

S T U D Y   G U I D E

LET US

WHY WE  
WORSHIP  
THE WAY  
WE DO



GOD

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THOMAS



# Let Us Worship God

STUDY GUIDE



LIGONIER MINISTRIES

*Let Us Worship God Study Guide*

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# How to Use This Study Guide

This study guide includes a chapter synopsis, a lesson objective, key passages, key points, and discussion questions from each chapter in *Let Us Worship God*, as well as questions that focus on a relevant passage of Scripture from each chapter. Participants should first read each corresponding chapter of the book in order to make the best use of this guide.

**Chapter Synopsis:** This section summarizes the material in the chapter and provides a reminder of what the chapter covered. It serves to help readers remember what they've already read in the book.

**Lesson Objective:** This section explains the purpose of the chapter and the intended outcome of the study guide lesson.

**Key Passages:** This section quotes several passages from the chapter so that readers can remember some of the more significant things the author said. It can also serve as a starting point for discussion if the group leader would like to ask questions or provide thoughts related to excerpts from the book.

**Key Points:** This section outlines many of the basic ideas that the author mentioned in the chapter. It helps readers recall not just the big idea of the chapter but also its supporting ideas and their flow.

**Scripture Reading:** This section highlights one of the chapter's key points in God's Word. It helps readers identify the scriptural basis of important Christian doctrines and develops their ability to understand Scripture through questions about the reading. These questions are also ideal for group study.

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**Reflection Questions:** This section provides readers with questions that could be asked of themselves or in a small-group setting. The questions are designed to help readers understand the chapter and apply that knowledge to their lives.

**Prayer:** This section closes the study with an opportunity to come before the Lord in prayer based on what readers have learned.

# The Local Church

## CHAPTER SYNOPSIS

Is going to church necessary? This question may be all too common today. One aspect of the church's nature is that it is visible. It is a gathered body of believers and their children, and it is the place where God ordinarily works to bring people to saving faith in Jesus Christ. So it is vital that we belong to a local church. A church ought to have certain characteristics to make it truly biblical: the preaching of the Word, the right administration of the sacraments, and church discipline.

## LESSON OBJECTIVE

This chapter will help you see the biblical warrant for joining a local biblically sound and healthy church and know how you ought to interact with its members.

## KEY PASSAGES

*As Lord of the church, Jesus alone dictates what the church does. He establishes the program. He sets the agenda. And, as we shall see, this is vitally important when answering the question, How should we worship? (p. 7)*

*The true church can be recognized if it has the following marks: the church engages in the pure preaching of the gospel, it makes use of the pure administration of the sacraments as Christ instituted them, and it practices church discipline for correcting faults (Belgic Confession). (pp. 11–12)*

*One function of the church is to enable us to serve one another. The three words that stabilize our thinking are others, others, others. (pp. 16–17)*

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*The contrast envisaged [in Hebrews 10:25] is not that of attending versus not attending. The contrast is between neglecting the body and encouraging the body. That means that you can show up and still neglect the body. If all you do is show up, you are not ministering to the body. (p. 18)*

### KEY POINTS

**The Visible Church** (pp. 5–11): Christians are called to gather together in order to worship. The visible church is the gathered body of professing Christians and their children. Every aspect of worship requires Christians to gather together, so being a part of a local church is not optional. We cannot be unchurched Christians.

**Marks of a True Church** (pp. 11–12): Reformers such as John Calvin and Philip Melancthon identified two primary marks of the church: the pure preaching of the gospel and the right administration of the sacraments. The Belgic Confession added church discipline to these marks. It is most common to see all three of these marks listed together.

**Expectations for Church** (pp. 12–16): Hebrews 10:19–27 provides us with a set of reasonable expectations for our being a part of a church: accountability, strength, purpose, and usefulness among Christians. By gathering together, we hold ourselves accountable, and this contributes to our strength of perseverance. It also enables us to engage in the purpose of stirring one another up to good works, which necessitates our own usefulness in the church.

**Serving Others** (pp. 16–20): As church members, we are not called to merely attend worship. We are called to *usefulness*, as outlined in Hebrews 10:25. In fact, if we are merely attending worship, then we may be guilty of neglecting worship because one of its purposes is to engage us in the act of encouraging others.

### SCRIPTURE READING

**Ephesians 4:11–16** And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love,

## THE LOCAL CHURCH

we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

- In this chapter, Dr. Thomas outlined how we can have reasonable expectations from being a part of the church from a passage in Hebrews 10. What are some other expectations that can be gleaned from this passage in Ephesians?

### REFLECTION QUESTIONS

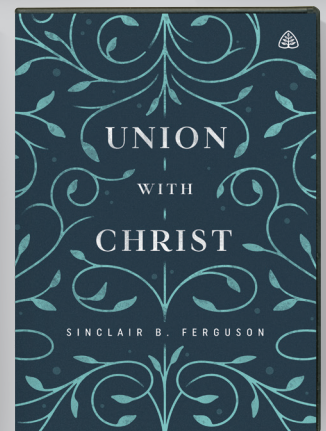
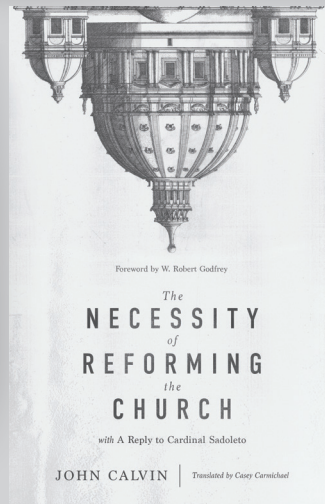
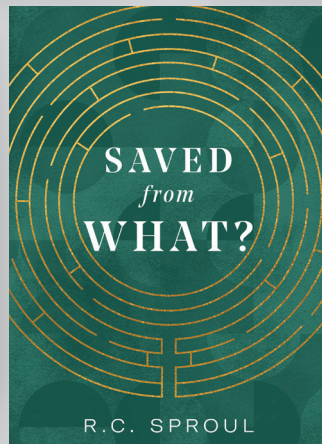
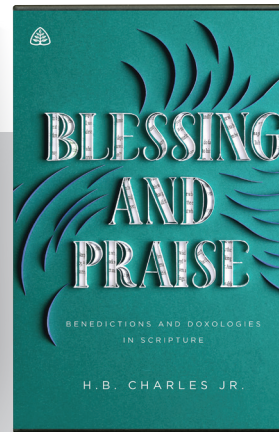
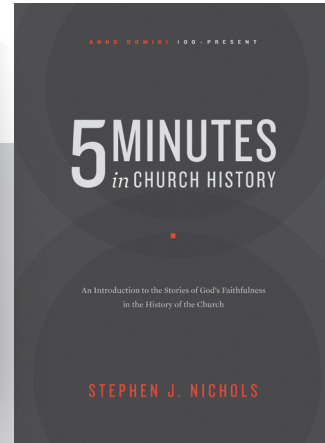
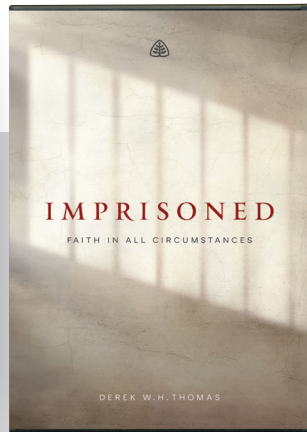
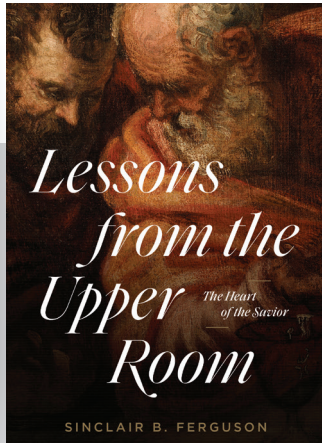
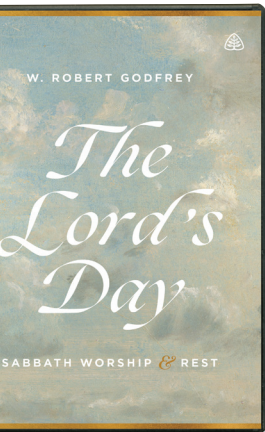
1. What are the four main ideas that Dr. Thomas stressed from Matthew 16:13–20?
2. Why are each of the marks of a true church essential? Do you see any warrant or benefit in adding other marks to this list?
3. What has been the most beneficial result of your life in a local church?
4. How might it be helpful to reflect on the return of Christ before gathering together with other Christians to worship?

### PRAYER

- Praise God that He has given you to Jesus Christ to belong to His body.
- Confess any areas where you might be neglecting the assembly of God's people.
- Thank God for the victory of Jesus Christ and the promise that nothing will prevail against His church.
- Ask God to help you identify your unique giftings to serve the church.



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