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Christ Church Blackpool
Foundations Reflection Guide

Part 6: Count Me In

This reflection guide is designed for uses for those who have listened or watched **Part 6: Count Me In**

It provides space to process the scriptures and apply the "Foundations" teaching.

The Big Idea is that Jesus is deeply passionate about His Church—it is His joy, His bride, and His plan to extend His kingdom to the ends of the Earth. We are called not just to believe, but to belong and be "counted in" to a local church family.

1. The Value of the Church

- **Read Revelation 1:12-20**

I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword. His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance. When I saw him, I fell at his feet as though dead. Then he placed his right hand on me and said: "Do not be afraid. I am the First and the Last. I am the Living One; I was dead, and now look, I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.
"Write, therefore, what you have seen, what is now and what will take place later. The mystery of the seven stars that you saw in my right hand and of the seven golden lampstands is this: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands are the seven churches.
The local church is not a building or a plastic organization; it is a golden lampstand of peerless worth to Christ.

Revelation 1:12-20

- **The Churches Value:** The church is compared to a golden lampstand—not something ordinary or disposable but crafted from valuable material. Its purpose is to illuminate the light of Christ for all nations.

- **Read Acts 20:28 and Ephesians 5:25-27**

Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood.

Acts 20:28

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

Ephesians 5:25-27

- **Key Takeaways:**
    - **The Bride:** The church is Jesus' "darling bride," His special delight in all the universe.
    - **The Price Tag:** Jesus considered the church so precious that He bought her with His own blood.
    - **Individual Care:** Jesus doesn't just love the worldwide church; He walks among individual local churches and knows them intimately.
- **Reflection:** Rate in your head 1–10: How important is the local church to you compared to how important she is to Jesus?

2. The Master Plan

- **Read Matthew 5:14-16 and Ephesians 3:10**

You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden... Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16

His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms.

Ephesians 3:10

- **Key Takeaways**

    1. **No Plan B:** The church is God's only plan to extend His Kingdom and save the lost.

    2. **Visible Witness:** Like a city on a hill, the church is meant to be a visible, radiant light that cannot be hidden.

Reflection: Why do you think some Christians choose to use their gifts in para-church, or solo ministries rather than using them in the local church?

Why might Jesus see this as not the best option?

3. The Pattern of the Early Church

- **Read Acts 2:42–47**

They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 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, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Acts 2:42-47

- **Devoted:** The first believers were "devoted" to Christ and His Church, they were fully counted in.

- **Five Values:** The five core values of Christ Church are derived from passages like this in Acts which describes life the early Christian church.

    1. **Biblical Truth:** They were devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship.

    2. **Presence of God:** to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles.

    3. **Humbly Serving:** They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.

    4. **Sharing Christ:** And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

    5. **Authentic Community:** 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, praising God and enjoying the favour of all the people.

4. Why Membership Matters

- **It identifies a person as a genuine believer.**

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household,

Ephesians 2:19

so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Romans 12:5

- **It provides family to support us in our walk with Christ.**

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.

Hebrews 10:24-25

- **It gives us a place to discover and use their gifts in ministry.**

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. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

1 Corinthians 12:13-14

- **It places us under the spiritual protection of godly leaders.**

Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you.
Hebrews 13:17

- **It gives us the accountability we need to grow**

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. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ.

- Galatians 6:1-2

- **Reflection:** We are designed to live in and be a devoted member of a church community. A disconnected Christian is like a football player without a team, a soldier without a regiment, a violin player without an orchestra, or a sheep without a flock.

5. The Commitments of Membership:

- **Committed to Serve:** By using your gifts and talents for the benefit of the body.

- **Committed to Give**: By fanatically contributing to regularly and joyfully support the mission of your local church.

- **Committed to Pursuing Unity:** By showing love and avoiding gossip, choosing to build up others rather than tear them down.

- **Committed to Showing Up:** By prioritising Sunday gatherings and midweek groups, aiming to encourage others and to receive support yourself.

- **Our Vision:** "To bring the life of Christ to a lost and broken world."

Are you willing to commit yourself to this local community of believers and join us in our mission?

Questions

1. **The Priority Check:** On a scale of 1–10, how much does the local church currently fill your heart and preoccupation?

2. **The Practical Expression:** Since Jesus bought the church with His blood, how is your love for her practically expressed this week?

3. **Serving**: Will you commit to using you gifts and talents for Christ in this church?

4. **Giving**: Will you commit to making fanatical giving a vital part of your worship, demonstrating your trust in God's provision?

5. **Unity:** Will you commit to protecting the unity of this church by refusing to engage in unwholesome talk or gossip?

6. **Showing Up:** Will you make it a priority to "not give up meeting together" but instead attend faithfully?