

## WHAT'S NEXT

### CONNECTING THROUGH THE CHURCH

**Matthew 28:19-20 NIV:** *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

#### **LIFE GROUP / PERSONAL STUDY:**

As we try to determine "What's Next," we've learned about the "Greatest Commandment" which sets Love as the Standard for all of our thoughts and activities as we love God and love others. Then we looked at the "Great Commission" which gives us direction about what our goals are to be. This week, we're going to dive deeper into these goals so that we know how to achieve them and fulfill the "Great Commission." This easiest and best place to begin is by "Connecting to God and to others Through the Church."

1A) Jesus gave three commands to His followers in Matthew 28:19. What was the first one?

1B) PERSONAL: Explain how you think the following words relate to this particular command.

Evangelism:

Fellowship:

1C) PERSONAL: What are you doing on a daily or weekly basis to fulfill this command? If you're not doing anything, what can you start doing?

2A) The 2nd command Jesus gave was to "baptize them in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." What does the word "baptizo" mean?

2B) PERSONAL: How would you describe the meaning of baptism and why it's important to follow this command?

3A) What was the 3rd command Jesus gave in Matthew 28:19?

3B) PERSONAL: How do you think the following words relate to this command and how are you personally involved?

Ministry:

Discipleship:

**Read Acts 2:36-41:**

4A) How does this passage reveal that Peter did all that he could to fulfill the commands Jesus had given them in Matthew 28:19-20?

4B) Explain the process God uses to bring us to Salvation through the following words  
Convince:

Convict:

Convert:

**Read Ephesians 1:3-14:**

5A) Make a list of all the action words found in this passage that reveal God's Work On Us.

5B) PERSONAL: Take some time to look at each word. As you realize that these words describe the reality in a believer's life, what does that mean to you?

6) According to the following verses, how does God Work In Us?  
Romans 12:2:

Ephesians 2:10:

**Read Ephesians 4:11-16:**

6A) According to verse 11, what has Christ given to the church?

6B) According to verse 12-13, what is the purpose and ultimate goal of these gifts being used in the church?

7) PERSONAL: How do you think verses 14-16 confirm that believers can fulfill the commands Jesus gave by "Connecting through the Church?"

**ACT:** The church is called out to represent Jesus here on the earth. We are referred to as His "Body" which means that we are to be doing what He did. To fulfill the Greatest Command and the Great Commission, we need to be connected to His Church, so that through daily Worship, Ministry, Evangelism, Fellowship, and Discipleship, we can Connect with God and grow in our personal relationship with Christ, but we can also connect with others - both believers and non-believers and help people come to Jesus and then help them grow in their relationships as well. All of these activities will bring Glory to God, which is our ultimate purpose.

**Daily Devotional:** It always helps to look at the context of the passage. Then try to answer the following questions about the passage. Who is involved? What is going on? Where is the action taking place? When? How can this concept apply to my life? Why is it important? Also look for Commands, Warnings, and Examples to follow or not to follow.

- This week let's explore passages that describe the beginnings of the New Testament church and why it's so important for us to be connected through the church.

## Monday:

### Acts 14:23-27 NIV

Paul and Barnabas appointed elders for them in each church and, with prayer and fasting, committed them to the Lord, in whom they had put their trust. After going through Pisidia, they came into Pamphylia, and when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. From Attalia they sailed back to Antioch, where they had been committed to the grace of God for the work they had now completed. On arriving there, they gathered the church together and reported all that God had done through them and how he had opened a door of faith to the Gentiles.

## Tuesday:

### 1 Corinthians 1:2-3 NIV

To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, together with all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ—their Lord and ours: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

## Wednesday:

### Ephesians 3:10-11 NIV

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

## Thursday:

### Ephesians 5:25-30 NIV

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body.

## Friday:

### 1 Timothy 5:16-17 NIV

If any woman who is a believer has widows in her care, she should continue to help them and not let the church be burdened with them, so that the church can help those widows who are really in need. The elders who direct the affairs of the church well are worthy of double honor, especially those whose work is preaching and teaching.

## Saturday:

### Revelation 3:22 NIV

“Whoever has ears, let them hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

## Sunday:

### Revelation 22:16 NLT

“I, Jesus, have sent my angel to give you this message for the churches. I am both the source of David and the heir to his throne. I am the bright Morning Star.”

