



PROTOTYPE, Part 1
Sermon Small Group Notes
Speaker: Pastor Dave Patterson

USING THIS SERMON DISCUSSION GUIDE

- 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. After considering the needs of your group, you may choose one of the following options:
 1. one section of questions
 2. one or two questions from each section
- Feel free to adapt the format to meet the needs of your group. If your group is mature and wants to dig deeper, add Scripture and ask suitable questions. Remember that this is only a guide.
- Personal application is key to everyone's growth and should be included in every discussion. When asked how he or she intends to apply a certain principle a group member may say, "I need to spend more time in the Bible and in prayer." It is important for you to help group members make applications that are more specific and commit to a specific plan of action by asking, for example, "How are you going to begin?" An example is to get up 30 minutes earlier each morning, spending 15 minutes reading the Bible and 10 minutes in prayer. Encourage each group member to be accountable to the group for personal progress at the next meeting.
- As the leader your goal is to help bring the group into a stimulating discussion that helps the members recognize their need for personal life change. Ultimately you want them to be willing to commit to change with accountability to the group. Accountability helps us to persevere in our commitments and achieve the blessings of success.

INTRODUCTION

Over the next few weeks, we're going to talk about God's original intent and design for what Jesus came to build: the Church. Were the plans just for a building or a religion? Was the design for something temporary or permanent?

The life, health, and mission of the Church are far more valuable and eternally significant than the average "church-goer" realizes. Even if you've been around the "church" and the Word for many years, you may have grown apathetic in regards to the mission and mandates that Jesus gave us.

We are going to discuss what Jesus had in mind for His Church because: the stakes are high, the responsibility is big, the opportunity is before us, and **We are God's plan!**

Definition of "prototype": *the original or model on which something is based or formed*

Definition of "the Church": *a movement built around a man (Jesus Christ) and an event (the Resurrection) that require a response*

- *a gathering of people around a person and an event that are called to be God's vehicle of redemption*

- (Greek) "*ekklesia*" = *the gathering, the assembly, the congregation*

MESSAGE

In order for us to know how we, today, can align with God's original design, here are some significant things to remember.

Reminders about the Church:

1. The gravity of the situation is eternity with or without God!

[Matthew 25.31-34]

When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit upon his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered in his presence, and he will separate the people as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will place the sheep at his right hand and the goats at his left. ³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world.

[Matthew 25.41, 44]

⁴¹ "Then the King will turn to those on the left and say, 'Away with you, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. ⁴⁶ "And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous will go into eternal life."

2. God has revealed his loving intent to rescue a lost world!

[2 Peter 3.9-11]

⁹The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, (the promise of His return) as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. **God does not want anyone to be destroyed**, but wants everyone to repent. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the

very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment. ¹¹ Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this, what kind of holy and godly lives should you live?

3. God's plan of rescue is His Church!

[Matthew 16.18]

*“...upon this rock I will build **my church**, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it”*

In the book Acts, we see the plan unfold. The movement is launched through Jesus gifting his disciples with The Holy Spirit. Out of obedience, and in authority, they responded and God added to their number daily!

[Acts 1.1-11]

*In my first book I told you, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began to do and teach ² until the day he was taken up to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions through the Holy Spirit. ³ During the forty days after his crucifixion, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God. ⁴ Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, “**Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift He promised, as I told you before.** ⁵ John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.” ⁶ So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, “Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?” ⁷ He replied, “**The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know.** ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” ⁹ After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. ¹⁰ As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. ¹¹ “Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go.”*

[Acts 2.1]

¹ *When the day of Pentecost came, they were all together in one place.*

How did it all start? What led up to this world-wide movement? How could 120 people in a room led by 12 young leaders start a movement around a man that would last for two thousand years and grow to a couple BILLION people who are on the planet right now, that say their lives have been changed by the message and power of Jesus?

How the Church Started:

1. **It started with a gathering of obedient Christ followers.**

They were committed to obey Jesus' instructions, even when mystery was involved.

2. **They waited in persistent prayer, worship, & unity.**

[Acts 1.14]

They all met together and were constantly united in prayer, along with Mary the mother of Jesus, several other women, and the brothers of Jesus.

Definition of "continued" = to persevere, to be consistently diligent, to be steadfast in prayer, worship, and fasting

3. **They were unified and completely committed to "the gathering."**

[Acts 2.1, NKJV]

When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

4. **They were positioned for a life-changing encounter.**

This year, we are positioning our church and believing for a life-changing encounter for everyone who has gathered to be a part of what God is doing. Are you a part of it?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. **What comes to mind when you hear the word church or when someone brings it up?**
2. **What led up to the birthing of the New Testament Church? What was the setup?**
3. **How does knowing the original design or intent for the Church help us evaluate the success of it today? How does that truth add gravity to our current situation, as individuals, as a local church, and as a global movement?**
4. **What are you waiting for in persistent prayer in this season of life? What happens if you stop praying before the breakthrough?**
5. **How can we deliberately focus on what God wants to use our church for?**