

Discussion Guide: August 3, 2025
Series: Church Matters
Message: What Is The Local Church?
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Take Home Truth: As a follower of Jesus, you need the local church to thrive.

Focus Passages

Matthew 16:15-19 (CSB): *“But you,” he asked them, “who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus responded, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”*

Ephesians 2:19-22 (CSB): *So, then, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God’s household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone. In him the whole building, being put together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. In him you are also being built together for God’s dwelling in the Spirit.*

1 Timothy 3:14-16 (NLT): *I am writing these things to you now, even though I hope to be with you soon, so that if I am delayed, you will know how people must conduct themselves in the household of God. This is the church of the living God, which is the pillar and foundation of the truth. Without question, this is the great mystery of our faith: Christ was revealed in a human body and vindicated by the Spirit. He was seen by angels and announced to the nations. He was believed in throughout the world and taken to heaven in glory.*

Discussion Questions

1. We all have experiences and thoughts about “church.” What have been some good, and possibly some difficult experiences, you’ve had with a local church? How did those experiences change or challenge your relationship with Jesus?
2. Look at Matthew 16:15-19. As Jesus builds His church, this means He is taking people out of the kingdom of darkness, and putting them into His kingdom. How does that change the way you see your own salvation? How does that change the way you see the local church as an outpost of the Kingdom of God?
3. Like a plant needs water, so every true follower of Jesus needs a relationship with the local church to thrive. Do you see your relationship to Jesus tied to your relationship with the local church? How can you step into a more active relationship with the local church?
4. Embracing the local church with all its flaws is vital to our growth in Jesus. How can remembering that Jesus is the one who builds His church help us when His people are difficult or hurtful?

Prayer: Take a moment to pray with thankfulness that God made you a part of His Church. Ask Him to grow your relationship with Jesus through your relationship to the local church.