

PT. 1: A BLUEPRINT

THEME:

The church is not a place; it's a people living out God's mission. Wherever believers go, whether in the home, workplace, school, or community, the church is present and active.

SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 16:13–18

ICE-BREAKER

1. What's the most challenging set of instructions or "assembly required" project you've tried to follow? Did you stick to the blueprint or improvise?
2. Imagine you're starting a brand-new sports team or organization. What's the very first "foundational principle" you would include in the blueprint?

REFLECT (Read Matthew 16:13–18 together)

3. Jesus said, "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." (Matthew 16:18) What does this reveal about who builds the church and what its foundation is?
4. In Matthew 16, Jesus first asks, "Who do people say I am?" then, "Who do you say I am?" Why do you think Jesus ties Peter's confession of faith directly to the foundation of the church? (Matthew 16:13–17)
5. Why is it important to see the church as people, not just a place we go? How does this truth change the way you view everyday areas of life like work, family, school, and even politics? (1 Cor. 3:16–17; Eph. 2:19–22)

6. Jesus, not us, is the builder of the church. How does this truth give you confidence when you see the flaws, failures, or pressures facing the church today? (Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 3:11)

TAKE ACTION

7. If the "blueprint" of the church begins with confessing Jesus as Lord, how are you personally deepening that confession in your daily life right now? (Romans 10:9; Philippians 2:11; Matthew 16:16)
8. Since you are the church, what area of your life, whether marriage, work, parenting, friendships, hobbies, or civic life, needs to better reflect Jesus this week? (Colossians 3:17; Matthew 5:14–16)
9. One purpose of the church is ministry to God through worship. How does prioritizing worship personally and corporately keep the church aligned with Jesus' blueprint? (Psalm 95:6; John 4:23–24)
10. The other purposes are ministry to believers and ministry to the world. What's one way you can encourage another believer this week, and one way you can show Jesus to someone far from God? (Hebrews 10:24–25; Matthew 28:19–20)

CLOSING CHALLENGES

- **Practice:** Each day this week, pray Matthew 16:18 over your life and church: "Jesus, build Your church here, and let hell's gates not prevail."
- **Prayer:** Pray for unity and boldness in your group and church family, that you would not just do church but be the church Jesus designed, everywhere you live, work, and go.