

## I. ME

- A. Welcome/Online
- B. Series
  - 1. Questions/Framework
- C. So What About Questions

## II. WE

- A. Have you ever asked yourself why are you here? Why do you go to church? What's the point of church for you?
  - 1. Someone is making you?
  - 2. It feels good?, Music? Awesome snacks?
  - 3. Connect to God?
  - 4. Habit? What your family has always done?
  - 5. Want a good influence on your kids.
  - 6. Social/business connection?
  - 7. You'll feel guilty if you don't?
- B. Don't you know how many other things you could be doing right now?
  - 1. "That's what I said!"... I don't blame you
  - 2. Often I think God made me be a pastor just so I would go to church.
- C. **Going to church is often boring at best and harmful at worst.**
- D. **Boring**
  - 1. Like going to a lecture in French on the trade practices of 16<sup>th</sup> century Italian city-states.
  - 2. Sermons about ancient Jewish washing rituals.
- E. **Harmful**
  - 1. Guilt/fear/intimidation/duping people out of money
  - 2. The horrible things that have been taught and done by people calling themselves churches are too much to list.

- F. Not to mention church can just be **weird!**
  - 1. Speaking in tongues
  - 2. Slapping on the forehead
  - 3. Eating Jesus' body (?) and drinking blood (?)
  - 4. Happy songs about blood and death and crucifixion
  - 5. Weird insider words and phrases like... Blessed, Sinful, Glory Hallelujah, Propitiation, Washed in the blood of the lamb.
- G. "I love Jesus but I really don't like church."
  - 1. "Why can't I just worship God out in nature?" Or "I follow Jesus. By myself."
  - 2. Just don't see the point.
- H. And maybe that's it...
  - 1. **Church seems pointless b/c we've missed the point of the Church.**
- I. Maybe we don't really understand.
  - 1. When I read about the 1<sup>st</sup> JF's there's nothing boring about it.
  - 2. Life giving, not harmful.
  - 3. Maybe Dangerous, yes, but in the way helicopter rescues are dangerous.
  - 4. Weird? Yes but in the people who are paralyzed suddenly being able to walk kind of way.
- J. I think we often reject the idea of church b/c we don't know what it is for.
  - 1. And therefore it gets boring, weird, or even harmful.
- K. So what is it actually and what's the point?
- L. **Church isn't somewhere you go. It's something you are.**

### III. GOD (Matt 16)

#### A. Matthew Background

#### B. Passage Background

1. Caesarea Philippi
  - a. 150 mi north of Jerusalem
  - b. Named after Caesar Augustus (1<sup>st</sup> emperor) after he died in 14 AD
2. "Who do people say I am?"
  - a. John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, other prophets
3. "What about you? Who do you say I am?"
  - a. Most important question in history.

#### C. V. 16

1. Messiah- Anointed one (Christ in Greek)
2. Son of Living God
3. God's king over humanity
4. Jesus- "YEP"

#### D. V. 18a

1. Peter as leader
2. Jesus' Identity as foundation of CHURCH
3. **The Church was Jesus' idea.**
4. Will build CHURCH... predicting what will happen after he's done...
5. **Church-** German word for House of the Lord (building)
6. Not what Jesus was saying at all...
  - a. This confusion is one of the primary reasons people, you, me have a unfavorable opinion about "going to church"
  - b. Why churches have forgotten their purpose
  - c. **The Church is not a place you go...**

#### 7. Original word is **Ekklesia**

- a. Not religious word- Gathering, assembly, group... usually for a specific purpose
- b. Not a **place** built for a specific purpose but a **group of people** brought together for a specific purpose

#### c. **Jesus didn't create a place he created a people.**

- d. Who's identity and foundation and commonality was him and who he is.

#### 8. The purpose wasn't just to sit around...

- a. Talking about rules
- b. Staying busy and out of trouble, off the streets
- c. Keeping members happy
- d. Hearing each other sing once a week
- e. Being against anyone who wasn't inside the building

#### E. V. 18b.

1. Hades- realm of the dead
2. Death itself will not stop the Ekklesia.
3. Ekklesia will smash the gates of death
4. Jesus designed the Church to be God's multi-ethnic, multi-generational, unstoppable people doing his life-giving work on earth.

#### F. The church is Jesus' chosen tool to save the world

1. There's no Plan B.
2. **The real mission of the church is to bring real life to a hurt and dying world.**
3. Not to be the moral police, not to be the judges, but to be transformed by the love of Jesus and then model true life/love and share how to have it.

#### G. It's a mission we have all been invited to participate in.

#### **IV. YOU**

- A. So then why do we have Organized Church why can't we just all go and do our own thing?
- B. Jesus doesn't want something from you. He wants something for you... A new, transformed life.
  - 1. And the Organized Ekklesia is designed to help facilitate that new life.
- C. Often we think/feel/hear that the Church needs something from us in order to accomplish its purpose.
  - 1. In reality, the organized part of the Ekklesia is here to help YOU accomplish YOUR purpose.
  - 2. Often church leaders see themselves and organization as Luke Skywalker when in reality they should be Obi-Wan Kenobi. For those of you unfamiliar with Star Wars...
    - 3. **Ephesians 4:11-13**
  - 4. When the organized aspect of the Ekklesia is functioning as it should, then real transformation happens in people's lives.
- D. But that transformation doesn't happen by sitting back and watching...
  - 1. The Church is God's vehicle to transform people by giving them the ability to participate in the mission... to contribute.
    - 2. **Participation creates transformation.**
      - a. Like Luke Skywalker, Frodo Baggins, Teaching, Hands on Training...
- E. At CCC, we call that participation Contributing.

#### **F. Contributing on a team.**

- 1. When you serve others with others... you transform.
- 2. You have ownership, camaraderie, see the world differently and see your place in it more clearly.
- 3. There are even psychological and physical health benefits to serving others.
- 4. **Doing what's best for others is what's best for you.**

**G. AND** participation looks like...

#### **H. Contributing Financially**

- 1. Crosscreek doesn't work without support from normal people like you.
- 2. No denomination support, no mother church sponsorship
- 3. Every dollar we use to bring God's love and message of transformation to Salem and our neighbors comes from the people you are sitting next to... and a few who give from far away.
- 4. Might not believe this but for CCC to run smoothly it takes about \$13,000 monthly.
- 5. Sounds like it's for the church but it's actually for you.
- 6. Best way to strengthen faith is giving financially.
- 7. **The best vaccine for greed is generosity.**
- 8. **3-10 Challenge.**
- 9. Maybe start smaller with the goal of reaching 10% in a few months.
- I. Ever see injustice or tragedy and say, "I wish I could do something to help?"
  - 1. You can.
  - 2. On an individual level you can care for and even prevent by helping people discover God's love by contributing on a team...
  - 3. On a larger level we can do something together by contributing financially...
- J. If every American Jesus-Follower gave 10% it would create an additional \$165 billion.

1. Relieve global hunger, starvation, deaths from preventable diseases in 5 years
2. Solve the world's water and sanitation issues, specifically in places where about 1 billion people live on less than \$1 a day
3. Could eliminate illiteracy in 5 years
4. Provide food, clothing, shelter to all refugees in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East.

K. What could **WE** do?

1. Let's find out!

**L. Maybe not ready for these?**

1. Come back
2. Be consistent- Hard to be effective if you miss 75%.
3. Join a Connect group- Where the churching happens
4. For Salem Opportunity... bring your bottles and cans.

M. You can be a part of the greatest effort in the history of humanity

1. God's rescue mission for the people he loves.

N. So contribute... Paul calls the church a body.

1. A Jesus follower who isn't contributing or a part of the church really is like the appendix.
2. You're there but not really doing anything until you have a problem.
3. **If church seems pointless, boring maybe it's time to focus on the real point of church and contribute to the mission.**

- A. Thinking back on our passage where Jesus predicts his new movement.
- B. It must have seemed crazy or impossible to look at the power, sophistication, wealth of the Roman Empire...
- C. Looking at this city named after one of the most powerful men in history
- D. And hear Jesus say that what he was building, would change the world.
- E. What could they do?
- F. But Jesus was no ordinary rabbi, no ordinary man...
- G. Death couldn't stop him and now his Ekklesia is on a mission to bring life to the world.
- H. The Roman Empire is nothing but dust.
- I. Jesus' Ekklesia still thrives...
- J. Jesus is still building his Church and you are invited to participate and contribute to the greatest mission in the history of humanity...

**K. The Church is not FOR church people. The Church is God's rescue plan FOR the world.**

- L. Join the mission and watch yourself transform as you are used to transform the world.

**M. A life devoted to the Kingdom of God stands out in a world devoted to the Kingdom of Self – Carey Nieuhof.**