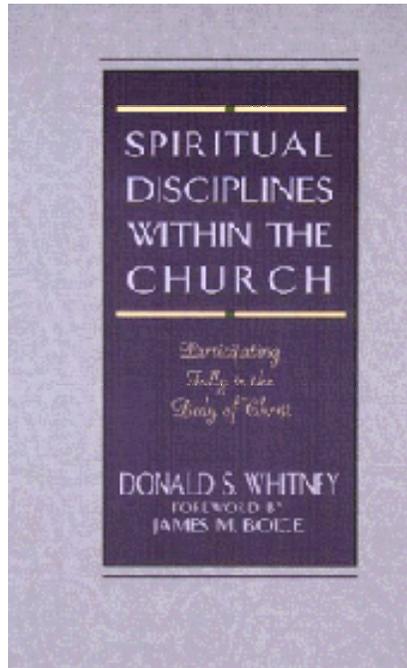


DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR



DONALD S. WHITNEY'S **SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES WITHIN THE CHURCH**

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**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES WITHIN THE CHURCH**

Discussion questions for chapter one, “Why Go to Church?”

1. Why read and discuss material on “Why Go to Church?” with a group consisting mostly of church members? (Pages 15-16).
2. What percentage of Americans goes to church on a given Sunday? (Page 16).
3. Why don’t people go to church? (Page 16). How many of these reasons does it take to keep them away? (Page 16).
4. What percentage of Americans believes that, “the Bible does not command people to attend a church; that is a man-made requirement”? (Page 17). Why is this? Is there a biblical command to attend church? (Page 17.) Comments? What should we think, in light of this verse, of someone who doesn’t go to church?
5. Why would Whitney say on page 18, “Neglect of church attendance is almost always one of the first outward signs of backsliding and one of the initial steps taken by those whose path ends in complete apostasy”?
6. The title of the second section is, “Going to Church Brings Spiritual Fellowship and Encouragement” (page 18). What would you say to someone who said he doesn’t need the fellowship and encouragement of the church?
7. Jesus said in Mark 12:28-30 that the greatest of all God’s commandments is to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. How does going to church relate to that? (Pages 19-20, especially 20.)
8. How can Whitney claim that, “Going to Church Follows Jesus’ Example”? (Page 21.) What excuses would Jesus have had for not assembling with other believers at the synagogue each week? (Page 21.) How does this relate to our busy lives?
9. Why isn’t it sufficient to support other Christian causes without going to church? (Page 22.)
10. Why does the author say that, “Going to church is the best way to listen to the preaching of God’s Word”? (Page 22.)
11. On page 24, Whitney notes that “Going to Church Allows You to Take the Lord’s Supper.” Why not take it at home or elsewhere?
12. On page 25, the author claims that, “Going to Church Enables You to Experience Special Blessings from God.” What kind of “special blessings from God” can we receive at church that we can’t receive in private worship?
13. Do you agree with the statement on page 26 that, “Christians who do not attend church are usually the most unbalanced Christians”? Why or why not?
14. Why would Whitney say that “Going to Church Is One Indication of Eternal Life”? (Pages 26-27.)
15. How does 1 John 2:19 (found on page 27) contribute to the discussion about the importance of church attendance?
16. Is it inconsistent for the author to say on page 26 that, “Going to Church Is One Indication of Eternal Life,” and then say on page 27 that “Going to church does not make you a Christian”? Why or why not?
17. Comment on the assertion on page 28 that, “Every command of God is a law of love,” especially as it relates to church attendance.
18. Whitney claims on page 29 that, “Not going to church is self-centered and foolish.” How do you respond to his argumentation? What kinds of situations where people do not go to church would be exceptions

19. When people say they don't go to church because of the problems and the hypocrites there, how should we respond? (Page 30.)
20. Whitney closes the chapter by quoting the Apostle Paul's question in 1 Corinthians 11:22, "Do you despise the church of God"? Can a Christian answer, "Yes," to this question? How would you answer someone who said, "No, I don't despise the church. I just don't want to attend?"
21. Is there anything you struggle with in this chapter? If so, what is it?
22. What surprised you in this chapter?
23. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
24. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
25. What's a good illustration of this particular point?
26. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
27. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
28. How do you think you should apply this section/chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
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Discussion questions for chapter two, “Why Seek Baptism in the Church?”

1. In the introduction to this chapter, Whitney illustrates the extremes to which some will go to identify with their favorite athletic team. What similar examples can you name, whether in sports or in some other part of life? Is it more acceptable to go to extremes to identify with other things than with one’s religion or God? Why or why not?
2. Comment on Whitney’s statement on pages 32-33 that, “Although baptism is never *equated* with faith or salvation in the New Testament, it is closely *associated* with both.”
3. Why should baptism be a public event? (Page 33.) Explain whether you believe there are circumstances in which a private baptism would be permissible.
4. How is baptism like a marriage ceremony? (Page 33.)
5. The second section of this chapter is, “Baptism Openly Obeys the Command of Christ.” On page 34 Whitney says, “Baptism is no mere custom started by ancient church leaders, then passed down from generation to generation as an encrusted ecclesiastical tradition or meaningless religious ritual. Baptism is a practice ordained by Jesus Christ Himself.” Why is it important to emphasize this?
6. What are some of the observations you can make about baptism from Jesus’ Great Commission in Matthew 28:18-20? (Page 34.)
7. What is your response to this declaration at the bottom of page 34: “So then, for a disciple of Christ to know His will about baptism and then willingly refuse is to intentionally disobey Christ and sin against God”?
8. Why did Jesus command us to be baptized “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”? (Pages 35-36).
9. What did you learn about the importance of the doctrine of the Trinity in the sub-section, “God is Triune”? (Pages 35-36). How could what you’ve learned be better emphasized in baptism? At other times?
10. Reread Whitney’s analogy on page 36 of a “Wanted” poster. Can you think of a similar analogy to the use of the Acts 2:38 phrase, “baptized . . . for the remission of sins”?
11. Why is the teaching of baptismal regeneration so attractive to many?
12. Comment on Whitney’s statement on page 37 that, “Although baptism is an important practice, if it were essential for salvation, we would always see it mentioned when the Bible talks about being made right with God.”
13. Elaborate on the marriage analogy used in the last full paragraph on page 38. Imputation is the theological term for the merits of Christ applied to the believer. How does the imputation of Christ’s righteousness to the believer demonstrate the righteousness and justice of God?
14. According to Romans 6:3-5, believers have been spiritually “baptized into Christ.” In other words, believers are “united together” with Him. What are some of the results of being spiritually united with Jesus Christ?
15. On page 39, Whitney asserts that baptism is a testimony that, “Planted and growing within [baptized people] are new loves (e.g., love for God, love for His Word, love for His people), new desires (e.g., for purity, for holy living, for Heaven), new priorities (the will of God), and more.” What are some passages of Scripture supporting this claim? How were some of these evidences of new life first manifested in you?
16. Should the church try to discern whether tokens of new spiritual life are present before baptizing someone? How? What should the church do in the case of a baptized member who begins to live in such a way as to cast serious doubt on the presence of biblical loves, desires, and priorities within them?
17. At the bottom of page 39, Whitney says, “Baptism is not a saving ritual.” And then, “Although this has been said already, it cannot be overemphasized.” Why does he repeat this point?

18. Tell about an experience you have witnessed where baptism strengthened the assurance of salvation in a person who had delayed obedience to baptism. (See page 40.) Why do you think assurance in such cases is strengthened by baptism?
19. In your church, how may a person present himself or herself as a candidate for baptism?
20. Suppose you were to talk with someone who professes to be a Christian, but has never been baptized. How would you speak to him about baptism?
21. Is there anything you struggle with in this chapter? If so, what is it?
22. What surprised you in this chapter?
23. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
24. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
25. What's a good illustration of this particular point?
26. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
27. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
28. How do you think you should apply this section/chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
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Discussion questions for chapter three, “Why Join a Church?”

1. Reread the questions asked of Whitney in the introduction of “Why Join a Church?” on page 13. If you had been in Whitney’s place (and hadn’t yet read this chapter), how would you have answered?
2. On page 43, in the last full paragraph of the introduction, Whitney says, “I began to realize that many of my conclusions about church membership were actually nothing more than previously unchallenged assumptions.” What formal teaching have you received, including sermons, lectures, books, articles, and so forth, establishing church membership as a biblical teaching?
3. Have you known of or attended a church that did not have a formal membership roll? What reason did they give for this practice?
4. What aspects of contemporary culture contribute to the decreased emphasis given to the importance of church membership?
5. On page 45, in the section, “Scripture Indicates Church Membership in New Testament Times,” Whitney says of 1 Corinthians 5:11-13, “The best way of explaining how they would have put away this man is to understand that they removed him from the membership of the church and generally stopped associating with him outside the church meetings.” Do you agree? Why or why not?
6. What implication does the word “church” have in the term “church discipline”? What implication does the role of the church in church discipline have on the subject of church membership? (Page 45.)
7. If a church attempts to practice church discipline, but has no church membership, upon what basis would they determine who does and does not have the right to speak and/or vote on the issues involved? (Pages 45-46.)
8. How does the strong public demarcation between believers and unbelievers in Acts 5:13 that argue for a recognizable church membership? (Page 46.)
9. On pages 46-47, Whitney quotes 1 Corinthians 14:23, “Therefore, if the whole church comes together in one place” How would a minister today know if his entire church were gathered in one place?
10. If a church doesn’t have a membership roll, how would a pastor determine those he is responsible to shepherd? If you answered something like, “He would be responsible for those who attend his church,” how many times or how often would people have to attend to be considered the pastor’s spiritual responsibility? (Pages 47-48.)
11. Why do the four biblical metaphors used to describe local churches (pages 48-49) support the idea of a definite church membership?
12. In the instructions for the church in the care of widows, the apostle Paul writes in 1 Timothy 5:9, “Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the **number**” (NKJV; “be enrolled,” ESV; “be put on the list,” NASB, NIV). How does the existence of a well-defined number, list, or roll of widow’s names in a church argue for the likelihood of a list or roll of church members?
13. The section, “There Are Biblical Reasons for Joining a Church” begins on page 49. Of the first three reasons given, comment on the one you believe to be the most important. (Pages 49-51.)
14. Of the second three reasons given, comment on the one you believe to be the most important. (Pages 51-52.)
15. Of the final three reasons given, comment on the one you believe to be the most important. (Pages 52-54.)
16. How should a church/pastor approach the problem of “spiritual hitchhikers” who haven’t become members? (Pages 52-53.)
17. In the section, “Biblical Responses to this Message,” Whitney says at the bottom of page 54 and the top of page 55, “Membership in a local church does not mean that you are part of the body of Christ. Without Christ, church membership means nothing. Hell is filled with people who are church

members.” In light of that quotation, respond to this statement: While we must distinguish salvation from church membership, we should never separate them.

18. Respond to Whitney’s emphasis on page 56 of the importance of being an active member of a church “where you live.” How do you respond to his illustration about college students transferring their membership each time they move home or back to school?
19. Why would Martyn Lloyd-Jones say that church membership is “the biggest honour which can come a man’s way in this world?” (Page 57.)
20. What do you now think is the single most important thing to say to the Christian who does not see the importance of joining the church he or she attends?
21. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
22. What surprised you in this chapter?
23. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
24. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
25. What’s a good illustration of this particular point?
26. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
27. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
28. How do you think you should apply this chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
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Discussion questions for chapter four, “Why Listen to Preaching in the Church?”

1. In the introduction to “Why Listen to Preaching in the Church?”, Whitney gives an illustration of a minister “staging drama productions in place of sermons.” What are some ways you have seen churches minimize preaching?
2. In the section, “God Was Pleased to Ordain Preaching” (page 61), Whitney suggests several means that our omnipotent God has used on occasion and might have used as His primary plan of proclaiming the gospel. Review these and try to name others. What is most puzzling to you as to why it would please God to choose to reveal His message primarily through preaching instead of these?
3. Since preaching, according to 1 Corinthians 1:21, was the method God chose as the primary delivery system for His message, and since preaching was to some degree dependent upon geographic discoveries and developments in transportation, and since entire civilizations rose and fell in large parts of the world in the centuries before gospel preachers could reach them, how does the spread of the gospel through preaching reflect the sovereign grace of God?
4. Why does Whitney claim on page 61, “Therefore preaching is always relevant, no matter what a majority of people thinks in any particular culture at a given point in history?” Relate your answer to 1 Corinthians 1:21.
5. What is “preaching” in the “broad sense” (page 61)? Give examples of this kind of preaching. What is “preaching” in the sense meant by 1 Corinthians 1:21? (Page 62.)
6. What specifically, according to 1 Corinthians 1:21, does God use “to save those who believe”? What is “the primary delivery system in the New Testament” for that which God uses to save people?
7. Why must we be careful to maintain the distinction between the “broad sense” of preaching as proclamation of the gospel by any and all legitimate means, and the kind of preaching spoken of in 1 Corinthians 1:21?
8. Where in the Bible do we see illustrated that preaching was the primary means God ordained to communicate His message? (Pages 62-63.)
9. What means might the apostle Paul have used to communicate the gospel when he came to plant the church in Corinth? (Page 63.) Why did he rely on preaching as the way to begin and build the church?
10. According to Whitney on page 64, what advantages does preaching have over other methods of proclaiming the gospel? What other advantages can you name?
11. According to the next division of the chapter (“God’s Message Is the Subject of Preaching”), what should be the subject of preaching? According to the context of verse 21, what is God’s message? What do the phrases used here to describe God’s message mean? In light of these phrases, how can Whitney claim that “all sermons [do not have to] only be about Jesus and/or His crucifixion” in order to be faithful to God’s message? (Pages 64-65.)
12. In what specific ways do many sermons fall short of the standard of biblical preaching outlined in 1 Corinthians 1:18-23? (Page 65.)
13. What are the two kinds of topical preaching Whitney describes on page 65? What is the danger of such preaching?
14. What are some simple signs to look and listen for to discern whether what you are hearing is biblical preaching?
15. In the story Whitney tells on pages 66-67, why didn’t “Chris” realize his spiritual dryness sooner? Why don’t people at other churches where there is little or no biblical preaching realize their spiritual dryness and do something about it?
16. In the third division of the chapter (“God Saves People Through His Message Preached”), Whitney says, “You should listen to preaching in the church because the most powerful and miraculous of the

works of God in the world occur through the preaching of His message.” How is this related to 1 Corinthians 1:21? (Page 67).

17. Illustrate the difference between God saving people *during* the preaching of a sermon and Him saving people *through* the preaching of a sermon. (Page 67.)
18. Comment on the two paragraphs on page 68 beginning with the sentence, “Throughout church history, all the greatest movements of God in saving people and strengthening His church have been built upon great, God-anointed preaching.”
19. At the bottom of page 68, the English Puritan preacher, David Clarkson, is quoted as saying, “The most wonderful things that are now done on earth are wrought in the public ordinances.” What does he mean when says about these wonderful things, “though the commonness and spiritualness of them makes them seem less wonderful”? (Page 68.)
20. Read aloud, then comment on the quotation by Clarkson on pages 68-69.
21. How can “Reverently and responsively listening to God’s Word preached” be “one of the highest forms of honoring and worshiping God”? (Page 69.)
22. Why does Whitney encourage people to hear preaching outside the church (such as on radio or by other electronic means), “as a *supplement to* and *not a substitute for* hearing the preaching of God’s Word in person”? (Page 70.)
23. Comment on Whitney’s observation on page 70 that if a pastor “sees preaching as a sideline to his calling, it will have a shallowing impact on everything else.”
24. What is wrong with a church calling a senior pastor described as a man who is “a good pastor, not a good preacher”?
25. Comment on Whitney’s statement at the bottom of page 70, “No ministry or program can compensate for an anemic pulpit.”
26. How does Whitney’s experience regarding the kinds of things most people look for in a church (described in the first two paragraphs on page 71), correspond to your experience with visitors to your church?
27. What are some of the reasons people should pray for their preacher and his preaching? (Pages 71-72.)
28. Comment on Whitney’s assertion on page 73 that, “One measurement of your spiritual health is your hunger for God’s Word preached.”
29. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
30. What surprised you in this chapter?
31. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
32. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
33. What’s a good illustration of this particular point?
34. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
35. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
36. How do you think you should apply this chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
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Discussion questions for chapter five, “Why Worship with the Church?”

1. Have you heard someone say like the opening quotation of this chapter, “I can worship God outdoors as well as I can at church?” What kinds of places have you heard people refer to as equivalent or superior to the church as a place of worship?
2. Why can a true Christian affirm these places—especially the outdoors—as places of worship? (Page 76.)
3. God is revealed in creation primarily as _____. (Page 76.)
4. Why is creation an insufficient revelation of God? (Pages 75-76.)
5. Where is the clearest revelation of God? (Pages 75-76.) Why are Jesus and the Bible the clearest revelations of God? (Pages 75-76.)
6. Comment on Whitney’s statement from page 77 that, “God gets more glory when you worship Him with the church than when you worship Him alone?”
7. On page 78, Welsh pastor Geoffrey Thomas is quoted as saying, “There is no way that those who neglect secret worship can know communion with God in the public services of the Lord’s Day.” Why do you agree or disagree?
8. The section beginning on page 78 says that “Congregational Worship Is More Edifying than Private Worship.” What is the main reason Whitney argues why this is so? What are the “spiritual resources” from which we receive in congregational worship “that are unavailable when [we are] alone”? (Page 78.)
9. On page 79 Whitney says, “Participation in congregational worship is more edifying to *others* than if you were to worship God only by yourself.” Give some examples of how this could happen.
10. Review 1 Corinthians 14:24-25 (found on page 79). Describe a time when you have seen or experienced someone become aware of the presence of God, or conviction of their sin, or their need for Christ because of the influence of the power of God’s truth in a worshiping congregation.
11. First Corinthians 6:19 “says that each believer in Christ is a temple of the Holy Spirit” (page 80). “But the Bible also says (and far more often) that Christians *collectively* are God’s temple (page 81). Why does it seem to many that they hear much more about being individual temples of the Holy Spirit than about being a part of the collective temple of God? What are some implications of the fact that the Bible describes the church as the temple of God much more frequently than it refers to individuals as His temple?
12. How and why should we respond to the fact that, according to Luke 4:16, Jesus regularly participated in congregational worship?
13. On page 82 Whitney declares, “Nothing you do on a consistent basis is more like the activity of Heaven than worshiping God with His people.” Why do you agree or disagree?
14. On pages 83-86, Whitney addresses the person who, after reading this chapter, would still say, “Even though the Bible is preached and biblically sound music is sung at my church, my experience in congregational worship there is usually inferior to my private worship experience.” What does Whitney mean by his first response to the person: “You should evaluate your experience by the Word of God, not vice versa”? (Pages 83-83.)
15. Why does Whitney concede in his second response to this person that, “You may sometimes experience the enjoyment of God more in private worship than congregational worship?” (Pages 84-85).
16. What is meant by the third reply, “You have not been thoughtful or wholehearted in congregational worship if this inability to worship publicly is typical”? (Pages 85-86.)
17. Respond to the statement at the top of page 86, “Most often you must *seek* God in public worship in order to find Him.” Does this contradict what was said earlier about 1 Corinthians 14:24-25 and the influence of sincere worshippers upon the insincere or unbelievers?

18. On page 86 we're reminded that, "Congregational worship surpasses private worship, but it does not replace it." What does this mean? Why do you agree or disagree with this statement?
19. Comment on Whitney's belief that, in contrast to those addressed in this chapter, namely "those who think public worship is virtually optional, . . . that there are many more people who have almost no private worship at all even though they attend worship every Sunday." (Page 86.)
20. To what two parts of the inner person does Whitney appeal in the final section (on pages 86-87)? Why?
21. How would you respond now to someone who said, "I can worship God outdoors as well as I can at church?"
22. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
23. What surprised you in this chapter?
24. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
25. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
26. What's a good illustration of this particular point?
27. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
28. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
29. How do you think you should apply this chapter?

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Discussion questions for chapter six, “Why Witness with the Church?”

1. Review the story of 2 Kings 7. How is the dilemma of the well-fed lepers like the condition of a Christian? (Page 90.)
2. How do you respond to Whitney’s claim at the top of page 91 that, in contrast to personal evangelism, congregational and small group evangelism have been neglected?
3. How is God “glorified more through a congregational witness” as Whitney claims on page 91? Provide an example of how this might be done. (Page 91).
4. In John 17:20-21, Jesus emphasized the importance of unity in evangelism. Read these verses. How does Christian unity both glorify God and bear witness to the power of the gospel? (Page 92.)
5. What are some ways church congregations or groups within a local church can exhibit unity in the presence of unbelievers?
6. In the section, “There Is Joy in Having a Part in Someone Coming to Christ,” Whitney says on page 93 that “only 5 percent of those in one of America’s most evangelistic denominations . . . have ever led another to Christ.” How do you respond to that statistic?
7. What does Whitney mean on page 93 when he speaks of “an evangelistic group that presents the gospel as a team effort”? Illustrate how you’ve seen this work or how it might work.
8. Why does Whitney say on page 95, “Christians should give their primary support to their local churches, and then, as time and money permit, assist parachurch organizations?”
9. Why does it often seem that a parachurch ministry can be more effective in what it does than a local church can in that particular ministry? (Page 95.) How should we respond to those who use this apparently superior effectiveness as the reason why they support a parachurch ministry more than their local church? (Pages 95-96.)
10. On pages 96-97, Whitney emphasizes that “Evangelism Is the Privilege and Responsibility of Everyone in the Church.” Review 1 Peter 2:9 that’s quoted in this section. What part of the verse typically gets the most attention? But what is the *purpose* given here for God’s people?
11. Why does Whitney say on page 97, “Evangelism is not just something we’re *told* to do, but something we *get* to do?”
12. Comment on the statement from page 97, “Perhaps the reason that some have such a negative perception of evangelism is that they can only imagine it as an individual event.”
13. Pages 97-100 stress the fact that, “Together We Can Demonstrate the Reality of Christ’s Power and Love Better.” Better than what? (Pages 97-98.) How? (Page 98.)
14. Review John 13:35. What implications does this verse have for congregational or small group evangelism?
15. Why is there such power in the corporate witness of Christians who show that they love one another? (Page 98.)
16. Review Acts 2:44-47. Why is this passage relevant to the discussion of love and congregational evangelism?
17. Why is a group of Christians showing love to one another harder to ignore than an individual Christian showing love to another? (Page 99.) Tell about an occasion when you have seen evidence of the power of a group of believers showing Christian love to one another.
18. On pages 100-101 is the section declaring that “Judgment Is Coming and People Must Be Persuaded by the gospel.” How do you respond to L. R. Scarborough’s statement in that section about how our evangelism would be changed if we could only have a five-minute glimpse into hell?
19. What do we say to those who profess to be Christians, but are “*unevangelistic* and unconcerned about it”? (Page 101.)
20. What are some ways that groups of Christians in your church can show Christian love to one another in the presence of one or more unbelievers?

21. Comment on the concept of the home evangelism meeting described on page 101. (For a downloadable copy of Whitney's invitation to a home evangelism meeting, go to the "Ministry Resources" button of www.BiblicalSpirituality.org.)
22. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
23. What surprised you in this chapter?
24. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
25. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
26. What's a good illustration of this particular point?
27. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
28. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
29. How do you think you should apply this chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
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Discussion questions for chapter seven, “Why Serve in the Church?”

1. Explain Whitney’s comment on page 104 that, “When it comes to serving in the local church, most professing Christians seem to follow either the World War II model or the Vietnam model.”
2. How does serving make us more like Jesus? (Pages 104-105.)
3. On page 105 Whitney asks, “If Jesus were in your church, can you imagine that He would do nothing? Would He simply attend the worship service, perhaps give a little on occasion, and then leave? Do you think He would serve or merely observe?” Why ask these questions?
4. How does serving in the church bring glory to God? (Pages 105-106.) When a person will not serve God within the local church—which is the main way God has chosen to do His work on the earth—what does that say to others about that person’s God?” (Page 106.)
5. Comment on Whitney’s remark at the bottom of page 106 that, “We should serve God not just because it is a duty, because serving Him is much more than that.”
6. What does Whitney mean at the top of page 107 when he says, “Serving God in His church is an indication that you have received His grace?” Why does he immediately follow that by saying, “Working in the church is not an infallible indication of salvation, of course”?
7. Why do you agree or disagree with the assertion on page 107 that, “Service to God has always shown generally who is right with God and who is not”?
8. What implications does Ephesians 2:10 have for a Christian’s serving in the church? (Pages 107-108.)
9. How do we answer the one who objects, “There are many ways to serve God. All service to God isn’t done in the local church”? (Page 108.)
10. How is “Serving in the church of God . . . one of the clearest manifestations of loving God Himself”? (Page 108.) How is this expressed in the Bible?
11. Explain Whitney’s testimony on page 109 where he says, “I have served in church ministries that would be prison-like drudgery to those who don’t love God, and yet I found deep inexplicable fulfillment in them.” Give an example from your own experience of how “Love for God makes a delight out of duty.” (Page 109).
12. What do you think of Spurgeon’s claim on page 109 that, “He is no Christian who does not seek to serve His God”?
13. What do you do (or what have you done) in the service of God in the church which causes you to say with Eric Liddell, “I *feel* His pleasure”? (Page 110.)
14. What do others do (or what have they done) in the service of God in the church which gives pleasure to you? (Page 111.)
15. How does our service in the church bring pleasure to God? (Page 111.) Hebrews 13:16 is cited as evidence that our service in the church brings pleasure to God. How does the context of that verse show that the kind of service described there is indeed service in the church and not just a general doing good to others?
16. Why do you agree or disagree with Whitney’s position on page 112 that, “Everyone who really wants to can do something to strengthen the work of the church”?
17. What happens sooner or later—and perhaps even frequently—to those who serve the Lord in His church? (Page 112.) What sustains servants of the Lord at such times? (Pages 112-113.)
18. What’s the difference between a consistent worker and a convenience worker? (Page 113.) Does your church seem to have fewer consistent workers and increasing numbers of convenience workers? Why? How was the Apostle Paul an example of a consistent worker? (Pages 113-114.)
19. Why does the Bible warn us in 2 Thessalonians 3:13, “Do not grow weary in doing good?” Why do we grow weary of doing good? What should we do if we’re growing weary of doing good?

20. How should we reply to those who say what the older couple said on page 114, “We’ve served our time; now we’re going to leave it to the younger ones”?
21. How is the woman in Mark 14 who anointed the feet of Jesus with costly perfume an example of serving the Lord?
22. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
23. What surprised you in this chapter?
24. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
25. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
26. What’s a good illustration of this particular point?
27. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
28. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
29. How do you think you should apply this chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES WITHIN THE CHURCH**

Discussion questions for chapter eight, “Why Give to the Church?”

1. Have you heard people say, “All churches talk about is money”? Why do some people say this? Why do you agree or disagree with Whitney’s statement on page 117 that, “such churches are the exception, not the rule”?
2. In light of the common stereotypes about the pursuit of money by churches and ministers, why reinforce the stereotypes and prejudices by talking about giving to the church? (Pages 117-118.)
3. Why do you agree or disagree with Whitney’s assertion on page 119 that, “All true love gives”? What implications does that have regarding a Christian’s love for Jesus Christ? How can we give to Jesus?
4. Read 2 Corinthians 8:9 (found on page 119). How do we become “rich” through Jesus’ “poverty”? What does this have to do with giving to the church?
5. Read Matthew 16:18 (found on page 119). What relationship does this have to the subject of this chapter?
6. Why do you agree or disagree with Whitney’s belief on page 120 that, “If our primary giving is to any other ministry than the local church, we are actually helping to displace the church”?
7. What is the Great Commission of Jesus? How does giving to the church help fulfill Jesus’ command to make disciples of all the nations? What are some specific examples of how this is true in your church?
8. How is giving a form of worship to God? (Pages 121-122.)
9. Why is the receptacle for our financial gifts to the church called an *offering* plate/bag/box? (Page 121.)
10. What is a person *not* doing if he is not thinking of God when giving his offering to God? (Page 122.) What are some practical suggestions or habits to help us think of God when placing our offerings in the plate?
11. Explain Whitney’s statement on page 122 that, “Giving to the church testifies to the church, to unconverted attenders, and to your family of your love for God.” Does this contradict the commands of Jesus in Matthew 6:2-4?
12. How is it so that giving to the church is not only giving to the Lord, but giving to our brothers and sisters in the church as well? (Page 123.)
13. Read (on page 122) about the giving of the church to meet needs within the body in Acts 14:32. Why is this not a form of communism? (Page 123.)
14. How does giving to the church weaken selfishness? (Page 123.) What is the wisdom of the “habit of giving to the church with the first check written out of each paycheck?” (Page 123.)
15. How does giving to the church testify of a changed life? (Pages 124-125.)
16. Explain the meaning of the heading on page 125, “Giving Supports the Ministry that Supports Us.”
17. How it is that, “Giving to God’s church reminds us that our Creator permanently owns us and all we temporarily have, including our money”? (Page 127.)
18. On page 128 is Whitney’s testimony of how his parents trained him to give to the Lord through the church each week. How were you trained to give to the church and/or how do you train your children to do so?
19. What is your reaction to Whitney’s story about selling his baseball cards in order to have money to give to his church’s effort to build a worship center without debt?
20. On pages 130-131 is the section, “God Promises Generous Blessings for Generous Givers.” Why must we be careful with such claims? In what ways does God generously bless those who generously give to Him?
21. What does Whitney mean by “give *systematically*”? (Pages 131-132.) Why do you agree or disagree with the idea of systematic giving?

22. What does he mean by, “give *proportionately*”? (Page 132.) What’s the advantage of regular giving according to a proportionate amount of your income as opposed to spontaneous decision-making about how much you’ll give?
23. Why do “the poorest American Christians give the highest percentage of their income to the church, while the wealthiest give the lowest?” (Page 132.) How can we keep this from happening to us if the Lord’s prospers us?
24. What is meant by “give *sacrificially*”? (Pages 132-133.)
25. Why do we need the warning that, “Giving to the church is of no eternal benefit to you unless you have first given yourself to the Lord”? (Page 133.)
26. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
27. What surprised you in this chapter?
28. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
29. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
30. What’s a good illustration of this particular point?
31. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
32. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
33. How do you think you should apply this chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES WITHIN THE CHURCH**

Discussion questions for chapter nine, “Why Attend the Ordinances of the Church?”

1. Does an announcement in your church that baptism and/or the Lord’s Supper will be observed during a particular gathering of your church affect the attendance at that meeting? Why or why not?
2. What is a Christian ordinance? (Page 135.) What is the difference between an ordinance and other things Jesus commanded us to do, such as to love one another? (Page 136.)
3. Most evangelical churches believe that Jesus has given two ordinances to the church—baptism and the Lord’s Supper. Why do most evangelical churches differ with those who believe foot-washing to be a third ordinance?
4. Why do most churches discourage people from baptizing “their children in the bathtub, . . . or their newly converted neighbors in the swimming pool at home”? (Page 136.)
5. How does attendance at the ordinance of baptism “Demonstrate Commitment to the Great Commission”? (Page 137.)
6. What is it about the meaning of baptism that makes it worthy of support by our attendance? (Page 138.)
7. Why is attendance at a baptism compared to the acceptance of a new member into a family? (Pages 138-139.) How might a new Christian feel if many from his new church family fail to attend his baptism?
8. At the baptism of a new believer, how is it beneficial for him or her to give a public testimony of coming to know God through Jesus Christ? How is it beneficial to those attending?
9. Other than your own, what has been the most memorable baptism of a new believer you have attended (and why)? If you spoke of the baptism of a family member, tell also of a memorable baptism of a non-family member.
10. Since Jesus explicitly commands observance of the Lord’s Supper, what must we say about the willing neglect of participation in it? (Pages 139-140.)
11. Why did eating the Passover with His disciples for the final time and His instituting the Lord’s Supper on that occasion mean so much to Jesus? (Page 140.) In light of what the ordinance meant to Jesus, what place should it have in the life of a follower of Jesus?
12. What does Whitney mean by his statement on page 140 that, “Although He is present everywhere, there is a special presence of Christ at His table”? (Page 140.) How is spiritual communion with Christ through the Lord’s Supper experienced? (Page 141.)
13. The Lord’s Supper is a memorial of the person and work of Jesus Christ. But what are two ways that this memorial differs from the statues or monuments we typically build to remember people or events? (Page 142.)
14. How does the proper observance of the Lord’s Supper continue to proclaim the heart of the gospel in a church where the preaching has strayed from the Bible? (Page 143.) Is the proclamation of the gospel through the regular observance of the Lord’s Supper sufficient to feed the souls of people in churches where the preaching isn’t based on the Bible?
15. How does attendance at the Lord’s Supper express “Anticipation [in] the Second Coming of Jesus? (Pages 143-144.)
16. Some churches occasionally have a silent Lord’s Supper service where the ordinance is observed without explanation or Scripture. People will speak of how they were impressed by the solemnity and beauty of such a silent focus on the elements. Why do you think such a practice can or cannot be supported by Scripture?
17. What has been the most memorable Lord’s Supper service you have attended (and why)?
18. Comment on Whitney’s claim on page 144 that, “Hardly any error is more common than thinking that you are a Christian and you will go to heaven because you are baptized and/or take the Lord’s Supper.”

19. What is your reaction to Whitney's assertion on page 144 that, "Participating in the ordinances is more important than almost every reason people give for not participating in them"?
20. Why does Whitney say on page 145 that, "Participating in the ordinances is necessary and a blessing"?
21. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
22. What surprised you in this chapter?
23. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
24. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
25. What's a good illustration of this particular point?
26. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
27. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
28. How do you think you should apply this chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES WITHIN THE CHURCH**

Discussion questions for chapter ten, “Why Fellowship with the Church?”

1. What evidence do you see in contemporary society of people wanting a greater sense of community? Why does being made in the image of God cause people to crave community?
2. What is the biblical term for the spiritual dynamic within Christian community? Consider each of the terms used in the previous question. Why is it (or is it not) appropriate to refer to fellowship as “the spiritual dynamic within Christian community”?
3. Why do you agree or disagree with the connection between fellowship and the local church which Whitney makes in this statement on page 148: “Consistent and life-sustaining fellowship in the New Testament is inseparably joined to intimacy within a believing community.” What implication does this have for those who are content with the fellowship they have via the “regular contact with believers outside a church setting”?
4. Although the Greek word *koinonia* is usually rendered “fellowship” in our English Bibles, it is translated a number of ways in the New Testament and in secular Greek usages. What is the essential concept in all these translations of *koinonia*? (Page 149.) While Christians share in many things, what do they share in above all else? (Page 149.)
5. In light of the intimacy found in so many other kinds of relationships between family members, friends, and others, how can Whitney claim that “Christian fellowship is unique”? (Page 150.)
6. What are some of the differences between socializing and fellowship? (Pages 150-151). Why do you think it is or is not important for Christians to understand and emphasize these differences?
7. On page 151 Whitney says, “Sharing in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and in the indwelling of the Spirit of God gives us more to talk about than the world dreams of.” “Why then,” he asks us, “are Christian gatherings (whether it’s two believers or the whole church) so often characterized by conversations about everything *except* the things of God and Christian living?”
8. While Whitney acknowledges that a kind of fellowship occurs when Christians worship or serve God together (page 151), clearly he believes that the heart of true *koinonia* is *talking*, and in particular, talking about God and/or the things of God. If he is right, what challenges does this present for our experience of *koinonia*?
9. What cultural factors today tend to inhibit fellowship?
10. What are some of the pros and cons of online or electronic fellowship? When does it become a substitute for, instead of supplemental to, face-to-face fellowship? What do 2 John 12 and 3 John 13-14 teach us in this regard?
11. Why do you agree or disagree with the heading on page 152 which says that through fellowship, “You Experience the Grace of God in Ways You Otherwise Cannot”?
12. What is your response to this warning on page 155: “Distance yourself from fellowship with the church, and there is a real sense in which you distance yourself from the grace of God”?
13. The section beginning on page 154 says that through fellowship, “You experience the Gifts and Grace Given to Others.” Describe how this happens. Describe an occasion when you experienced the grace of God ministering to you through fellowship with another believer.
14. Illustrate how a Christian’s “Practice of the Spiritual Disciplines Is Encouraged” through fellowship. (Page 155.)
15. What does Whitney mean when he says on page 156, “Of course, there’s a risk inherent in *koinonia*”? What does he mean by, “It is much better to have fellowship and be hurt than never to fellowship at all”? (Page 157.) There are people who would disagree; why?
16. Why do you agree or disagree with Whitney’s claim on page 157 that, “Fellowship is much like a bank in this regard: You must make deposits if you want to make withdrawals”?
17. Why is it or is it not possible for a person who regularly attends a good church to sinfully neglect fellowship?

18. On pages 159-160, Whitney says that “The privilege of fellowship with the church is costly.” What are some of the costs of fellowship? When are people willing to pay these costs? When are they not willing?
19. Review the description on page 160 of the gatherings Whitney called the “Fellowship/Theological Discussion Meetings.” Why do you think he said that these times of fellowship were “one of the most fruitful and unifying ministries of the church”? How do you think people in your church family would respond to such an idea?
20. Why is or isn’t a list of “fellowship-prompting questions,” like those found on page 161, useful to you? If such a list could be useful to you, what are some practical ways you could take advantage of it? Name some settings where you might be able to use such questions. What are some other questions that could cultivate koinonia?
21. Whitney closes the chapter with a section (pages 161-162) that attempts to persuade two specific types of people that the pursuit of fellowship is worthwhile. Does your recent experience with fellowship in the church cause you to also want to persuade people that fellowship is worthwhile, or does it leave you in need of persuading that fellowship is worthwhile? If you were to write an addendum to this chapter, what would you say?
22. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
23. What surprised you in this chapter?
24. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
25. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
26. What’s a good illustration of this particular point?
27. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
28. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
29. How do you think you should apply this chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES WITHIN THE CHURCH**

Discussion questions for chapter eleven, “Why Pray with the Church?”

1. What is your response to the statistics on page 163 about the frequency of prayer among American adults?
2. Reread the part of the quotation from Gene Getz, beginning with the word “Consequently” on page 165. Do you think it’s true that we “‘individualize’ many references to corporate experience in the New Testament”? If so, why? If we were to conform to Getz’ understanding of “corporate experience” in our churches, what would be different?
3. Comment on Whitney’s belief that, “Praying with the church is what Christians eagerly do when they are full of God.” (Page 164.)
4. Why does Whitney say on page 165 that the promise about prayer in Matthew 18:19-20 is often misapplied? What would prompt E.M. Bounds to declare, “Let it be noted with emphasis that a church which is careless of discipline will be careless in praying”? (Page 166.)
5. What part of the promise in Matthew 18:19-20 indicates that the promise can be applied to “any united prayer”? Why is this promise necessary since the Bible teaches us that God is present everywhere?
6. What is the difference between “mutual prayer and united prayer”? (Page 166.)
7. Why do you agree or disagree with T.W. Hunt’s principle: “The closer the bond, the more powerful the prayer; the higher the unity, the greater the authority in prayer.” (Page 167.)
8. Read 1 Peter 3:7. What connection can you make between this verse and T.W. Hunt’s principle of united prayer?
9. Why did the church in Acts 4:29 pray for boldness to speak the Word of God instead of praying for protection or the removal of persecution? (Pages 167-168.) In your experience, when have you heard Christians praying this way in the face of opposition to the gospel? What are some current situations where there should be united prayer for the effectiveness of the gospel and the church?
10. Why should a preacher with the knowledge, experience, and skills of the apostle Paul so frequently request prayer for himself and his preaching? (Pages 168-170.) Why do you think Paul always requested prayer for himself and his preaching instead of for those who would hear him?
11. Comment on Whitney’s words from page 170: “Why have a church, why be part of a church that has little or no power to change lives? Yet such power comes from God alone, and He gives it only to churches that pray. So if you will not pray with your church, what lasting benefits can you expect from your church?”
12. Why do you or do you not believe that the same kinds of spiritual movements like those described on pages 170-172 still occur today? What do you think the spiritual condition of each situation was prior to these dramatic events? How should this affect our corporate prayer for reformation and revival?
13. What’s the best example you’ve seen of a church praying for evangelism and missions? What are three ideas that might help your church move toward more united prayer for evangelism and missions?
14. How do you respond to Whitney’s assertion on page 173 that, “Some of the things you seek from God may not be given except when others in your church pray for you”?
15. Why is it that, “Somehow it seems a sign of spiritual weakness if we have to ask others to pray for us”? (Page 173.) What are some practical guidelines regarding the times and ways to ask for prayer?
16. Why is it “neither normal nor healthy Christianity” to “ask for prayer from people in the church and . . . pray for others in return, but . . . not . . . pray *with* these same brothers and sisters”? (Page 174.)
17. Why do you agree or disagree with the sentence on page 174 that, “If congregational or small group prayer isn’t part of your Christian life, there’s a problem”? (Page 174.)

18. How should we reply to those who say that they are uncomfortable praying aloud with others? (Page 174.) What are some ways that have helped you or others you know overcome their reluctance to pray aloud with others?
19. On pages 174-175 are several suggestions for becoming “an active part of the prayer life of your church.” Which of these deserves special attention in your church? What are some other suggestions not listed in this section?
20. In your experience, what church has been the most effective in mobilizing its people to pray together? Explain your answer. What’s one thing that other churches and/or their leaders could do to follow that church’s example?
21. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
22. What surprised you in this chapter?
23. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
24. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
25. What’s a good illustration of this particular point?
26. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
27. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
28. How do you think you should apply this chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES WITHIN THE CHURCH**

Discussion questions for chapter twelve, “Why Learn in the Church?”

1. After the opening illustration about the important contribution of codebreakers in World War II, Whitney first says that, “God has *not* spoken to us cryptically” in the Bible, and that “Any person who has the Holy Spirit . . . has both the ability to understand the Scriptures and the right to interpret them for himself.” But then he says that God has given us “codebreakers” in the church and intends for us to learn from them. Why is or isn’t this a contradiction? (Pages 177-178.)
2. Why do you think the church is described in 1 Timothy 3:15 as “the pillar and ground of the truth”? (Page 179.) What are some practical ways that the church fulfills this function? In what ways do some churches fail in the role of “pillar and ground of the truth”?
3. What kinds of things does a faithful “pillar” church teach that sound like code to people? What should the church say to those (whether inside or outside the church) who criticize the church for talking about things so unfamiliar to people? (Page 180.)
4. How should the church reply to those who say that the “pillar” is flawed, its messengers are flawed and sometimes corrupt, and therefore the pillar’s message cannot be trusted? (Page 180.)
5. Why can’t a Christian ingest a sufficient amount of God’s truth through radio, TV, the Internet, and/or seminary classes? (Pages 180-181.)
6. How can learning in the church include more than just the academic side of discipleship? Why is “more than just the academic side of discipleship” important? (Page 181.)
7. Comment on Whitney’s claim on page 181 that, “Learning in the church is always richer and better balanced than learning alone or through media.”
8. What should we say to those who consider a minister on radio or television to be their pastor? (Page 181.)
9. Why has God placed in the church people with the gift of teaching? According to Jonathan Edwards, what is implied in the fact that God has “made it the duty of some to take pains to teach”? (Page 182.)
10. Excluding those in vocational Christian ministry, who is the best teacher you’ve had in church? Why?
11. In addition to those whose ministry in the church is explicitly or primarily that of teaching, from whom else in the church should we learn? If you answered, “Everyone,” do you mean that literally? How can a relatively new believer teach a person who’s been a mature believer for years, or a nearly illiterate Christian teach anything to someone who can study the Bible in its original languages of Hebrew and Greek?
12. According to the greatest of all God’s commandments (found in Mark 12:30), what does God want most from us? How does this relate to the topic of this chapter, “Why Learn in the Church?”
13. Picture a true Christian who loves God, but who manifests a lack of love for God with all the mind. What are some signs by which a lack of love for God with the mind might show itself?
14. Explain Whitney’s statement on page 183 that, “Loving God with all your mind means loving Him with what you *mentally initiate*”? Give an example of this.
15. What does he mean on page 184 by loving God with “what you *mentally cultivate*”? Illustrate how the church can help us do this.
16. Explain and illustrate what Whitney means on page 184 by, “You love God with your mind by what you *mentally tolerate*.”
17. Why do you agree or disagree with Whitney’s assertion on page 185 that, “If we do not learn with the church we are likely to drift into erroneous, individualistic interpretations of Scripture.”
18. Comment on the remark found on page 185 that, “There is only one true interpretation of any passage, even though it may have countless applications.” How is it, as Whitney maintains, that

“Learning in the church tends to guide us better toward this meaning and steer us from an individualistic understanding of the passage”?

19. Why do you agree or disagree with Whitney’s belief (stated on page 186) that, “The most important way of learning in the church [is] by listening to the preaching of God’s Word”?
20. What are some other ways of learning in the church that are often overlooked or neglected by individuals or by churches?
21. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
22. What surprised you in this chapter?
23. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
24. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
25. What’s a good illustration of this particular point?
26. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
27. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
28. How do you think you should apply this chapter?

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR
SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINES WITHIN THE CHURCH**

Discussion questions for chapter thirteen, “Why Research the Church?”

1. Why should people already established in a church home spend the time to study material such as in this chapter on recognizing a good church? (Page 188.)
2. How can it be true “that all disciplines that have been addressed so far—attending, baptism, joining, listening to preaching, worshiping, witnessing, serving, giving, attending the ordinances, fellowshiping, praying, and learning—can be done in an unfaithful church”? (Pages 188-189.) See also 2 Timothy 3:5.
3. What would an unfaithful church like the one described in Revelation 3:1, a church which has “Activities and Reputation Without Life,” be like? (Pages 189-190.)
4. What would an unfaithful church like the one described in Revelation 3:2, a church which “Never Accomplishes Anything for God,” be like? (Pages 190-191.)
5. What would an unfaithful church like the one described in Revelation 3:3, a church “Has forgotten the Scriptures and Faithful Preaching,” be like? (Pages 191-192.)
6. What would an unfaithful church like the one described in Revelation 3:15-16, a church which “Is indifferent to the Things of God,” be like? (Page 192.)
7. What would an unfaithful church like the one described in Revelation 3:17, a church which “Has No Sense of Need or of Dependence Upon God,” be like? (Page 193.)
8. Whitney says on page 193, “I’ve seen strong believers leave a good church, then soon find themselves almost mindlessly going through the motions of Christianity. All the while their souls are starving.” Why is it so easy for people to find themselves a part of an unfaithful church like one of these?
9. Why do you think that, “Almost every book in the New Testament—22 of the 27—gives at least one warning about false prophets”? (Page 194.)
10. What’s an *over*reaction to the awareness that there are many false teachers in the church throughout the world? Why do some people believe that all ministers are either dishonest, ignorant, or spooky? (Page 195.)
11. The section on pages 195-196 is about ministers who disqualify themselves from ministry by becoming unfaithful to biblical standards. What are the best ways for discerning if this is occurring in the life of the minister at the church you are considering?
12. On pages 196-197, Whitney warns against becoming the kind of hearer described in 2 Timothy 4:3-4. On page 197 he says, “God has commanded preachers: ‘Preach the word!’ (2 Timothy 4:2), not merely stories that illustrate the word.” Describe the difference between the two kinds of preaching.
13. As you review pages 197-199, what is your reaction to the long list of insights into the character and methods of false teachers as described in 2 Peter 2?
14. Why do you think that more people don’t ask many in-depth questions of the pastor before joining a church? Why do you or do you not think it would be a good idea for a church to provide either a suggested list of questions for prospective members to ask the pastor, or a list of questions with his printed answers?
15. What questions might be helpful to add to the list on pages 200-202? What should we think when a pastor seems unwilling to answer key questions clearly, or refuses to answer such questions at all? (Page 202.)
16. Why is it or isn’t it justified to never return to a church if no one speaks to you on your first visit?
17. What do you think about Whitney’s question on page 205 for those searching for a church home: “Ultimately you may have to ask yourself, ‘Can I live with the things I don’t like about this church?’”
18. What does Whitney mean by, “A good church is worth a good distance”? Why is it “better to have a good church in a bad location than a bad church in a good location”? (Page 205.) Briefly describe when you learned one part or the other of this maxim by experience.

19. Why do you or do you not agree with the statement on page 206 that, “We can’t use the unfaithfulness of churches as excuses for disobedience to the command about not forsaking the assembly of ourselves together (Hebrews 10:25)”?
20. Review the story on pages 206-207 of the couple who moved to another city because of the advantages it offered in so many areas of life, only to regret the move when they realized the condition of the churches there, and the impact this had on their souls and family. What should people do to protect themselves from such regretful situations?
21. Is there anything you struggle with in this section/chapter? If so, what is it?
22. What surprised you in this chapter?
23. What new insight did you experience in this chapter?
24. What emotion did you experience in this chapter? Why?
25. What’s a good illustration of this particular point?
26. What was left unsaid in this chapter that you wish had been addressed?
27. Why do you think Whitney included this chapter?
28. How do you think you should apply this chapter?