

Week 8

Family Ties: Fellowship & Spiritual Family

Following Jesus was never meant to be a solo project. This week is about finding an actual home in the family of God.

Day 1 — Why You Can't Disciple Yourself

Optional Reading: Mark 2 • Exodus 17 • Ecclesiastes 4 • Proverbs 27 • Romans 1 • Acts 2 • 1 Thess. 5 • Hebrews 10

“Two are better than one because they have a good reward for their efforts. For if either falls, his companion can lift him up; but pity the one who falls without another to lift him up.” (Ecclesiastes 4:9–10)

Some days you're the man on the mat — unable to move, unable to get yourself anywhere near Jesus. Other days you're carrying your friend, “tearing a hole in the roof” because niceties aren’t what they need.

Either way, no one gets there alone.

Bible Study Questions

1. Read Mark 2:1-5. What was this man unable to do on his own? What motivates a friend to do what these friends did?

2. Read Exodus 17:8-13. What would have happened to Israel had Moses not had the support of others?

3. Read Ecclesiastes 4:12. How many can be overpowered? How many can resist? What “is not easily broken”?

4. Read Proverbs 27:17. According to this verse, do we become better on our own? How so, then?

5. Read Romans 1:11–12. What does Paul say he wants to do for the believers, and what does he say will happen “mutually”?

6. Read Acts 2:46. How does the Bible describe believers meeting “every day”?

7. Read 1 Thessalonians 5:11. List the two things this verse instructs believers to do for each other.

8. Read Hebrews 10:24-25. What does this verse instruct believers 1) to do 2) not to do?

Reflect: *Who is currently in your corner spiritually — someone who will catch you when you stumble? Who will tear back a roof and place you at the feet of Jesus? Are you willing to do the same for someone also?*

Journal: *What impacted you during this devotion? How will you apply this to your life?*

Day 2 — Belonging, Not Just Attending

Optional Reading: Mark 3 • Ephesians 2 • Psalm 133 • 1 Corinthians 12 • Ephesians 4 • Psalm 68 • Galatians 6

“And let us consider one another in order to provoke love and good works, not neglecting to gather together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging each other, and all the more as you see the day approaching.” (Hebrews 10:24–25)

Jesus once looked at a room of ordinary people and called them his family — not because of blood, because of personal relationship. That's what church is at its root: not scattered individuals who believe the same things, but a called-out group gathered together, where encouragement, correction, and celebration happen in real time.

Some people go to church for years and are never known by a single person there. Others show up once, and somebody remembers their name for the rest of their life. One is a habit. The other is a home, built on relationships.

Bible Study Questions

1. Read Mark 3:31-35. Who does Jesus say his true family is?

2. Read Ephesians 2:19. What two things are believers no longer and what two things are they now?

3. Read Psalm 133:1. What two words describe how the psalmist says it is when God's people live together?

4. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12. How does this verse compare the body and its parts to the church and its members? Why is this important to understand?

5. Read 1 Corinthians 12:25-26. What happens to the rest of the body when one part suffers, or when one part is honored?

6. Read Ephesians 4:3. What are believers told to make every effort to keep?

7. Read Psalm 68:6. What does this verse say God does for those who are alone?

8. Read Galatians 6:10. Who does this verse say to “especially” do good toward?

Reflect: Does your relationship with your church feel more like attendance or belonging right now? What would move it toward belonging? What personal steps can you take toward belonging?

Journal: What impacted you during this devotion? How will you apply this to your life?

Day 3 — The Cost of Isolation

Optional Reading: Proverbs 18 & 27 • Ecclesiastes 4 • 1 Kings 19 • 1 Peter 5 • Hebrews 3 • Matthew 27 • 3 John

“Then the LORD God said, ‘It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper corresponding to him.’”
(Genesis 2:18)

Isolation found a prophet who'd just seen fire fall from heaven. Isolation found Jesus on the cross. If it can find them, you are certainly not immune.

But isolation isn't always something that happens to you. Sometimes it's something you do to someone else — an unreturned call in their time of need, an unwelcoming gesture, avoidance because “they don't look like me.” What about the amount of time you stare at a device while others sit right next to you? So, ask honestly: how are you guarding against allowing isolation in your own life — and creating isolation for others?

Bible Study Questions

1. Read Proverbs 18:1. What does this verse say a person who isolates himself pursues, and what does he do to sound wisdom?

2. Read Ecclesiastes 4:9-10. If a companion can lift another up, what happens when there is no companion?

3. Read 1 Kings 19:10. What does Elijah say about being left, in his complaint to God?

4. Read 1 Peter 5:8. What imagery does this verse use for how the enemy operates, and why might this make isolation dangerous?

5. Read Hebrews 3:12-13. How are believers protected daily from evil? Is that available externally in isolation?

6. Read Matthew 27:46. What does Jesus experience on the cross?

7. Read 3 John 9-11. How is not being welcoming to other believers characterized?

8. Read Proverbs 27:10. Are we to abandon (leave in isolation) others?

Reflect: *Has isolation been creeping into your life lately? What's been causing it? Have you isolated someone and need to seek forgiveness and re-establish relationships?*

Journal: *What impacted you during this devotion? How will you apply this to your life?*

Day 4 — Real Community, Real Honesty

Optional Reading: Proverbs 27 • Proverbs 28 • 1 John 1 • Galatians 6 • Galatians 5 • Ephesians 4

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is very powerful in its effect.” (James 5:16)

Surface-level communities can meet weekly for years without anyone knowing what burdens others are actually carrying. Real fellowship requires enough honesty to be known, which is uncomfortable and healing in equal measure.

Healing tends to happen in the light, not in a polished version of your life you present at church.

Bible Study Questions

1. Read Proverbs 27:5–6. What does this passage say is “better than” hidden love?

2. Read Proverbs 27:6. What are the “wounds” of a friend? How are they compared to the kisses of an enemy?

3. Read Proverbs 28:13. What contrast does this verse draw between concealing sin and confessing it?

4. Read 1 John 1:7. What does this verse say happens when we walk in the light, as he is in the light?

5. Read 1 John 1:9. If we _____ our _____, how does the Bible characterize God in forgiving us? What does He cleanse us from?

6. Read Galatians 6:1. What are “spiritual” believers told to do for someone caught in a sin? How are they to do it?

7. Read Galatians 6:2, 5:14. What law does this verse say is fulfilled by carrying each other's burdens?

8. Read Ephesians 4:25. What does this verse instruct believers to do, since we are members of one another?

Reflect: *Is there someone you trust unequivocally to be honest with about a current struggle? What prayers should you be praying about friendships or struggles?*

Journal: What impacted you during this devotion? How will you apply this to your life?

Day 5 — Belonging to One Another

Optional Reading: 1 Peter 2 • 1 Corinthians 12 • Ephesians 4 • Colossians 3 • John 13 • 1 Peter 4 • 1 John 3

“... in the same way we who are many are one body in Christ and individually members of one another.”
(Romans 12:5)

You don't just belong to the church — in some sense, the church belongs to you, and you to it. That mutual belonging means your presence, your gifts, and your absence all genuinely affect other people.

Belonging isn't a feeling you wait for. It's a love you show up and prove.

Bible Study Questions

1. Read 1 Peter 2: 9-10. Who are we?

2. Read 1 Corinthians 12:27. What does this verse call believers, both together and individually?

3. Read Ephesians 4:16. How does this verse say the body is built up? What does each part contribute?

4. Read Colossians 3:14. What virtue does this verse say is the “perfect bond of unity”?

5. Read John 13:34. What “new command” does Jesus give in this verse?

6. Read John 13:35. How will everyone know the disciples belong to Jesus?

7. Read 1 Peter 4:10. What are believers told to do with the gift they have received? Why?

8. Read 1 John 3:13-18. How does verse 18 say we are to love and not love?

Reflect: *What's one specific way you could show up for your church family this week — not out of duty, but belonging?*

Journal: What impacted you during this devotion? How will you apply this to your life?

Memorization: What verse this week impacted you in a way that you should commit it to memory?
