

Rediscover Church • Week 1 • What Is A Church?

1) "A Christian without a church is a Christian in trouble." The number who identify as Christians is far larger than the number who regularly attend church gatherings. Why do you think that is so? What things have kept you from going to church at times in the past?

2) What aspect of church means the most to you?

- Worship? - Preaching & Teaching? - Fellowship? - Service? - Outreach & Mission?

The word "church" (ekklesia) generally means "gathering" or "assembly," but the church is more than a gathering. It's more than a social club or community service organization. It's more than a support group; more than a concert with a TED talk. "Church" is so much MORE ...

Church is a group of people who know they have been loved by Christ and have begun to love one another like that. It's a local community of believers who gather for worship and scatter for witness. We share life together centered on Jesus for the good of one another and the world.

Church is an Embassy of Heaven, and when we gather together King Jesus is present in a unique and powerful way.

3) Preaching & People . . . "A church has something to do with a group of people gathering to be shaped by God's Word." How has the Holy Spirit used preaching in your life? How has he used his people? Why are both preaching and people essential to what the church is?

4) A Gospel Community . . . "More than anything else, your non-Christian friends need not just your gospel words but also a gospel community that testifies to the truth of those gospel words. You want them to watch the life of your church and say, 'God really does change people here in the church.'" In what ways is gospel community attractive to non-Christians? In what specific ways might the people in our community see God changing people in our church?

5) Heaven Touching Earth . . . How would it change your experience on Sunday if you remembered that you are worshiping alongside the whole host of heaven, and in the company of the Lord Jesus himself?

6) Loved & Loving One Another . . . "This is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us." (1 John 4:10-12) What is the basis of our love for others? Is this love optional? In what ways have you experienced Christlike love in the church? What encouragement do these verses offer us when it's difficult to love our brothers and sisters?

Prayer Prompts

- Pray for our church to grow in spiritual health and in numbers as we seek to glorify the Lord, to know him more, and to make him known.
- Pray for the unity of our church family, and for all Christians around the world.
- Ask the Lord to reveal practical ways you can engage with your family – How can you connect, contribute, protect, nurture, serve, and love the church well this Fall?