



**Group Discussion Guide**  
**January 13, 2019**  
**Build STRONG Family Together**

The size of a church is no sure indicator of its strength. Just like a building structure, a church's durability is demonstrated when pressure is brought against it. When testing comes, can it withstand and continue to move forward in step with Christ? A church is only as strong as the strength of her individual members, the strength of her leadership, and the strength of her foundation. Due to weather, many of you may have missed Bart's sermon for January 13. Please go back and listen on the Parkside YouTube channel as he addressed our process of leadership affirmation at Parkside which is so very important to understand and discuss.

**Our church is as strong as the spiritual health of our members**

**Read Matthew 7:24-27**

Jesus describes the formula for a personal life that is in tune with God and that can survive the inevitable trials that come with life.

- Share a time or two in your life when a trial came along, and you were sustained by your faith in Christ and your obedience to Christ.
- You may have experienced a time when you tried to survive on your own in a crisis, leaving Christ out of that event entirely. Would paying attention to Christ have made a difference as to the outcome of that?
- Do you feel that you are growing or stalled in your present relationship with Christ? Has your group discussed participation in the 10-week Rooted experience?

**Our church is as strong as our leadership**

**Read Ephesians 4:11-13, I Timothy 3:1-7, Titus 1:5-9**

As Bart stated on Sunday, our understanding of the scriptural references to bishops, pastors and overseers – are all one and the same level of leadership in a local church. At Parkside we use another biblical synonym, *elder*, to reference the 9 men who presently oversee the life and ministries of our church.

- Can you name the 9 men who serve as elders at Parkside?
- What do you see as the advantages of a church led by their own local leadership [like Parkside] as opposed to taking direction from a regional headquarters?
- What do you think the primary work of the elders should be in the life of Parkside?

## **Our church is as strong as our foundation**

**Read Isaiah 28:16, Psalm 118:22, Matthew 21:42, I Peter 2:4-6, Ephesians 2:19-22**

The only possible foundation and cornerstone for a church that honors God in the right way, is Jesus Christ.

- What did Jesus mean when he described himself as the one and only foundation and cornerstone of THE church, and of any church?
- What does that mean – what does that look like in the practicalities of what a church believes and how it functions?
- What must continually happen for a church to remain firmly and squarely on the foundation of Jesus? What could be the symptoms our church would exhibit if we ever started shifting off that foundation?