

Week 16 | Church

What is the Church?

It doesn't really make sense to be a Christian that doesn't have a _____. And it's _____.

Hebrews 10:25-26 says, *"And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near."*

Jesus talked about the importance of the church in Matthew 16. Jesus said in verse 18, *"I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."*

A couple of things to remember about the church.

#1 Jesus is the L_____ P_____. He's the boss. He's in charge. We follow His leadership and His mission for the church.

#2 Hell itself cannot prevent the church from m_____ f_____ when it's on m_____ for Jesus. Hell cannot prevail against the church!

Jesus loves the church. Ephesians 5:25 says that *"Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her."* But what exactly do we mean by the word "Church?"

The New Testament Greek word for church is "ekklesia" and carries the idea of "those who assemble together" or "called out ones." Here's a definition of the church: The community of _____ true believers for _____ time.

When we think of the church we need to think of it as capital "C" church and lower case "c" church. Capital "C" church is the _____ church. It is anybody that has received Christ as Lord and Savior from thousands of years ago to today, in Indiana and Indonesia.

The lower case “c” are _____ churches. Each Christian should identify themselves with a local church.

So what makes up a local church?

It's a local group of people who have agreed upon a certain set of _____ (taught from God's Word), who live out the _____ of Jesus together, who have in place, the biblical o_____ of elders and deacons, and observe the o_____ of baptism and communion.



Whole Group Discussion

What are some of the excuses Christians make to not get plugged into a local church?

What kind of impact has your church had on your life and/or the life of your family?

What is the mission of the church? When Jesus called some of His disciples, He said to them (in Matthew 4:19), “*Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.*” In this we see three important parts to Jesus’ call to the disciple.

First of all, “*Follow me.*” And so we see that it’s important to m_____ disciples. Second, Jesus said, “*I will make you.*” It’s important to m_____ as disciples (as we follow Jesus’ leadership). And third, Jesus said He would make us “*fishers of men.*” We need to m_____ disciples of Jesus.

Jesus gave His disciples the “Great Commission”...

"And Jesus came and said to them, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.'" Matthew 28:18-20

These are the marching orders of His church. Some churches measure their success by the “3 B’s”... building, budget, and behinds in the seats. While a nice building and healthy budget and numerical growth are nice, they are not the ultimate measure of success.

The ultimate measure of success is the _____ of the mission of Jesus. Is the church making disciples of all nations?

While Sunday morning worship services are important, the primary place for discipleship to occur best is in smaller, intentional, relational environments.

Making disciples happens in _____ environments. That's the way Jesus did it in the Gospels.

We need s_____ relational groups in our lives because God c_____ us that way (Genesis 2:18). And because we need them to succeed as Christians (Hebrews 3:12-13).

We can accomplish more _____ than we can _____ (Romans 12:4-5).

Are you plugged into a local church? Are you just a _____ or are you an a_____ part of the church family?

God has not called us to simply attend a service; He has called us to be on mission for Jesus within a body of believers. The gates of hell cannot prevail against the church. Let's live like we believe it!



Small Group Discussion

What was the most challenging point made in today's session? How come?

Read Hebrews 10:23-25. How do these verses support what we've looked at today? What could it look like for you to "stir up one another to love and good works?"

How could you pour more into your local church?



Prayer Focus

How has the church helped you in your walk with Jesus? Take some time thanking God for your church and its leaders.