

Go To Church And Be The Church | Discussion Guide - *Matthew 16:13-20*

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[Notes Video](#)

The New Testament definition of "church" is a body of believers that has been called out from the world by God, to live as His people under the authority of Jesus Christ. Unfortunately, while many people choose to attend church, few actually represent the Church (Jesus) in their community.

Matthew 16:18 (NLT) Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means 'rock'), and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.

There is no shortage of moral or ethical dilemmas in today's world. When faced with these challenges, what is your moral authority? An Ordinary Faith, REQUIRES that you embrace God's word (scripture) as your moral authority and that you depend fully upon God's Holy Spirit for understanding. This understanding is solidified and exemplified through the Church. Choose to represent Jesus in truth and love. Be the light that draws others into the presence of God.

Jesus' Plan IS The Church

Jesus diligently built the church (His bride) as a foundation to support His followers. In building the Church, Jesus calls people to action and they respond. He lives inside of them and they call others. Each changed heart is a soul added to the church. We know that Jesus is coming back to claim His bride. Outside of her, there is no salvation, nor is there any long term solution for the world's difficulties.

Ephesians 3:10 (NLT) God's purpose in all this was to use the church to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.

What Does It Mean To BE The Church

Get Established.

Passively waiting for the right time or the right circumstance to BECOME the Church will only stall spiritual development. We must actively reach out and prioritize our relationship with Christ. Focus on that relationship, learn from it and be guided by it. Then, let your relationship with Jesus light the way for others.

Romans 12:2 (NLT) Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but **let God transform you** into a new person by **changing the way you think**. Then you will learn to **know God's will** for you, which is good and pleasing and perfect.

Get Equipped.

Identify the gifts that God has given you. If you don't know what gifts you have been given, get in the word, pray and listen to what God is telling you. Then use those gifts to carry out God's mission and build others up; when used rightly, your gifts will produce the fruits of the spirit.

Ephesians 4:11-12 (NLT) Now these are the gifts Christ gave to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. ¹² Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ.

Get Engaged.

Build up the church and build up each other. We are all fighting the fight and we all need support and guidance to keep our eyes fixed on God's purpose. It's time to SHOW the world how GOOD God is! Whatever it is that you get engaged in, do it CONSISTENTLY. When the laborers stop doing, they stop getting helped, saved, healed, and delivered.

Romans 2:4 (NLT) Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?

Jesus cares very much about His Church. We ARE His Church, so we must BE His Church. However, we cannot BE the Church without GOING to Church. Establish, Equip and Engage with the Bride of Jesus and serve as a testament of the goodness of God.

Talk About It...

- *What do you think are some important issues churches face today? Why?*
- *What do you think about turning to the Bible as your moral authority? What challenges arise when using the Bible as your basis for Truth?*
- *Review Matthew 16:18. How does Jesus build the Church? What does it mean for us that Jesus is the one who builds the Church?*
- *Review Ephesians 5:25-27. How does Jesus "fix" the Church? What do you think about that?*
- *Review 1 Corinthians 4:3-5. How does this verse affect our complaints about others? How can we use the verse to complain less about others?*
- *Discuss some practical ways to get established and equipped to BE the Church.*
- *Review Romans 2:4. How could we bring goodness to our community? What would you like to do?*
- *What would you like to share from today's topic with someone else?*