

Week #1:

Take a few minutes each day and read the following passages with your family. The passages refer to the Church and can give insight into what we will need to do in the weeks ahead. Come next week prepared to give your thoughts on what will be needed for us to function as a Church.

Day #1: Acts 2:40-47: What are the ongoing activities of this first congregation? What are some ways this will happen with us? Who will be involved in the activities?

Day #2: Acts 16:13-16; 30-34. We know that a Church was started in Philippi. Where do you suppose it met? What happened when it grew?

Day #3: Romans 16:3-5; Colossians 4:15, Philemon 1:1, 2 (Philemon lived in the town of Colosseae). Where did these Churches meet? What happened in Colossae when they outgrew a home? What are some things we should be doing?

Day #4: Hebrews 10:23-25: How important is it for the Saints to meet together? What is the purpose of the meetings? What are some specific ways you can be involved in this?

Day #5: Ephesians 4:11-16: Repeat the question above.

Week #2:

This week we will be studying the individual's role in this growth. Some of the passages were read last week, but this week it will be viewed from a different perspective.

Day #1: I Corinthians 12:4-11; 14:12 What has God given to the Church through His Spirit? What is the purpose of these gifts? What is necessary for the Church to be healthy? (Cf. Ephesians 4:16)

Day #2: I Corinthians 12:12-18 How is the Church like body? In what way are the believers like members? Who determines what gifts we receive?

Day #3: I Corinthians 12:19-31 How does the fact we are different bring strength to the body? What is the danger in our differences? What gifts has God given for the equipping of the Saints? (Cf. Ephesians 4:11, 12)

Day #4: I Peter 4:10, 11 In what sense are the gifts God has given to us a stewardship? How are they to be used (see day #1)? In which of the two broad categories (v.11) might your gifts lie? How might you be used to build up the Church?

Day #5: Romans 12:3-8 What are some things that would limit the exercise of our gifts? Do these excuse our not using our gifts? Look at the list of gifts here how could each one be used to minister in our body? Where might you fit in?

Week #3: Decision

This week we will learn principles in discerning the will of God. Spend some time with your family discussing the passages each day. Ultimately we hope that these principles will help us to determine if it is God's will for us to move forward toward becoming a Church. There are really 2 questions, which need to be answered?

1. Is God leading us to start another house Church in the East Providence Network?
2. If so, Is God leading our family to part of this?

I. If the Spirit of God is going to speak to you it is necessary that you be under His complete control. Look at the following passages to see what they teach about being led by the Spirit.

Day #1: Romans 8:5-14. What is the evidence that the Spirit is leading one? What would prevent the Spirit from leading you? What should be done with barriers? (see I John 1:9)

Day #2: Galatians 5:13-24. What are the two forces at work in the believer's life? What determines which will have control? Where does the abundant life lie? Are you living it?

Day #3: Galatians 5:25-6:10. What are some responsibilities for those who are "walking by the Spirit"? What will prevent us from being led by the spirit? What are some subtle ways we sow to the flesh?

II. The Scripture also has much other help when trying to make decisions of this nature.

Day #4: Luke 14:25-35. What are the principles regarding decision-making laid out here? How will being part of a new Church affect you and your family? What will be the benefits?

Day #5: Acts 13:1-4 How did the Holy Spirit speak to Saul and Barnabus? What are some ways group decisions can help us reach decisions as individuals and as a family? How about in this particular decision?

(By the way, was this call a new revelation to Saul? (see Acts 9:11-18) Why did Saul wait until this time of confirmation before he left (A period of several year from the time of his conversion)?

FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION: Have a time to reflect on the last 4 days readings. Have an open time of sharing your encouragements and concerns. Now take these to the Lord and seek the directing of His Spirit. Come Sunday prepared to share how the Lord has directed. Be open to his further direction through the meeting.

Week #4:

The next couple of weeks we will be looking at the experience of the early Church in the book of Acts. We are not trying to repeat that experience, but rather get a feel of what was important to the early Church. Hopefully this can help us as we move toward fulfilling God's plan for us.

Day #1: Acts 1:1-11 What did Jesus tell his disciples to do? How difficult was this task? What did they need? What was their response? (12)

Day #2: Acts 1:12-14 What did they do while they waited as Jesus told them (vs 4)? Who was involved? How diligently were they engaged in this activity? How about you and your family?

Day #3: Acts 2:1-13 What was the result of the obedience of the disciples (1:4)? What was the result of them being "filled with the Holy Spirit?"

Day #4: Acts 4:1-22 How do you see Peter changed now that he has received the Holy Spirit? (Compare him with how he acted at Jesus trial). What were the results of his bold witness? What is the cost of evangelism?

Day #5: Acts 4:23-31 Do you notice anything striking about the believer's prayer (especially vs 29)? How do we pray when in affliction? What was the result of their prayer? What was the result of their being "filled with the Holy Spirit?"

Week #5:

Day #1: Acts 4:32-37 How were the believers involved in one another's lives? What would be some things that would prevent this kind of intimate involvement today? What could we do about these things?

Day #2: Acts 5:1-11 How does this incident display the seriousness of a walk with God? What was the result of this "discipline" on the believers?

Day #3: Acts 6:1-6 What was the problem here? Who noticed it? How was it resolved? Who help resolve the problems we will face?

Day #4: Acts 8:1-4 What happened to the faithful Saints? How did God use this to extend His Church? Who preached? Are you?

Day #5: Acts 8:9-24 Why did Simon respond to the message? What did Peter say to Him? Why was he so harsh? What motivates you to follow the savior?

Week #6:

The next week we will be looking at the celebration of the Lord's Table and then at Ephesians to begin to lay groundwork for covenanting as a new congregation. Try to set up a regular time where you, as a family, can look at the passages of scripture and discuss the questions (You may have to simplify the questions for younger children). Come Sunday prepared to share what you have learned.

Day #1: Luke 22:14-23 What did Jesus say the bread and the cup symbolized in this, the first Lord's supper? What is the significance of the Lord's Supper being instituted on the Passover feast (a memorial feast commemorating God delivering Israel out of Egypt)?

Day #2: I Corinthians 5:6-8 Why don't most Christians celebrate the Passover feast? What is our responsibility now that our Passover has been sacrificed?

Day #3: I Corinthians 10:14-22 What do we need to be careful of as we partake of the bread and the cup of the Lord? How can we prepare our families and ourselves as we ready ourselves to partake of the Lord's Table?

Day #4: I Corinthians 11:17-32 What were some of the ways the Corinthian Church was violating the Lord's table? What were the consequences? Are there any steps you need to take before you can partake of the Lord's Table?

Day #5: John 13:3-17 Why did Jesus wash his disciples feet at the Passover meal? In what way was this action symbolic? In what way was it an example? As you prepare to partake of the Lord's Table are you following his example?