

**Big idea: God’s design is for Christians to be nurtured, protected, and raised in the context of a covenant community known as the church. There is no place on earth like it! Find a good one and join in!**

**I. REVIEW (Preview): LIFE IN THE BODY**

- A. Every believer needs to **GROW**      What small group are you in?
- B. Every believer needs a place to **SERVE**      Where do you serve?
- C. Every believer is a **MISSIONARY**      Who are you praying for?
- D. Every believer needs a place to **BELONG**      Are you connected?
- E. Every believer is called on to **GIVE**

**II. A PLACE TO BELONG**

**A. The church’s VITAL role**

- 1. Christ’s **COMMITMENT** to the church
- 2. **BLESSINGS** you can’t get anywhere else
  - a. There are many things God will do for you just because you are one of His **CHILDREN**.
  - b. There are other things God will only do for you when you are a **FUNCTIONING** member of His Body.

**B. The VALUE of membership**

- 1. It identifies you as being part of God’s **FAMILY**
- 2. It provides a spiritual family to **SUPPORT** and encourage you in your walk with God
- 3. It gives you a place to discover and use your **SPIRITUAL GIFTS**
- 4. It places you under the spiritual **PROTECTION** of godly leaders
- 5. It gives you the **ACCOUNTABILITY** you need to grow

**C. What to LOOK for in a church**

- 1. God-honoring **WORSHIP**
- 2. Biblical **INSTRUCTION**
- 3. Caring **FELLOWSHIP**
- 4. Loving **ACCOUNTABILITY**
- 5. **OUTWARD** focus

**III. APPLICATION**

- A. The Christian life involves not only believing – it includes belonging. Look out for each other – be there for someone!**
  
- B. We grow stronger in Christ by being in relationships with other Christians. You will never reach your full potential unless you are connected to other believers in a local church fellowship.**