



**WEEK OF NOVEMBER 5, 2017 - THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH**

1. Thinking back on this week's sermon, was there anything you heard for the first time or that caught your attention, challenged, or confused you?

2. What are the purposes of the church (separate from para-church organizations, government, family, etc.)? If you get stuck, try verses like John 4:23-24, Acts 2:42, Ephesians 4:11-13, and Acts 1:8.

3. What are some things the Church is doing that are not part of those purposes? Is that okay? Is this true of Valley Bible Church specifically?

4. Using your understanding of 1 Corinthians 12:4-27 and Ephesians 4:11-16, what is your God-given function within this part of the Body of Christ?

5. What biblical principles help guide how much one ought to give to their local church?

6. Using Hebrews 10:23-25 as a starting place, what does it mean to "not forsake our own assembling together" as a church? What are some signs that one may have slipped towards isolation in this way?

7. What are some common reasons people give for not attending church regularly? Recognizing that these can range from pat excuses to deep hurts, how can believers respond to these specific reasons?

8. Valley Bible Church is an independent church – without ties to any larger denomination. What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of this approach?

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

*Why We Love the Church: In Praise of Organized Religion* by Kevin DeYoung presents a loving case for church involvement to “the committed, the disgruntled, the waffling, and the disconnected.”

*Nine Marks of a Healthy Church* by Mark Dever uses nine critical qualities to measure the health of a church.

*The Church In God’s Program* by Robert Saucy is a biblical study of the Church through Scripture and history, and includes today’s contemporary problems.

*Stop Dating the Church!* by Joshua Harris is a quick but powerful read that reminds us that faith was never meant to be a solo pursuit, but a committed family.

*Life Together* by Dietrich Bonhoeffer gives practical advice on how life together with Christ can be achieved, even in the context of an underground movement in Nazi Germany.