

## The Foundation

Study 1	Study 2	Study 3	Study 4	Study 5	Study 6
The Foundation	The Body Of Christ	Pillar 1: Community	Pillar 2: The Bible	Pillar 3: Accountability	The Church Being The Church

### Questions for Discussion

**?** Think back to a time you did something without understanding why you were doing it in the first place. How did that make you feel? How would you have handled the situation differently if you'd understood why you were doing it?

### Ephesians 2:1-10 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient. <sup>3</sup> All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our flesh and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath. <sup>4</sup> But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, <sup>5</sup> made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved. <sup>6</sup> And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. <sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— <sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

### Verses 1-3 - Hopeless And Helpless

**?** Verse 1 describes us as “dead in our transgressions.” What does that mean? When are the Ephesians dead in their transgressions?

To be spiritually dead is not to be almost dead or at wit's end. It is to be truly lost and completely separated from God. Helpless and hopeless. Prior to Christ, dead people stayed dead.

**?** Looking at the text (and the text box) above, which of these descriptions stands out to you? How did you see this play out in your own life prior to knowing Christ?

? In verse 3 Paul writes, “Like the rest, we were by nature deserving of wrath.” When you hear human beings described as “deserving of wrath,” how does that make you feel? Why? How does our culture react to hearing human beings are “deserving of wrath”?

#### “By Nature”

Based on the original language, this has to do with our status at birth. Just as we are unable to choose whether we are born into a wealthy family or an impoverished family, so too we are without choice with regards to our spiritual condition at birth. We are all born into sin. In essence, our spiritual lineage or our parent/owner at birth is sin. God hates sin and separates Himself from it. Therefore, we are deserving of God’s wrath.

This can be a hard truth. Oftentimes we compare God’s anger (wrath) with our own, which is most often blind and short-sighted. God’s anger is different. His is all-knowing, justified, and a true reflection of His hatred of sin.

Thankfully, God didn’t leave us this way.

#### Verses 4-7—Together With Christ

? Contrasting with verses 1-3, verses 4-7 talk about us being made alive, raised up, and seated with Christ. What is the meaning and significance of those terms? How can each of the above phrases impact the way we view ourselves today?

? Looking at verses 6 and 7, what can we understand about God’s motivation for all He did for us together in Christ?

#### Verses 8-10—Created For Good Works

? Verses 8 and 9 make it clear that we cannot earn salvation or God’s favor. Looking at verse 10, how are we, as followers of Christ, to view good works?

? How does understanding that Christ has joined us with Him, through His grace not our effort, motivate us to gather in small groups as followers of Christ?

? How does this understanding of good works line up with the way you thought of good works in childhood? How can that previous understanding spillover over into our thinking about our good works in Christ as followers of Him today?

### **Bringing It All Together**

? How can being an active and consistent member of a small group remind us of our foundation? (That we were once dead and now we are made alive, raised up, and seated with Christ?)

? How can participation in a small group show God's incomparable riches and grace to non-believers around us?

? It's tempting to let things like small group become a Christian obligation or something we *have* to do rather than something we *get* to do. Is attending this small group stemming from a foundation in a Christ or a sense of obligation? How can active and regular attendance in a small group become less of a "have to" and more of a "get to"?

### **For Discussion And Accountability**

? What changes can you make in your actions or thinking that will help Christ become or remain your central motivation for good works?

## The Body Of Christ

Study 1	Study 2	Study 3	Study 4	Study 5	Study 6
The Foundation	The Body Of Christ	Pillar 1: Community	Pillar 2: The Bible	Pillar 3: Accountability	The Church Being The Church

### Questions for Discussion

**?** Have you ever had a significant injury to a specific part of your body? What happened? How did that impact the overall functioning of the rest of your body?

### Romans 12:1-8 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. <sup>2</sup> Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will. <sup>3</sup> For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you. <sup>4</sup> For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, <sup>5</sup> so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. <sup>6</sup> We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; <sup>7</sup> if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; <sup>8</sup> if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

**?** What does it mean to offer our bodies as living sacrifices? What are the results of doing this?

**?** We are constantly worshiping something.

This passage highlights two possible focuses of our worship. What are they?

- 1.
- 2.

God created us and built us for a relationship with him. We belong to him, and we owe him gratitude for every breath, every moment, everything. Because humans were built to live for him (to worship), we will always try to worship something - if not God, we will choose some other object of ultimate devotion to give our lives meaning. - Tim Keller

? How can being involved in a small group motivate you to worship God alone (rather than the things of this world)?

? What does viewing ourselves with sober judgment (vs. 3) look like? Why is this so hard to do sometimes?

? How can being surrounded by other followers of Christ in a small group help us to have a “sober lens” through which to view ourselves?

? What does it mean that “each member belongs to all the others?” How is this concept challenging in American culture?

? Small groups are an extension and expression of the Body of Christ. What does it mean that “each member belongs to all the others” in your small group? What does that look like in a healthy small group?

### **1 Corinthians 12: 4-11 (NIV)**

<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. <sup>5</sup> There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.

<sup>7</sup> Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. <sup>8</sup> To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.

? Verse 7 brings up two points about Spiritual gifts (manifestations of the Spirit). What are they, and why are they important?

### **1 Corinthians 12:12-21 & 25-27 (NIV)**

<sup>12</sup> Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. <sup>13</sup> For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. <sup>14</sup> Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

<sup>15</sup> Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>16</sup> And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. <sup>17</sup> If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? <sup>18</sup> But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. <sup>19</sup> If they were all one part, where would the body be? <sup>20</sup> As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

<sup>21</sup> The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!”...

<sup>25</sup> so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. <sup>26</sup> If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

<sup>27</sup> Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

**?** How is (or isn’t) our small group like a human body? How do (or could) our different parts complement each other and work together?

**?** How can our small group work more as a unified body? What are ways we are doing this well? What are ways we can improve?

### **Ephesians 4:11-16 (NIV)**

<sup>11</sup> So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. <sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature

body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

**?** This passage addresses the results of the body of Christ using the gifts of God in a unified way. What are those results?

#### **For Discussion And Accountability**

**?** How does your individual behavior and attitude contribute to or hinder your small group in becoming a unified body? What are ways you are doing this well? What are ways you can improve?

## Pillar 1: Community

Study 1	Study 2	Study 3	Study 4	Study 5	Study 6
The Foundation	The Body Of Christ	Pillar 1: Community	Pillar 2: The Bible	Pillar 3: Accountability	The Church Being The Church

### Questions for Discussion

### Small Groups' Vision Statement

To foster biblical community that makes Disciples of Christ and builds up His body.

#### Community

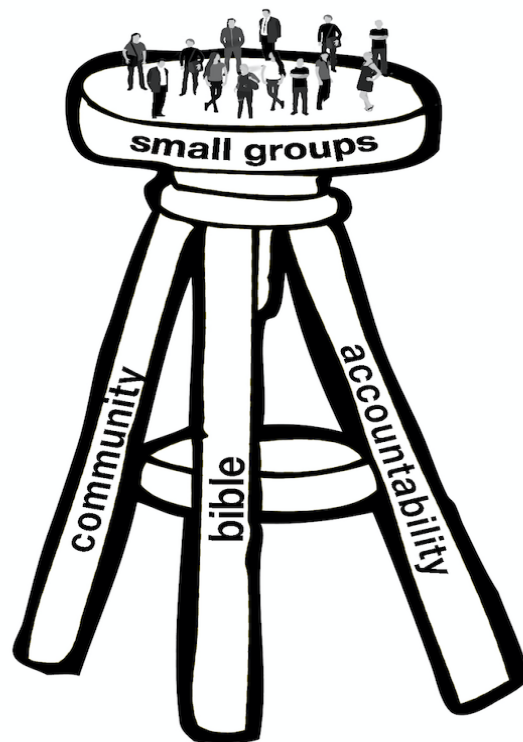
Small Groups should be a place of fun, acceptance, sharing the ups and downs of life, and support in times of need.

#### Bible

Groups are expected to open God's Word with one another in order to grow in understanding of God's Word and apply Scripture to daily life.

#### Accountability

Small Group members should have a strong commitment to pushing one another toward Christ. This includes sharing struggles; killing sin; making Jesus the aim, motivation, answer & source of their lives, prayer; follow-up; and encouragement



We believe that small groups are made up of three important legs. If any of these three legs is disproportionate, the stool will tip over in one direction.

? Do you have any thoughts or questions about the 3 pillars of Hope Small Groups?



## Let's Talk About Community

? What have your experiences been like in Christian community?

? Why is it often so difficult to let ourselves be truly known in Christian community?

## Christ As The Example

### Philippians 2:1-8 (NIV)

<sup>1</sup> Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, <sup>2</sup> then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. <sup>3</sup> Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, <sup>4</sup> not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

<sup>5</sup> In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:

<sup>6</sup> Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;

<sup>7</sup> rather, he made himself nothing  
by taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.

<sup>8</sup> And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
by becoming obedient to death—  
even death on a cross!

? Looking at verses 1-4, what do they say about how we should relate to one another?

? In verses 5-8 Christ modeled the behavior that Paul (the writer of Philippians) calls the Philippians to live out. How can Christ's example motivate us to live out His example amongst the people in our small group and church?

## What Does The Bible Say About Christian Community?

Verse	What is the surrounding text talking about?	What does this verse have to say about Christian Community?	How is our small group living this out?	How can our small group grow in this area?
Hebrews 10:24-25				
Romans 12:16				
Romans 16:17				
Acts 2:46-47				
Colossians 3:13				
1 Peter 4:8-11				
Ephesians 4:1b-3				

<b>Romans 15:5-7</b>				
<b>1 Cor 12:26</b>				

### **Hebrews 10:24-25 (NIV)**

<sup>24</sup>And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, <sup>25</sup>not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

### **Romans 12:16 (NIV)**

Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

### **Romans 16:17 (NIV)**

I urge you, brothers and sisters, to watch out for those who cause divisions and put obstacles in your way that are contrary to the teaching you have learned. Keep away from them.

### **Acts 2:46-47 (NIV)**

<sup>46</sup>Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, <sup>47</sup>praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

### **Colossians 3:13 (NIV)**

Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you.

### **1 Peter 4:8-11 (NIV)**

<sup>8</sup>Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup>Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling. <sup>10</sup>Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. <sup>11</sup>If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen.

**Ephesians 4:1b-3 (NIV)**

<sup>1b</sup>I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup>Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup>Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

**Romans 15:5-7 (NIV)**

<sup>5</sup>May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, <sup>6</sup>so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>7</sup>Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

**1 Corinthians 12:26 (NIV)**

If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

**Summarize**

? What are ways that our small group is doing community well?

? In what ways can we improve community in our small group?

? What obstacles stand in our way of truly knowing the other people in our small group?

**For Discussion And Accountability**

? How does your individual behavior and attitude contribute to or hinder our small group in growing in community? What are ways you are doing this well? What are ways you can improve?

## Pillar 2: The Bible

Study 1	Study 2	Study 3	Study 4	Study 5	Study 6
The Foundation	The Body Of Christ	Pillar 1: Community	Pillar 2: The Bible	Pillar 3: Accountability	The Church Being The Church

### Let's Talk About The Bible

? When you were growing up, what role did the Bible play in your life? How would you have described the Bible as a teenager?

**Hope Community Church's Statement of Faith regarding the Bible:** We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, fully inspired and without error in the original manuscripts, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that it has supreme authority in all matters of faith and conduct.

? What are your thoughts regarding Hope's understanding of the Bible? In what ways have you seen Hope talk about the Bible that's consistent with this definition?

? Looking at the sidebar, how does this compare or contrast to other ways you've studied Scripture and used the Bible in small group settings?

Hope's desire for biblical discussion in small groups is that we would...

- Open God's Word together on a regular basis.
- Read and discuss a passage(s).
- Focus on applying that passage to our daily lives through the help of the Spirit and the encouragement of believers in our small group.

### What Does The Bible Say About The Bible?

? The Bible itself talks about the importance of studying God's Word. It might seem strange to use a source itself to give merit and validity to that same source. How is the Bible different from any other text or source in that regard?

#### Psalm 19:7-11 (NIV)

<sup>7</sup>The law of the Lord is perfect,  
refreshing the soul.

The statutes of the Lord are trustworthy,  
making wise the simple.

<sup>8</sup>The precepts of the Lord are right,  
giving joy to the heart.  
The commands of the Lord are radiant,  
giving light to the eyes.  
<sup>9</sup>The fear of the Lord is pure,  
enduring forever.  
The decrees of the Lord are firm,  
and all of them are righteous.  
<sup>10</sup>They are more precious than gold,  
than much pure gold;  
they are sweeter than honey,  
than honey from the honeycomb.  
<sup>11</sup>By them your servant is warned;  
in keeping them there is great reward.

? What does this passage say about God's Word (law, statutes, etc.)?

? In what ways do you see the commands of God being precious and giving joy? When is that hard to see?

### **Proverbs 3:1-4 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup>My son, do not forget my teaching,  
but keep my commands in your heart,  
<sup>2</sup>for they will prolong your life many years  
and bring you peace and prosperity.  
<sup>3</sup>Let love and faithfulness never leave you;  
bind them around your neck,  
write them on the tablet of your heart.  
<sup>4</sup>Then you will win favor and a good name  
in the sight of God and man.

? What does this passage say about God's Word (teaching and commands)?

? How do we store up God's Word in our heart? How have you seen "stored up Scripture" benefit you in your life?

**Luke 24:44-48 (NIV)**

<sup>44</sup>He said to them, "This is what I told you while I was still with you: Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms." <sup>45</sup>Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. <sup>46</sup>He told them, "This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, <sup>47</sup>and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. <sup>48</sup>You are witnesses of these things.

**John 20:30-31 (NIV)**

<sup>30</sup>Jesus performed many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book.

<sup>31</sup>But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.



How is God's Word critical in showing us who Christ is?

**2 Timothy 3:14-17 (NIV)**

<sup>14</sup>But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, <sup>15</sup>and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>16</sup>All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, <sup>17</sup>so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.



List the ways described in this passage that Scripture is useful. How have you seen those things play out in your own faith life?

**Let's Practice!****Romans 5:1-5 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup>Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, <sup>2</sup>through whom we have gained access by faith into this grace in which we now stand. And we boast in the hope of the glory of God. <sup>3</sup>Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; <sup>4</sup>perseverance, character; and character, hope. <sup>5</sup>And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.



What stands out to you in this passage?

? How can we apply this passage to our lives this week as we go out from small group?

? What will we, as a small group, do this week to encourage one another to follow through on applying this passage until we meet again?

### **Summing It Up**

? When we come together in close community to study God's Word our lives are made richer as well. In what ways can we, as a small group, grow in our ability to encourage one another to read and apply God's Word in our daily lives?

### **For Discussion And Accountability**

? What does it look like (both joys and challenges) to study and apply God's Word in your own life?

? In what ways do you personally need to be encouraged or challenged to apply God's Word in your life?



### Pillar 3: Accountability

Study 1	Study 2	Study 3	Study 4	Study 5	Study 6
The Foundation	The Body Of Christ	Pillar 1: Community	Pillar 2: The Bible	Pillar 3: Accountability	The Church Being The Church

#### Questions for Discussion

? Think back to a time when you did something that was difficult. Did you have someone to encourage you to start, move forward, or finish? How does having someone to encourage you change a difficult situation?

#### Let's Talk About Accountability

? When you think about accountability, what comes to mind? What have your experiences of accountability been like before joining this group?

? What are common factors in situations where accountability goes poorly?

? What are common factors in situations where accountability goes well?

#### What Does The Bible Say About Christian Accountability?

##### Colossians 3:5-10 (NIV)

<sup>5</sup>Put to death, therefore, whatever belongs to your earthly nature: sexual immorality, impurity, lust, evil desires and greed, which is idolatry. <sup>6</sup>Because of these, the wrath of God is coming. <sup>7</sup>You used to walk in these ways, in the life you once lived. <sup>8</sup>But now you must also rid yourselves of all such things as these: anger, rage, malice, slander, and filthy language from your lips. <sup>9</sup>Do not lie to each other, since you have taken off your old self with its practices <sup>10</sup>and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge in the image of its Creator.

? This passage lists the ways we used to live apart from Christ and calls us to walk differently as followers of Christ. Why is accountability so critical in living out the commands of these verses?

? What are specific ways we as a small group can encourage each other to live like Christ and remember that in Him we have taken off our old self and have put on a new self?

**James 5:16a (NIV)**

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.

? How have you seen confession of sin to another trusted person lead to healing?

**Galatians 6:1-2 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup>Brothers and sisters, if someone is caught in a sin, you who live by the Spirit should restore that person gently. But watch yourselves, or you also may be tempted. <sup>2</sup>Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

? How can we, as a small group, show mercy and help restore each other as we share our struggles?

? How can we lean on each other to help us "watch ourselves"?

**Accountability In Our Small Group**

? As a group, let's create a definition of *biblical accountability*.

? How can our group improve in the area of Christian biblical accountability?

**For Discussion And Accountability**

? Am I seeking out accountability?

? Am I heeding the wisdom of God's Word and those who offer accountability in my life?

? Am I bravely and lovingly offering accountability to others in my small group?

## The Church Being The Church

Study 1	Study 2	Study 3	Study 4	Study 5	Study 6
The Foundation	The Body Of Christ	Pillar 1: Community	Pillar 2: The Bible	Pillar 3: Accountability	The Church Being The Church

### Questions for Discussion

**?** Do you enjoy gift giving? Why or why not?

### Activity

**?** When you were answering the previous question, how were you defining “the church “ as you formed your answer?

**?** When people hear the word “church” they often think of a building or location. Neither of these definitions involves a building structure. How does this compare to or challenge your childhood or current definition or the word “church”?

### 1. The Church - A Local Group Of Followers Of Christ Who Gather As The Body of Christ

#### Galatians 1:2 (NIV)

Paul, an apostle—sent not from men nor by a man, but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, who raised him from the dead—and all the brothers and sisters with me, To the churches in Galatia:

#### Romans 16:5 (NIV)

Greet also the church that meets at their house.

#### Acts 8:1 (NIV)

On that day a great persecution broke out against the church in Jerusalem, and all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria.

**?** Describe your experiences with the local church over your life. What made you feel close to or distant from that local body of believers?

? How does this small group serve as an extension of the local church called Hope Community Church?

? How can this small group remind each other that we, as a body, make up Hope Community Church?

## **2. The Church - The Global Collection Of Followers Of Christ Throughout Time**

### **Matthew 16:17-18 (NIV)**

<sup>17</sup>Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup>And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

### **Ephesians 1:18-23 (NIV)**

<sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength <sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, <sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

### **1 Corinthians 15:9 (NIV)**

For I am the least of the apostles and do not even deserve to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

? What do these passages say about the global church?

? In what ways do you participate in the global church?

## **The Church in Action**

### **Ephesians 4:11-16 (NIV)**

<sup>11</sup> So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

<sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. <sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

? According to the passage, what is the result of the body of Christ being properly built up as people serve using their gifts?

? What are your initial thoughts on the concept Naty just introduced?

? What do you see as your role in the church? Is there a way God is challenging you to use your gifts to bless the larger body of Christ at Hope?

? As you think of yourself and others “being the church to the church,” what encourages you? What struggles or difficulties come to mind?

? Looking back at the list you made tonight in small group, how is God challenging you to examine the ways you are serving as “the church” to the people in your small group?

#### **For Discussion And Accountability**

? What is one tangible way you can build up the body by serving as “the church to the church” this week?