



GATHERED

The Empowered Presence of God's People

STUDENT GUIDE

SESSION ONE: The Outpost of Heaven

A Study on the Church by



SMYRNAFIRST
BAPTIST CHURCH



Session One

THE OUTPOST OF HEAVEN

This study has been created in hopes that it will help us all consider the biblical vision of the church. As such, we sincerely hope you will take time each week to interact with the Scriptures in preparation for the weekly video lesson. This Student Guide gives you three opportunities to sit down with God's Word each week.

You are also encouraged to spend some time in conversation with other believers about the lesson. This study will at times challenge your notions of the church. As you study, train yourself to hold loosely to your own concepts of what is right and wrong in the church and search the Scripture to clearly see what God says is right for the church. Our prayer is that you would fall more in love with Jesus through this study and worship him with greater passion, truth, and power.

DAY 1

Write down a definition of the church. Discuss the definition you write with others in your Sunday School class. Save this definition so that you can look at it again when the study has ended to see if you have grown or changed in your views or ideas about the church.

What do you think of when you hear the words *theology* and *doctrine*? Are your thoughts and feelings toward these words positive or negative? Why?

Read Ephesians 4:11-15. What is the main purpose of gifted leaders in the church? What themes do you see in these verses that are associated with God's people?

Sometimes in the church, we make a practice or tradition out of things that are cultural instead of biblical. Try to make a short list of church practices that are purely cultural and not directed by Scripture.

DAY 2

Read Hebrews 5:11-6:20. What problem is the writer addressing?

Look carefully at verses 9-12. What gives the writer encouragement when he thinks of the church? What end does he hope their full assurance will bring?

What major Bible events are discussed in verses 13-20? How would you summarize the actions you read about in these verses?

What is the anchor we have for our souls? How does it personally help you live your life?

DAY 3

Read Genesis 22:15-18, Exodus 20:1-21, and Jeremiah 31:31-34. What do these texts have in common? How are they different?

Read Romans 5:1-2. What observations about the church can you make from this passage.

Romans 1:16 speaks clearly of the gospel. What else does it address?

Read John 16:16-17 and Revelation 21:3. What primary promise is God fulfilling here. What can we learn from these texts about the practices of the church?