



HEART FOR THE HOUSE

Part 4: #LocalChurch

Sermon Small Group Questions

Speaker: Pastor Dave Patterson

We will invest our lives to build the local church. THE CHURCH IS A BIG DEAL TO GOD & A BIG DEAL TO US. #LOCALCHURCH

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

We have provided all the Scriptures referenced in the sermon and some discussion questions for you to use to facilitate a discussion.

This Sermon Discussion Guide is only a tool to aid you in meeting the needs of your group. For most groups, there are too many questions to answer in one session together.

While the questions are important, remember your small group's goal is not to pound through the questions but to create an atmosphere that will foster true friendships, so knock yourself out with the discussion questions but spend more time laughing than answering the questions.

[Ephesians 3.9-11, NLT]

*I was chosen to explain to everyone this mysterious plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning. God's purpose in all this was **to use the church** to display his wisdom in its rich variety to all the unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. **This was his eternal plan**, which he carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord.*

[Ephesians 4.11-13]

The Church = *EKKLESIA* = those who have been:

- **called out** of darkness
- **called together** into a visible body
- **equipped for ministry** by God-appointed leadership

Four Things to Know About The Church

1. The Church is God's idea: God's plan, with His guarantee to success!

"I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it." - Jesus [Matthew 16.18]

2. The Church is where God's authority, favor, and gifts are released. [Matthew 18.15-17; 1 Corinthians 12.28]

3. The Local Church is where our spiritual growth takes place and our spiritual gifts are developed.

Growth requires connection.

[Romans 12.4-8, NLT]

*Just as our bodies have many parts and each part has a special function, so it is with Christ's body. **We are many parts of one body, and we all belong to each other.** In his grace, **God has given us different gifts** for doing certain things well. So if God has given you the ability to prophesy, speak out with as much faith as God has given you. If your gift is serving others, serve them well. If you are a teacher, teach well. If your gift is to encourage others, be encouraging. If it is giving, give generously. If God has given you leadership ability, take the responsibility seriously. And if you have a gift for showing kindness to others, do it gladly.*

4. The Church is The Bride of Christ.

[Revelation 19.6-9, NIV]

*Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: "Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For **the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.**" (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of God's holy people.) Then the angel said to me, "Write this: Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!" And he added, "These are the true words of God."*

- A. **Don't disregard the Bride.** (our attitude)
- B. **Don't discredit the Bride.** (our conversation)

[1 Corinthians 1.10, NIV]

*I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you **agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.***

[Titus 3.10, NLT]

If people are causing divisions among you, give a first and second warning. After that, have nothing more to do with them.

- C. **Don't disengage from the Bride.** (our commitment)

[Ephesians 4.16, AMP]

For because of Him the whole body (the church, in all its various parts), closely joined and firmly knit together by the joints and ligaments with which it is supplied, when each part [with power

adapted to its need] is working properly [in all its functions], grows to full maturity, building itself up in love.

[Ephesians 5.25, NLT]

...Christ loved the church, [and] He gave up his life for her.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1. When you have mentioned, or invited someone to, church what kind of responses have you gotten**
- 2. What traits make The Church "the bride of Christ?"
What has he done, and would He do, to protect us?**
- 3. Why do you think God wants us to build our lives and The Church according to the pattern established in His Word?**
- 4. How is the church weakened if each of us are not doing his/her part? What gift are you personally bringing to the table?**
- 5. What are you doing to value The Local Church?
What are you avoiding, so you do not devalue The Local Church (including other churches around us)?**
- 6. What and how can you improve or intentionally grow in these areas: attitude, conversation, and commitment?**
- 7. Spend some time praying for The Local Church as a group.**