
Study 1

Why Jesus Loves the Church

Get Talking

1. Consider our city, our country and the wider world. What state do you think the Christian church is in? How do you think God feels about the church today?

Investigate – Image #1

2. Read Isaiah 54:4-10; 62:4-5 and Hosea 2:14-20. What image does God use here to describe his people? Why is this surprising?
3. Read Ephesians 5:21-33. In this great passage on marriage, what is the unexpected twist in Paul's argument?
4. How does this passage describe Christ's love for the church? What does he treat her? Why does he do it?
5. Read Revelation 19:6-9. What does the future look like for God's church?
6. What does the picture of the church as a bride say about us? What are the implications for how we think about our own church?

Investigate – Image #2

7. Read 1 Corinthians 3:9-17. What is the dominant image used here for the church? Who is God in this metaphor? Who are we?
8. What does this image say about the church? What does it say about God?
9. Read Ephesians 2:19-22. Why is the picture of the church a temple of God so profound? What does this mean for how we think of one another within the church (hint: look back at v14-18)?

Investigate – Image #3

10. Read Ephesians 1:18-23 (see also Ephesians 5:23; 1 Corinthians 12:27). In addition to the bride and the building, what other image is used of the church here?
11. What does it mean that the church is the body of Christ in terms of a) how we think of Christ and b) how we think of each other?
12. Think of all three images – what do they tell us about how much Christ loves his church?
13. How do they challenge how we think about our own church?