

Christ Community Church

Community Group Discussion Guide for Week of September 20, 2026

Announcements

1. **Community Group:** Be sure to access your Community Group document to sign up to bring a snack or dessert item to a future Community Group?
2. **Boiler Room Prayer Gathering:** Join others on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of every month at 9:00 AM in the YMCA to pray for ourselves, our neighbors, our city, and whatever else.
3. **Future Meetups:** Next Women's Meetup is Oct. 1 from 7:30 to 9:00 PM at the Collins Home for a Bonfire - Next MAC Sunday is Sept. 13 at Mac's Pizza Pub in Blue Ash after Church - Next Men's Meetup is October 15 from 7:30 to 9:00 at Hoppin' Vines in Kenwood.
4. **OGB Coat Drive:** Bring new and gently used coats to the Operation Give Back donation bin at the Blue Ash YMCA Starting September 1st-October 18th to help keep local children and families warm throughout the winter months.
5. **2nd Annual BBQ Birthday Bash:** Join us after the service on October 4 as we celebrate Christ Community Church's 2nd birthday! We'll have BBQ, birthday cake, and plenty of time to celebrate together, and weather permitting, the splash pad will be open for the kids. Be sure to sign up online to bring a side and submit your T-shirt size so we can have a shirt ready for you!

Opening Question

What's something that didn't go according to plan for you, but makes for a good story now?

1 Samuel 5:1-12

Leader's Note: Open with a brief prayer, asking God to make the group receptive to His Word. Then invite someone to read the passage aloud. (For longer sections, consider dividing the reading among several people.)

[1] When the Philistines captured the ark of God, they brought it from Ebenezer to Ashdod. [2] Then the Philistines took the ark of God and brought it into the house of Dagon and set it up beside Dagon. [3] And when the people of Ashdod rose early the next day, behold, Dagon had fallen face downward on the ground before the ark of the LORD. So they took Dagon and put him back in his place. [4] But when they rose early on the next morning, behold, Dagon had fallen face downward on the ground before the ark of the LORD, and the head of Dagon and both his hands were lying cut off on the threshold. Only the trunk of Dagon was left to him. [5] This is why the priests of Dagon and all who enter the house of Dagon do not tread on the threshold of Dagon in Ashdod to this day.

[6] The hand of the LORD was heavy against the people of Ashdod, and he terrified and afflicted them with tumors, both Ashdod and its territory. [7] And when the men of Ashdod saw how things were, they said, "The ark of the God of Israel must not remain with us, for his hand is hard against us and against Dagon our god." [8] So they sent and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines and said, "What shall we do with the ark of the God of Israel?" They answered, "Let the ark of the God of Israel be brought around to Gath." So they brought the ark of the God of Israel there. [9] But after they had brought it around, the hand of the LORD was against the city, causing a very great panic, and he afflicted the men of the city, both young and old, so that tumors broke out on them. [10] So they sent the ark of God to Ekron. But as soon as the ark of God came to Ekron, the people of Ekron cried out, "They have brought around to us the ark of the God of Israel to kill us and our people." [11] They sent therefore and gathered together all the lords of the Philistines and said, "Send away the ark of the God of Israel, and let it return to its own place, that it may not kill us and our people." For there was a deathly panic throughout the whole city. The hand of God was very heavy there. [12] The men who did not die were struck with tumors, and the cry of the city went up to heaven.

Discussion Questions

1. In **1 Samuel 5:1–5**, the Philistines place the ark beside Dagon as a symbol of their victory, but God shows that His glory has not been diminished by Israel's defeat. **Tell us about a time when difficult circumstances affected what you believed about God.**

Potential Follow Up Question(s): Looking back, do you see that situation differently now? Why or why not?

2. In **1 Samuel 5:3–5**, Dagon repeatedly falls before the ark, showing that God does not need His people to defend His power or glory. **Where in your life do you feel**

pressure to control an outcome that ultimately belongs in God's hands?

Potential Follow Up Question(s): What makes it difficult to release that outcome to God? What might entrusting that outcome to God actually look like?

3. In **1 Samuel 5:6–8**, the people of Ashdod recognize that God's hand is against them, but rather than submitting to Him, they try to solve the problem by moving the ark somewhere else. **In our own lives, why do you think it can feel easier to change our circumstances than to allow God to change us?**

Potential Follow-Up Question(s): What might it look like to submit our plans to God rather than trying to get God behind our plans?

4. In **1 Samuel 5:9–12**, the Philistines discover that they cannot escape God simply by moving the ark from one city to another; ultimately, God remains in control. **How could trusting that God is in control free us to remain faithfully present in the places and relationships where He has put us?**

Potential Follow-Up Question(s): Where might fear tempt you either to withdraw from others or simply go along with those around you? What could "faithful presence" look like for you there?

5. Throughout **1 Samuel 5:1–12**, Israel's circumstances seem to suggest that God has been defeated, while the reader can see that God is actually at work accomplishing His purposes. **What circumstance in your life right now is especially difficult to understand, and how might what we have seen about God in this passage shape the way you walk through it?**

Potential Follow-Up Question(s): What would it look like to let who God is shape how you understand and respond to that circumstance? How could this group encourage or pray for you as you seek to trust Him?

Prayer

Leader's Note: Wrap up your time by moving into prayer using ACTS—Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication—as a simple guide. Move naturally through each category, inviting group members to share requests as appropriate before you begin praying together, encouraging others to pray for them as they feel led, then close by thanking God for His Word and for your time together.

- **Adoration:** Praise God for who He is and what He has done, expressing your love, worship, and delight in Him.
- **Confession:** Honestly acknowledge the ways you have failed to trust God and His promises and to love Him and others as you should, receiving His forgiveness through Christ and asking for His grace to grow in faithful obedience.
- **Thanksgiving:** Thank God for His grace, His provision, His faithfulness, His answered prayers, and the blessings that are yours in Christ.
- **Supplication:** Ask God to work in your life, your family, your church, your neighbors, and throughout the world, praying that His kingdom would come and His will would be done.

Closing Prayer Prompt

God our Father, help us to trust who You are even when we do not understand our circumstances. Free us from fear and help us to remain faithfully present wherever You have placed us, trusting that Jesus Christ is risen and reigning and that You are always faithful to Your people. Amen.
