

UP, IN, OUT:

- Follow up with your plans from last time to reach OUT to someone or a group during this winter season.

OPEN:

- As you read the chapter on church discipline, how did it sit with you or make you feel?
- Can you think back to a time when a parent, coach, teacher, or someone else disciplined you out of love for you and for your own good?

DIG:

- On page 87, Jonathan Leeman states that church discipline is “an essential part of Christian discipleship.” What does he mean by this, and do you agree or disagree?
- On page 88, Leeman insists that sin leading to church discipline must be 1) unrepented, 2) verifiable, 3) significant. Come up with some examples and determine if they fit these criteria.
- According to the chapter, how does our world define love? How does the Bible define love?
- In what ways could church discipline be considered loving?

Read Matthew 18:10-20

- We typically think of God as the shepherd who searches for us - His lost sheep. Given that this parable is right before the church discipline passage, what other conclusion might we draw?
- Given your personality and history, which of the steps of church discipline outlined here would probably be most difficult for you to do?

Read 1 Corinthians 5

- How is this different than what Jesus described in Matthew 18? What are we to make of this?
- What are your thoughts about the final sentence of the chapter?

Read Galatians 6:1

- What additional perspective does this bring to our understanding of church discipline?

REFLECT:

- If a serious case of church discipline was brought before the congregation of VCC, and we were forced to decide whether or not to excommunicate the offender, how do you think we would deal with this as a church?

APPLY:

What can you do differently to create an environment within VCC that both prevents the need for church discipline and lays the groundwork for Biblical church discipline? (See p.99 for ideas)

PRAY: