

DISCIPLESHIP RESOURCES

DISCUSSION GUIDES

EVERY MONDAY

Discussion Guide

Sunday Sermon 9.20.26



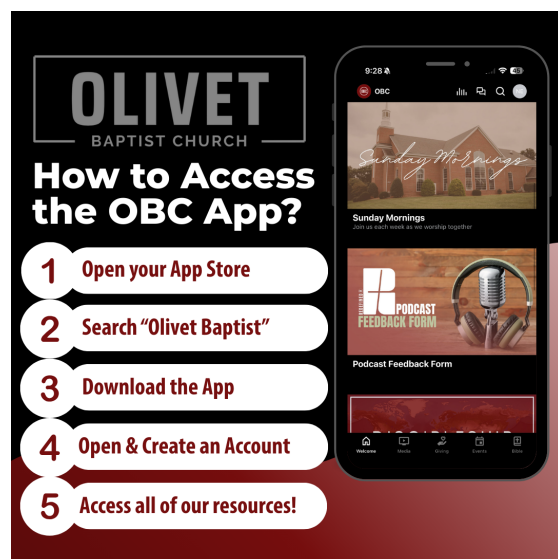
Reestablishing God's Standard in the Church

INTRO

This guide is designed to help your family or group take what was taught on Sunday and move from simply hearing the information to applying it in ways that build up and encourage one another. Feel free to adjust the depth and number of questions based on your time and the size of your group.

Access the Sermon on the Website & App:

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OVERVIEW

This week's sermon introduced a new series through the book of 1 Timothy. Using the 1919 Boston Molasses Disaster as an illustration, the pastor challenged the church to honestly evaluate whether we are living up to God's standard for the local church — not our own traditions, not what seems to be working, but what Scripture actually says. The guide below is designed to help your group dig deeper into these ideas together.

Key Takeaways

- Just because nothing has collapsed does not mean the structure is sound. Warning signs must be taken seriously before disaster strikes.
 - God has a clear standard for how the local church should operate, and we must constantly return to Scripture to evaluate ourselves against that standard.
 - Paul wrote 1 Timothy so that believers would "know how to conduct themselves in the house of God" (1 Timothy 3:14-15).
 - True discipleship is not just an information download. It requires letting someone into your life so they can watch how you live.
 - The church is blood-bought believers who recognize Christ as head, who consistently gather and fellowship, and who submit to God-given leadership.
 - The central question for this entire series is: Are we a biblical church that is up to God's standard?
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Icebreaker

Think back to a time when you ignored a small warning sign in any area of life — a relationship, a car, your health, anything — and it eventually became a bigger problem. Share that experience with the group. What kept you from addressing it sooner?

Discussion Questions

Getting Into the Text

1. Read 1 Timothy 1:1-2 together. Paul calls himself "an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God." Why do you think it mattered to Paul to establish his authority right at the start of this letter? What does that tell us about the seriousness of what he is about to say?
2. Read 1 Timothy 3:14-15 together. Paul says he is writing so that Timothy will relay to the church how to "conduct themselves in the house of God." What does the phrase "house of God" bring to mind for you? How does it change your perspective to think of the church as a household rather than a building or an organization?

3. The sermon described the church as having three marks: blood-bought believers who recognize Christ as head, consistent gathering and fellowship, and God-given leadership. Which of these three do you feel your group or church does well? Which one do you think is most easily neglected, and why?

Going Deeper

4. The pastor made a distinction between capital-A Apostles and the broader idea of being "sent." He also said that every believer has a role in living out the Great Commission. In your own words, what does it mean to be sent? How does that apply to your everyday life?
5. The sermon described two parts of discipleship: teaching and letting someone into your life. The pastor said, "A Bible study is part of it, but it is not the whole piece." What has been your own experience with discipleship? Have you had someone let you into their life, or have you done that for someone else?
6. The pastor said, "I think what we've ended up with is a lot of spiritual orphans. We've got a lot of brothers and sisters. We don't have many parents." What do you think contributes to that reality in the church today? What would it take to change it?
7. The sermon listed several things the church is not: a casual get-together of believers, a gathering that ignores non-negotiable biblical truths, a building, or an external program. Were any of those surprising to you? Has your own understanding of church ever leaned too heavily on one of those definitions?
8. Hebrews 10:24-25 calls believers not only to assemble but to exhort one another. The pastor pointed out that we often focus on the gathering and miss the fellowship. What is the difference between simply attending church and truly fellowshiping with other believers? What does that look like practically in your own life?

Personal Reflection

9. The pastor closed with three questions. Take a moment and work through them honestly as a group:
 - Are you saved? Not just a church member or church attendee, but genuinely born again?
 - Are you committed to a local body?
 - Are you willing to let God have the final say in how the church operates, even when it challenges your preferences or traditions?
 10. The central question for this entire series is: "Are we a biblical church that is up to God's standard?" As you begin this study, what is one area of church life — or your own personal involvement in the church — where you feel God might be calling you to honest evaluation?
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Practical Applications

This Week, Choose One or More of the Following:

- **Read ahead.** Work through 1 Timothy chapter 1 on your own before the next sermon. As you read, write down one thing that challenges you and one question you want to bring back to your group.
- **Identify a spiritual son or daughter.** Pray and ask God to show you one person in your life who is younger in faith that you could begin investing in more intentionally. Consider what it would look like to not just teach them but to actually let them into your life.
- **Identify a spiritual parent.** If you feel like a spiritual orphan, pray and ask God to bring a spiritually mature believer into your life. Then take a step toward that person — ask them to coffee, ask them a hard question, or simply tell them you would like to learn from them.
- **Evaluate your fellowship.** Reflect honestly on whether you are gathering and fellowshiping with your local church body. If you are only showing up on Sundays and leaving without real connection, take one step this week to go deeper — join a small group, reach out to someone you do not know well, or serve alongside others.
- **Pray for the church.** Set aside time this week to specifically pray for your local church body — its leadership, its future, and its faithfulness to God's standard. Ask God to give you a genuine love for the church the way He loves it.

Closing Prayer Points

- Pray for a spirit of honest self-evaluation as your group works through this series together.
- Pray for anyone in the group who may be wrestling with the question of whether they are truly saved.
- Pray for the leadership of your church as they shepherd the flock.
- Pray that God would raise up spiritual fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters within your body.
- Pray that your church would be willing to let Scripture — not tradition, not preference, not what seems to work — have the final say.