
EQUIP

**How is the church made? – Small Group Session Two
Week beginning 5th February**



How is the church made?

Last week, we were given a new vision of the real church; we are now part of a great 'gathering' in the heavenlies - all God's people joyfully gathered round Jesus as he speaks his word of the gospel, transforming us. This is an awesome vision and it is God's eternal plan. It is the goal of everything: a new humanity created in His Son, glorifying Him forever in His new creation.

Our small church family here in this world is a small reflection of that eternal reality. Whilst Jesus is with us by His Spirit when we gather and His word is spoken to transform us, our here and now churches are also divided, given to weakness, full of sinners and often full with those who don't belong to His eternal heavenly church - those who have not yet placed their trust in Jesus.

Now, for the next few weeks, we are going to learn some simple truths about this glorious church. This week, we are asking how is this church made? By what method or means are people being gathered into His kingdom?

So why not start the session by praying together? Ask God to show you once again the beauty of His plan for the church and to show us again the part we are to play in it? Then why not have a go at tossing around some answers to our main question this week - how do you think the church is made? What method or means? Who does what? And, having given you own answers, maybe think about the answer others who think differently to you or your group might give.

"I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

Matthew 16:18

Powerful Speech

1 The essence of church growth

To see how the church is made, we are not going to look at one passage, but several. Some are short, just a line or two, others are longer. Skim through each of these passages and, as you look at them, try to build up a picture of the main things we learn about how the church is made. This should take about 20 mins.

The goal is not to write down everything, but to list the main ideas that keep being repeated. Summarise the main thoughts, so you end up with four or five things that are needed for people to be gathered into the kingdom of God. Here are your verses...

- Luke 24:45-49
- Acts 6:7
- Acts 13:49
- Acts 14:21-22
- Acts 19:20
- Colossians 1:3-8
- 1 Thessalonians 1:4-10
- 1 Thessalonians 2:7b-13

Once you have got your four or five things, try to boil down your thoughts to a couple of words for each idea. Maybe try to give each thought a single word, maybe all with the same letter. Give it 5 mins and see where you get to.

(In our church we sometimes summarise our thought with four Ps. This week's video tells you how we have broken it down if that helps. You will have your own ideas.)

2 Unpacking your discoveries

The goal of the summary and single letters is just to help us think. It makes us clarify what we really mean and what is really important. Having done that, in the final 20 mins I want you to have a wide-ranging open discussion about your discoveries. How do they impact your life, your family, your group and our church.

What might you need to change, clarify or commit to in your life?

What might you need to do differently as a small group?

What might we need to think or do differently as a church?

