

**LEADERS GUIDE: 10/9/16 | CHURCH: A LIFE TOGETHER PART 2**

1. What in the sermon stood out to you regarding God's wisdom and care for his church?
 -Why is the church beautiful? What stood out to you as new or just a good reminder? Of the three portraits of the gospel given at the end of the service, which one is most compelling for you? How can a right theology of the church help shape our responses to people who are "hurt by the church"? The church is full of sinners, but by God's grace we want to be known by our attempts to respond to our failings with grace towards others and obedience to Jesus. The church isn't yet what it will be, but by the power of the Holy Spirit it is becoming what it should be.
2. Read Galatians 6:1-2 and note the responsibilities we have both to others and to ourselves. How do these verses challenge the way you view community group and church?
 -We are to know what sin looks like as the church, and we are allowed to point out sin in the life of others, but all of this needs to be done in a system of grace and care. We want to restore each other because eternal life matters. We also need to, for the good of the body, be aware of our own tendencies to sin, and we need to privately and publicly attempt to receive help in pursuing obedience. We are to bear with one another as a body. It's interesting that Paul says this "fulfill(s) the law of Christ." Isn't it amazing to think that as we serve and love each other well as the church we are loving in an explicitly Christ-empowered way! May this be the anthem of your community group and our church as a whole.
3. Read Ephesians 1:22 and Hebrews 13:17. We are to submit to Jesus as our preeminent authority and head of the church. We are also to submit to the elders and leaders of our church. In the context of the church, why are submission and humility difficult and what are the benefits for us?
 -Submission is hard for two reasons. One is that our hearts are innately selfish and desire to follow their own passions (James 4:1). The other is that culture promotes an ideology of self-interest over the interest of others. Submission, according to culture, is to be feared. But this is not so in the church of Jesus. Submission honors God, serves others and brings greater joy to the church member. The benefits are, as we just saw, it fulfills the law of Christ. It increases love and joy among the church. It is a visible representation of a spiritual gospel. It is unique and counter cultural in a world with a skewed view of love.