the mission our mindset? Your home, your job, and your community needs someone who's mindset is the mission of Christ.

#### Prayer:

Lord, help us to understand and prioritize Your mission for the church. May our actions reflect our commitment to spreading Your Gospel and serving others. Remind us daily of our role in Your plan.

#### Action Step:

Identify one way you can contribute to the church's mission this week. Consider joining a ministry or participating in community outreach.

## SMALLL GROUP CURRICULUM

### ACTS 1:12-26 – *The Culture of the Church*

#### Day 2: The Culture of the Church is Defined by Unity

Ephesians 4:2-3 - "With all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Growing up, every morning at school, we recited the pledge of allegiance. This pledge communicates a commitment to be 'one nation, under God, indivisible...'; clearly valuing the essential piece of unity in America. Unity is essential in any setting of people. I remember reading about a man who learned how to competitively row a boat with a team of people. Having never done this before, he learned that the mission was to move the boat quickly, so he did what anyone would do. Him and his team tried their hardest, and worked diligently to move the boat quickly, but with no training, they found themselves bruised and bloody from a chaotic and disorganized attempt. They learned that rowing intensely as an individual was worse than rowing softly as a team. Unity was the missing piece. Their time was cut in half when they learned to row together instead of on their own. Unity is a hallmark of a healthy church culture. As we work together as one body, our diverse gifts and perspectives create a beautiful tapestry that glorifies God. Striving for unity doesn't mean uniformity; rather, it celebrates our differences while centering on Christ.

Warren Wiersbe said "It's not enough for Christians to have faith in the Lord; they must also have faith in one another." It's an amazing quote, but it can feel like a near impossibility. As people, we've grown accustomed to distrusting people. We have learned that when we trust, we too are left bruised and bloody, hurt and bitter. Trusting one another is one of the most important ingredients to a healthy church. Imagine a church where trust permeated every level of the congregation? Imagine a group of people who are not only aware of the mission, but who are ready and willing to strive together to accomplish it.

#### Prayer:

Father, help us to foster an environment of unity in our church. Teach us to bear with one another in love and to seek peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ.

#### Action Step:

Reach out to someone in your church with whom you may have differences and find common ground in Christ.

## SMALL GROUP CURRICULUM

ACTS 1:12-26 – *The Culture of the Church*

### Day 3: The Culture of the Church is Rooted in Prayer

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances..."

Martin Luther said "Prayer is as essential for the Christian as breath is for the human". Unfortunately, just like our breath, we take prayer for granted. We forget that in Jesus Christ, the veil was torn in order to give us access, in order to gain connection between us and God. As I study the generation of teenagers and young adults in our world today, I wonder if many have put up their own veil, keeping themselves from God's presence as they forsake the discipline of prayer. Unlike our favorite book, a good puzzle, or our most enjoyed hobby, prayer isn't something we are anticipating with great excitement. Prayers often feel like a chore and takes hard work to do consistently. However, if we can move past this dark and twisted view of prayer, we learn it's vital presence in our hearts. Prayer is foundational to the culture of our church. It is the lifeline that connects us with God and aligns our hearts with His will. As we seek Him in prayer, we cultivate a culture that depends on divine guidance and encourages intimacy with our Creator.

What if we began to pray differently than we have ever before. Praying with more courage, more conviction, greater faith and greater trust in the one receiving our prayers. We need to constantly remember that God wants to hear from His children, and His ear is always open to your prayers. I know that I wouldn't be where I am without my mother's prayers, and I'm sure, that someone has prayed for you, and God has been answering those prayers right in your midst.

#### **Prayer:**

Lord, make our church a house of prayer. May we continually seek Your will and draw closer to You through our conversations with You.

#### **Action Step:**

Organize or participate in a prayer meeting this week or dedicate a specific time to pray for your church and its leaders.

## **SMALLL GROUP CURRICULUM**

*ACTS 1:12-26 – The Culture of the Church*

### **Day 4: The Culture of the Church is Centered in Scripture**

2 Timothy 3:16-17 - "All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness..."

It's been said that the Bible's purpose is hidden in the name of the book. Basic Instructions Before Leaving Earth! Bible! It's an easy way to remember that the Bible is our greatest tool in discovering the will and heart of God. How often do we say, "if only I knew the will of God" or "How do I know what Jesus would do in this moment?" The Bible gives us these answers to these questions. What we run into most often though is that experience that the Bible isn't always a fun or enjoyable read. If you do the work necessary, and discipline yourself in the Scriptures, you will see it's immediate impact in your life. Scripture is our guide, illuminating the path for the church's culture. When God's Word is central, our beliefs, practices, and community life will reflect His truth. A culture rooted in Scripture grounds us in wisdom, strengthens our faith, and equips us to face life's challenges.

#### **Prayer:**

God, guide us to cherish and uphold Your Word in our church. May it shape our understanding and practice of faith as we seek to live according to Your teachings.

#### **Action Step:**

Commit to reading a book of the Bible this month with a friend or small group and discuss its implications on church culture.

## **SMALLL GROUP CURRICULUM**

### *ACTS 1:12-26 – The Culture of the Church*

#### **Day 5: The Culture of the Church is Determined by Obedience**

James 1:22 - "But be doers of the word, and not hearers only..."

I'd love to be a fly on the wall of the unsung heroes of the faith. I'd love to see the prayers of faithful men and women of God who have since been forgotten in the pages of history. Today, everyone wants a platform and more and more influence. Kids want to go viral on social media, and people want their opinions to create a platform of influence in the world. Sometimes, the Lord's desire for us is not a platform, and not more influence, sometimes He desires from us a heart dedicated to quiet obedience. Obedience is the ultimate expression of our faith and commitment to Christ. A culture of obedience not only affects individual lives but also transforms the church. When we act on His Word, we reveal our faith to others and inspire them to join us in following Christ.

#### **Prayer:**

Lord, empower us to be obedient to Your calling. Help us to put our faith into action and encourage others to do the same, creating a culture that reflects Your love and truth.

#### **Action Step:**

Identify one area where God is calling you to step out in obedience, whether it's volunteering, sharing your faith, or serving in a ministry.