

UP, IN, OUT:

We're in the middle of winter, and lots of people are feeling down and cooped up. How could our group reach out to and serve people in this season? Let's make a plan for some OUT.

OPEN:

As a group, try to come up with a list of 25 things people can be members of. How are some of these like or unlike church membership?

DIG:

At VCC, our understanding of baptism and the Lord's Supper has changed a lot over the years.

- How are our practices of these ordinances similar to or different from what is described in this chapter?
- What are your thoughts on the differences? Should we change to be more like what is described in the book?

Read 1 Corinthians 11:17-22

- What is the problem Paul is addressing?
- What does he say the Corinthian church is not doing?
- What is his reason for saying this?

Read 1 Corinthians 11:23-33

- What does Paul say we do (accomplish) when we celebrate the Lord's Supper?
- What is the warning given to us? What do you think it means? (They explain their understanding of this in the paragraph that overlaps p.74 and 75.)

Read the top paragraph on p.74 of the book

- What do the authors mean by baptism being the "front door into church membership?"
- Do you think we should require baptism (as believers, not as infants) for church membership?

In the next paragraph, they say, "the Lord's Supper is how we recognize one another as believers on an ongoing basis.

- What do they mean by this?
- Does communion at VCC function this way?

The book defines membership as "a church's *affirmation* and *oversight* of a Christian's profession of faith and discipleship, combined with the Christian's *submission* to the church and its oversight." p.75

- What do you think about this? Is this how membership is working at VCC?

REFLECT:

What do you think we should consider changing about membership, baptism, or communion at VCC?

APPLY:

Are there any steps you need to take to align yourself with the Biblical ideas of membership, baptism, and communion?

PRAY: