



April 15-16, 2023

“EKKLESIA” Week 1: “For His Glory”

Matthew 16:13-20 + 1 Peter 2:1-10

GATHER

- Describe a time in your life when you discovered the importance of the church. What were the circumstances? (If you’re still wrestling with the idea of the church, take the opportunity to share a bit about why and how your group could pray with or for you on this.)
- If you were at a weekend service, share your takeaways from the message you heard. What was something the Holy Spirit highlighted for you?

GROW

This weekend, the message was anchored in Matthew 16:13-20 and 1 Peter 2:1-12. Read these texts and answer the questions below to talk through the key ideas.

1. Understand Their Story

- a. Read Matthew 16:13-20. This is the first time that the word “church” is used in the Bible! What are all the different things you learn about the church in these verses?
- b. Read 1 Peter 2:3-12.
 - i. How is Jesus described in this text, and how is people’s relationship to him described?
 - ii. What are God’s people supposed to BE according to Peter?
 - iii. What are God’s people supposed to DO according to Peter?

2. Connect to His Story

- a. The 1 Peter passage is rich with Old Testament imagery.
 - i. Read Exodus 19:1-6. What images in Exodus appear in 1 Peter? What does this parallel language teach you about Peter’s conception of the church?

1. What does a priest do?
2. With this in mind, what does it look like for God's people in the New and Old Testament to be "royal priests?"

GO

- 3. Apply To Our Story** As the church, we glorify God by living as his people. We become his people when we come to Jesus (1 Peter 2:4), believe in him (1 Peter 2:6) and receive his mercy (1 Peter 2:10). He builds us into a spiritual house¹, and gives us a purpose: to be a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:5).
- We are called to offer up spiritual sacrifices (1 Peter 2:5, Romans 12:1-2)
 - to proclaim his excellencies (1 Peter 2:9)
 - and to act honorably, doing good deeds among unbelievers in order that they might glorify God (1 Peter 2:11-12)

How can you glorify God this week, as part of his church? Pick one or two of the four options below and reflect on how you can live as the church for his glory.

- a. Do you need to come to him, believe in him and receive his mercy?
- b. How can you be a "priest" this week? Priests bring people to God (intercession), bring God to people (evangelism and discipleship), and serve the people of God. Who can you intercede for in prayer? Who are those who don't currently follow Jesus that you could pray for by name? Who may need to be taught about God? Where and how can you serve the church?
- c. How can you proclaim God's excellencies this week as you talk to other Christians, or to non-Christians?
- d. Is there a "good deed" that you feel the Spirit nudging you to do at work, at school or in the places you live or volunteer, in order to bring glory to God?

¹ In the Old Testament, the people of God worshiped in the temple of God. In the New Testament, according to Peter and Paul, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in His people and we become the temple of God! See 1 Corinthians 3:16-17 and 1 Corinthians 6:18-20 for teaching on how this knowledge should transform our lives.

