



MON 1-31

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Romans 12:5
- ✓ THOUGHT "In the same way, though there are many of us, we are one body in Christ, and individually we belong to each other." [CEB] As believers, we are interconnected with all other believers because of Christ. We are meant to function as a part of a whole! How are you nurturing that connection?
- ✓ PRAYER God, I thank you for providing support and encouragement in the form of my local church. Give me courage to step out and become more connected and to be willing to serve as that support and encouragement for others. Amen.

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TUES 2-1

- ✓ SCRIPTURE John 10:16
- ✓ THOUGHT "I have other sheep, too, that are not in this sheepfold. I must bring them also. They will listen to my voice, and there will be one flock with one shepherd." [NLT] Christ followers all follow one shepherd! We must be devoted to the same goal of bringing more sheep into the fold. Can you think of someone in your life who needs to be invited in? How can you make sure they feel included and a part of the church?
- ✓ PRAYER Lord Jesus, help me to keep in mind your desire to reach more people. I want to be someone who offers your love freely and who invites others into the body of Christ. Amen.

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WED 2-2

- ✓ SCRIPTURE 1 Corinthians 12:20-21
- ✓ THOUGHT "But as it is, there are many parts but one body. So the eye can't say to the hand, 'I don't need you,' or in turn, the head can't say to the feet, 'I don't need you.'" [CEB] We need each other! We each have an important role to play in doing the work of God. You have a unique contribution and must be willing to show up and play your role!
- ✓ PRAYER God, thank you for making me with unique abilities and ideas. Help me willingly contribute to the Church, whom you love so much. Sometimes I get tired and protective of my time, but I pray you would strengthen me and help me to keep connected. Amen.

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THURS 2-3

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Hebrews 10:24-25
- ✓ THOUGHT "And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, 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." [NIV] Inherent in the church is a picture of unity. Our purpose is to join together to do the work of God. Give thanks for the ways you have been encouraged by the body of Christ!
- ✓ PRAYER Loving God, thank you for the people in my life who keep me on my toes, encouraging me to love and do good for others. Help me to find a way this week to do the same for someone else. Amen.

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FRI 2-4

- ✓ SCRIPTURE John 15:5
- ✓ THOUGHT "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing." [NLT] Jesus is the head of the Church. The only way the church works, is if each member stays connected to Christ. It is only when we are led by Christ that we can do effective work together!
- ✓ PRAYER Lord Jesus, I want my connection with you to stay strong and alive. When I begin to neglect spending time with you and learning about you, please pull me close. I know you are my source of strength and my guide. Thank you for using me to show your love to others. Amen.

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SAT 2-5

- ✓ SCRIPTURE Matthew 28:19-20
- ✓ THOUGHT "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, teaching them to obey everything that I've commanded you. Look, I myself will be with you every day until the end of this present age." [CEB] Keep the big picture in mind! When differences of opinion with other believers threaten our unity, remember the goal we all share. This is our number one concern above all others!
- ✓ PRAYER God, I am sorry for the ways I have become distracted from the mission you have given the church. Rekindle my passion to bring people into the body of Christ. Amen.

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GROUP GUIDE

- ✓ **PRAYER** God, we acknowledge that you are already here. May our hearts be open to your presence and direction. Amen.

- ✓ **BIG IDEA** During this series, we could easily spend small group time debating the hot topics; however, since our goal is to build unity, the group discussion guides are centered around that concept. The church IS by nature a picture of unity! It is inherent in the body of Christ that the church is one body.

- ✓ **DISCUSS**
 - Describe a time when you were part of a healthy, high-functioning team. What characteristics of the team and its members contributed to the overall effectiveness?

 - Read Ephesians 4:11-16 aloud. What are some of the responsibilities you have as a member of a local congregation?

 - Our active participation in the work of the body of Christ helps bring ourselves and others to spiritual maturity. Each of us has a role to play! If you had to rate your current involvement with the church on a scale of 1 to 5, 1 being occasional Sunday attendance and 5 being regular Sunday attendance along with actively serving and participating in some type of small group, where would you land? Can you identify current roadblocks to becoming more involved?

 - Read Ephesians 1:22-23 aloud. Christ is the head of the body, the head of the Church. Have you been a part of a church where you felt that Christ was truly the head? What are ways our church can grow in that area? How might this impact our church's effectiveness?

 - Discuss the "80-20 rule" (20% of the church members do 80% of the work). Do you think this is the case at our church? The potential risk in this type of situation is the 20% of "doers" burn out and eventually quit altogether. What are some ways we can work to involve the other 80%? How might this expansion of the diversity of the "doers" increase our effectiveness?

- ✓ **Pray** Lord Jesus, we acknowledge the Church's need for each of our contributions in order to function in the manner you intended. Help us understand more about what it means to be unified in the way we operate so that we can reach as many people with your transformational love as possible. Thank you for your direction. Amen.