

Message Study Guide

(Scriptures & quotes from this week's message are available on thorncreek.church/live)

Warming up

1. What are your earliest memories of attending church? How old, who took you to church, and what songs do you remember?

Digging Deeper & Application

Take your time reading the scripture given. If possible look up the verses in different versions and pause at each verse and discuss it.

2. Read, Matthew 16:13-18.
 - a. According to this passage, who is the founder and CEO of the church?
 - b. How will it be built?
 - c. On whom?
 - d. Who is Peter?
 - e. Would you have chosen Peter?
 - f. How strong is the church?
3. Can you think about famous companies that are no longer around? Out of business?

How long has the church been in existence?

Do you think the company where you work will be around forever?

What will live longer, the church or your company?

Why is the church outliving every company?

4. The word church in the New Testament is a translation of the word ekklesia, which means "called out ones" or "assembly." It never refers to a building or place. When people think about "church" do they typically think of a building or people? Why or why not?
5. The birth of the church is found in Acts 1-5:42. It started with Pentecost, but there was one sermon that launched the church. Read it! It's found in Acts 2:14-41.
Every great church has humble beginnings. You can find sacrifice, struggle, pain, hurt, hurdles, and...commitment.
 - a. Can you think of any churches that God is using that have had humble beginnings?
 - b. What made them special?
6. What do you think of this quote from Rick Warren, "Build your people before your steeple."

7. According to Acts 11:26, what were Christ followers called for the first time? Our generation has created a new category that biblical and historical Christianity never conceived of: UNCHURCHED CHRISTIANS. Can you be a “Christian” and not go to church?
8. Give three reasons why people don’t go to church. What do you think about this quote from Francis Chan? "Due to our consumer mindset, people are prone to jump from church to church, which weakens the church overall."
9. What are some reasons to attend church? Compare with Hebrews 10:25. What do you think about this quote from H.B. Charles? "If you can miss church without missing church, something is missing."

Application

Below are some of the points shared in the message. Discuss how they apply to your life.

- First, the church in the New Testament as the New Testament teaches about the church is people, not places. The word church in the New Testament is a translation of the word **ekklesia**, which means “**called out ones**” or “**assembly**.” It never refers to a building or place.
- The church is the most powerful organization on earth. It’s made up of flawed people, sinner and saint, that worship and thirst for the Living God. It’s the bride of Christ. The Pillar of Truth. The Word of God is heard, the presence of God is experienced, the Holy Spirit is poured out, and lives are changed forever. There’s nothing else like it in this world.
- A strong family attends church together.
- A strong marriage attends church together.
- "Due to our consumer mindset, people are prone to jump from church to church, which weakens the church overall." - **Francis Chan**