

Week 2 **LEADER** Discussion Questions

Many of our LifeGroups are starting back up this week, so we hope you are refreshed and ready to embark on this new series!

These questions are a resource for you, not an assignment, which means there's no single "right way" to use them. Feel free to modify the questions to suit your group, skip questions, or read carefully through every last word!

Remember that we want all our groups to balance out 3 different values: (1) a commitment to knowing God's Word, (2) a commitment to caring for each other as a community, (3) and a commitment to serving those around us.

If you'd like a refresher on what this looks like, scroll down to the bottom of this file for a section called "Biblical Communities on Mission."

Text: 1 Cor 1:10-17

Series Resources: See last week's questions for helpful ESV Study Bible graphics.

Icebreaker: What causes groups or communities of people to divide? When have you experienced division in a group you've been a part of?

Most of us have experienced division—at work, on a team, etc. This question is meant to tee up the conversation for this week.

1. Read all of chapter 1 (even though we're only focusing on verses 10-17 this week). What stands out to you from the text or from the sermon this week?

This question will be standard each week and is intentionally open-ended. For some groups, this could be the main question that gets everyone talking and is most helpful. We are inviting you to read entire chapters in this series so you can grow in familiarity with the text.

2. How would you summarize the core problem the Corinthians are facing in verses 10-12? Why is their situation one that Paul can't just ignore?

The core problem is division in the church. More specifically, it's a form of division where people in the church are aligning themselves with different leaders. The people in the church likely find certain leaders to be more compelling or "better." It's likely as well that the people doing this see an advantage to be gained for themselves by aligning themselves with a particular leader. If I follow Apollos, for example, I'll grow in status as he grows in status. Paul can't ignore this because it is weakening the unity of the church. It's threatening its mission and purpose, so the stakes are too high to ignore.

Application: Do you see potential for or even examples of a similar type of division happening in churches today? Explain what you think.

Think about how easy it is to have a big platform today with social media and other tools that can help talented, big-personality teachers go “viral.” Pair this with a culture (and church?) that already tends toward consumerism and you have the potential for a similar kind of problem.

3. Paul says in verse 11 that there are reports of quarreling in the church. Lots of organizations experience conflict, but what is especially troubling about quarreling in the church?

This overlaps with the previous question. Quarreling in the church threatens the mission of the church. You could look at John 17:21-23 as a reference here to be reminded about Jesus’s desire for his followers to be united. Divisions in the church is antithetical to the kind of unity Christ desires.

Application: What inspires Christians today to show an unhealthy allegiance to a particular leader or teacher?

For a few ideas...strong/dynamic personalities, great speaking abilities, intelligence, physical attractiveness, a big crowd, endorsements, doctrinal agreement, etc. Note that none of these are inherently bad! The problem arises from the tendency of the human heart to take good things and make them ultimate things.

4. In verses 13-17, Paul responds to the reports of conflict with a series of questions. What do you think his point is with these questions?

Questions can be one of the most effective teaching tools, which many have observed. Questions force the Corinthians to think for themselves about what they’re doing. Paul’s specific questions help to point out the absurdity of what they’re doing by posturing themselves around different human leaders rather than around Christ.

Application: What are some practical things we can do to keep our attention in the church on what Christ has done for us rather than on people who impress us?

We should beware of forms of ministry that are “personality-driven” and be committed to regular practices that help us remember the gospel message. Bible reading, prayer, and community with believers are a few good examples.

5. How would you describe Paul’s attitude toward his own ministry from these verses?

Paul minimizes his role and expresses an attitude where he is intentionally NOT seeking to impress the people around him with eloquence or embellishments that would put the attention on his form rather than the substance of what he’s saying. Instead, his desire is to let the inherently supernatural power of the gospel change lives.

Application: Division that is not dealt with is deadly to a church! Pray for Calvary and pray for your LifeGroup—that we would be united by a common allegiance to Jesus Christ.

A Framework for Our Groups: Biblical Communities on Mission

How does a group at Calvary know if it's committed to the right things? What kind of activities should it engage in? How can a group know whether it is making good use of its time and energy? We believe these questions can be addressed in the phrase *Biblical Communities on Mission*, and we see the basis for it at the end of Acts 2.

Not everything described in the Book of Acts is necessarily meant to be prescriptive—a direct instruction for the 21st century church. Even so, the commitments we see from the early church in the passage are helpful as we seek to faithfully pursue what Jesus desires for His church in any age.

Acts 2:42-47 doesn't tell us everything about the early church, but it does help reveal basic commitments of the early church. Here are three that we see:

Biblical: The passage begins with the statement that, “they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching.” The apostles were the authorities as eyewitnesses to the life and teaching of Jesus before the New Testament had been written. We desire every group at Calvary to be devoted to reading, studying, discussing, and following the teaching of the Bible.

Community: These verses also include words like, “fellowship,” “breaking of bread,” “prayers,” and “together.” It's a commitment to being with each other, not only at the temple to worship, but also to share meals in each other's homes. It's a desire to care for each other's needs through generosity and encourage each other's faith. We desire every member of a group to be growing in their relationship with Jesus, developing true friendship with other people and caring for each other outside of the official programs of Calvary Bible Church.

Mission: In this passage, the believers were driven by a mission bigger than their own personal preferences and desires. They prioritized unity, generosity, caring for those in need and gratefulness. All these priorities were lived out in their daily lives and regular rhythms of worship. We desire every group at Calvary to identify and care for the needs of those within the group and in the community.

The following illustration developed by Mark Vance at saltcompany.com visualizes this framework and depicts how a group can pursue being a healthy group by having all three elements present in their group.

*Building Christ-centered communities of people fully devoted
to loving God and loving others.*



We believe these three commitments are timeless, meaning that they guide our way of thinking about what we should be committed to in our groups. Biblical Communities on Mission serves as a framework as we form new groups, but it also helps us evaluate how we're spending our time and energy and attention once we're in a group.

Building Christ-centered communities of people fully devoted to loving God and loving others.