



Cuyahoga  
Valley Church

# SERMON STUDY GUIDE

Week of 1.12.25

MATTHEW 18:15-17, 1 PETER 5:1-3, EXODUS 19:3-6 //

Joe Valenti

Please take the opportunity to revisit the CVC Equip  
Portrait of a Healthy LifeGroup on a regular basis

## CONNECT (10 MIN)

- ① What is something that especially stood out to you in the sermon from last week or this week, and why?

## EXPLORE (30 MIN)

**Create Context (5 min):** You can find the sermon recap video [HERE!](#)

### Study & Discussion (25 min)

**Read Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Peter 5:1-3, and Exodus 19:3-6**

- ② In his sermon on Sunday, Pastor Joe talked about how, in the modern West, we are encouraged by society at large to find meaning and purpose within ourselves, and then find affirmation for those things outside of ourselves. He called this “radical individualism.”
  - How and where do you see radical individualism in the world around us today?
  - In what ways do you think this cultural phenomenon of radical individualism shows up in the church today (hint: Joe addressed some of this in the sermon)?
- ③ Pastor Joe also said on Sunday that “radical individualism cuts at the root of God’s intended means for accomplishing His mission - namely, the church. If we’re going to succeed in our mission to invite people to new life in Christ, we will do it through biblical commitment, not radical individualism.”
  - What stands out to you in this quote?
  - How do you think we can, at CVC, seek to live out biblical commitment instead of radical individualism, both as a community and as individuals?



- ④ We talked on Sunday about how the words “church membership” don’t appear as such in Scripture, but the idea and heart of this kind of commitment to God’s people appear again and again. Read Matthew 18:15-17, 1 Peter 5:1-3, and Exodus 19:3-6. How do these passages help us to understand the importance, and the heart, of church membership?
- ⑤ What is your current reaction to the idea of church membership? Rejection, reluctance, or receptiveness? Explain your thoughts.
- ⑥ God designed every human being as a unique individual who also needs to live in community with others.
  - What are some of the blessings that come from each person being unique?
  - What are some of the blessings that come from living in a unified community with others?
  - What negative things can happen in an organization/society in which individualism is rejected and not valued at all?
  - What negative things can happen when individualism is valued in an extreme way and prioritized above biblical unity and community?
  - We can celebrate our uniqueness as individuals while also submitting to a unified, biblical community; in a practical sense, are there any changes you need to make in order to align more fully with God's design?

## PRAY AND APPLY

### 1. Pray for Open Hearts

Pray that those attending this weekend will have hearts prepared to hear and respond to the message, especially regarding the biblical call to covenant commitment in the church.

### 2. Pray for Conviction and Encouragement

Ask God to convict those who have resisted church membership and encourage those who are faithfully engaged, inspiring a deeper understanding of their role in the body of Christ.

### 3. Pray for Unity and Accountability

Seek God’s help in fostering greater unity within CVC as a covenant community, where members hold one another accountable in love and humility.

### 4. Pray for Leaders

Lift up our pastors, elders, and staff as they shepherd the congregation, asking God to give them wisdom, strength, and a deep sense of responsibility for the flock entrusted to their care.

### 5. Pray for the Church’s Mission

Pray that this message strengthens our ability to fulfill our mission of inviting people to new life in Christ, reflecting a community marked by love, commitment, and transformation.



## RESOURCES

CVC Staff Podcast on Church Membership (this needs to go out everywhere!)

Web: [https://www.buzzsprout.com/2109113?client\\_source=large\\_player&iframe=true&referrer=https://www.buzzsprout.com/2109113.js?container\\_id=buzzsprout-large-player&player=large#](https://www.buzzsprout.com/2109113?client_source=large_player&iframe=true&referrer=https://www.buzzsprout.com/2109113.js?container_id=buzzsprout-large-player&player=large#)

Spotify: <https://open.spotify.com/episode/2gRgFSYETp9Usqe4yXNh0k?si=14e3525a15f848b6>

CVC Why Membership Document

<https://cvconline.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/01/Membership-at-Cuyahoga-Valley-Church-2025.pdf>

Blog Posts

What is Church Membership? - <https://www.9marks.org/article/what-is-church-membership/>

Why Church Membership Matters - Alistair Begg: <https://blog.truthforlife.org/why-church-membership-matters>

What Does the Bible Say about Church Membership? - Alistair Begg: <https://blog.truthforlife.org/sermons-on-church-membership>

6 Reasons Why Membership Matters - Kevin DeYoung: <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/blogs/kevin-deyoung/6-reasons-why-membership-matters/>

Yes, the Bible Does Teach Church Membership (Part 1) - Greg Gilbert: <https://www.imb.org/2017/01/25/why-every-healthy-church-practices-membership-part-1/>

Yes, the Bible Does Teach Church Membership (Part 2): <https://www.imb.org/2017/01/26/bible-teach-church-membership-2/>

Book: The Why, the What, and the How of Church Membership

<https://us.10ofthose.com/product/9781633422889/the-why-the-what-and-the-how-of-church-membership-paperback>



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# WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Week of 1.12.25

Please take a moment to share these announcements with your group.

More information on each item can be found by scanning the QR codes.

## EQUIP

### Sunday Sessions Podcast

Sunday Sessions is a weekly theology class offered in the fall and spring. Each week various topics of doctrine and practice are explored from a conservative, evangelical viewpoint. Join us on Sunday mornings at 9:30am in Room 104/106 in the spring! If you can't make it or miss a week, catch up via our podcast [HERE](#).



## CVCKIDS

### Night to Shine: February 7, 2025

CVCKids will be hosting our annual Night to Shine event on February 7th. Night to Shine is a worldwide movement that is changing Valentine's Day from simply a celebration of love, to a celebration of God's love for people with special needs, and the value of life. We at Cuyahoga Valley Church are grateful that we have been chosen to participate in this event, and look forward to sharing the love of God. You can find out details about how to register a guest for the event or become a volunteer [HERE](#).



## CVCYOUTH

### Winter Retreat: February 21-23, 2025

Get ready to embrace the winter chill with a weekend of adventure, worship, and community at our upcoming CVCYouth Winter Retreat! This year we'll aim to deepen our prayerfulness as we take an in-depth look at the Lord's Prayer together. Cost: Early-Bird Pricing (1/12-1/19) - \$150, Regular Pricing (1/20-2/9) - \$175, Late Pricing (2/10-2/16) - \$200. You can register your student [HERE](#).

