

“Why Do We Need the Church?”



*Remember: The goal of small group is 100% participation. Everyone talks.

OPEN IT

- If you could start a club for anything in the world (and people actually had to join), what would the club be, and what would make it worth joining?
- What is something you once thought was important but eventually started asking, “Why do we even do this?” (Bonus points if it involves a family rule, a tradition, or something at work!)

READ IT:

- Mark 3:13–19
- 1 Peter 2:9
- Luke 6:40
- John 15:5

EXPLORE IT:

- **The “Why” Question:** The message begins by asking why we need the church. What answers have you heard to that question? What would you say to someone who likes Jesus but isn't sure about the church?
- **Called by Jesus — Mark 3:13–14:** Jesus called the disciples, and they came to him. What do you notice about the fact that Jesus called them before giving them a job to do? What might this tell us about what Jesus wants from us before he asks us to do something for him?
- **Chosen for a Purpose — 1 Peter 2:9:** Peter describes God's people as chosen to declare his praises. How might seeing yourself as someone God has chosen for his purposes change the way you approach an ordinary week?

- **Apprentices, Not Attenders — Luke 6:40:** Jesus says a fully trained student will become like their teacher. What's the difference between knowing a lot about Jesus and actually becoming more like him? What's one characteristic of Jesus you'd love to see growing in you?
- **Staying Connected — John 15:5:** Jesus says that apart from him, we can do nothing. Why is it possible to fill our calendars with church activities and still miss what Jesus wants to produce in us? What helps you stay connected to Jesus rather than just staying busy for him?
- **A Ragtag Team — Mark 3:16–19:** Jesus brought together a diverse group of imperfect people, including Matthew and Simon the Zealot, who came from very different political and social backgrounds. What makes it difficult for very different people to follow Jesus together? What might our differences allow Jesus to accomplish that wouldn't happen if we all thought alike?
- **From Developing to Deploying — Mark 3:14–15:** Jesus appointed the disciples both to be with him and to be sent out. Why do you think both are necessary? What can go wrong if we focus on spiritual growth without serving others—or on serving others without nurturing our relationship with Jesus?
- **The Church's Purpose:** If the church exists to help people find and follow Jesus, how should that purpose shape the way we spend our time, use our gifts, and care for people outside our church? Where might we be tempted to prioritize our own comfort over someone else's opportunity to encounter Jesus?
- **Authentic Discipleship:** The message reminds us that Jesus worked through imperfect disciples who sometimes failed him. How can a small group become a place where people are honest about their struggles while still encouraging one another to grow? What helps you feel safe enough to be real with other Christians?
- **Your Next Step:** The message ends by asking, “What's my part?” When you think about discovering, developing, and deploying faith in Jesus, which of those feels like your most important next step right now? What is one thing that might help you take it?

DO IT:

- **Be With Jesus Before Doing for Jesus.** Set aside 10 minutes on at least three days this week to read a Gospel passage, notice something about Jesus, and pray, “Jesus, help me become more like you in this area.” [Rhythm: Daily Devotion](#) · [Guidemark D: Depend on God](#)
- **Invest in One Person.** Identify one person you can encourage in their faith. Ask about their spiritual journey, listen without rushing to fix anything, and look for an opportunity to share what Jesus is teaching you. [Rhythm: Community](#) · [Sharing Your Story](#) · [Guidemark I: Invest in accountable relationships](#)

- **Serve Beyond Your Circle.** As a group, identify one practical need among your neighbors or in your community. Choose a specific way to meet it together, especially for someone who may not be able to repay you. [Rhythm: Serving · Outward Focus over inward fixation](#)
- **Become Apprentices Together.** Ask someone in your group to name one quality of Jesus they want to grow in. Check in with one another next week about what you are learning and where you need God's help. Keep the conversation encouraging rather than judgmental. [Rhythm: Community · Repentance · Guidemark I: Invest in Accountable Relationships](#)
- **Pray for Your Mission Field.** Write down the names of three people who need to discover or grow in faith in Jesus. Pray for them regularly this week, asking God to help you love them well and recognize opportunities to serve, invite, or share your story. [Rhythm: Prayer · Guidemark E: Embrace our responsibility to share Christ](#)

PRAY IT:

Father, thank you for calling us to more than simply attending church—you invite us to be with Jesus, become more like him, and join his mission in the world. Help us depend on your power rather than our own strength, and teach us to grow together as imperfect people who love and encourage one another. Give us eyes to see our neighbors, courage to share our stories, and willing hearts to serve wherever you lead us. Show each of us our next step in discovering, developing, and deploying faith in Jesus, so that together we can help others find and follow him. Amen.