



Does The Church Matter? - Week 4 DISCUSSION GUIDE

OVERVIEW

In this message of the series *Does It Matter?*, we will discuss the power of relationships within the Church.

DISCUSSION

- Name some fun things you do or traditions you have with your friends or spiritual family.

The Church matters because it is God's way of creating relationships, building accountability and connection, and overcoming loneliness and isolation. The Church is the greenhouse God designed so you can flourish in life. **Psalm 92:12-14: *The righteous shall flourish like a palm tree, he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon. Those who are planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God. They shall still bear fruit in old age; they shall be fresh and flourishing...*** For seeds to grow, they must be planted in the right environment and take root to reach their full potential. Every believer needs to be planted in a local church where they can thrive in their gifts and talents, and where there is encouragement and room for growth. When we are planted properly, we'll see the seed within us reach its full potential.

Roots are critical to our success. Two primary purposes for roots are: 1. They nourish and give life to the plant. 2. They hold the plant in place. One of the best ways we can practically establish roots in our lives is through the forming and building of healthy relationships. As we open ourselves to others, we are forming and establishing roots.

- Why do you think relationships within the Church are important?
- Reflecting on Psalm 92:12-14, how have you seen yourself or others flourish within the local church?

Acts 2:42, 46-47: *And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers... So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.* This passage paints a beautiful picture of healthy, biblical relationships. Another word for these relationships is community. Community is a unified body of individuals with common purpose. Simply put, it is doing life together.

- What does doing life together mean to you?
- Give an example of someone God brought into your life through church that you do life with.

Four Benefits of Being Planted and Rooted:

1. **Strength in adversity.**

Jeremiah 17:8: *“For he shall be like a tree planted by the waters, which spreads out its roots by the river, and will not fear when heat comes;”* A flourishing life is not thrown off course by obstacles or a bit of heat because, it is rooted in relationships. If you are planted in the House of the Lord, no matter what happens, you can weather the storms. As we walk together, we will find encouragement in times of adversity if we remain true to the relationships God has placed in our lives.

- Share an example of how being connected to your church community has provided you with support and encouragement during a difficult time.

2. **Spiritual and emotional health.**

Genesis 2:18: *And the LORD God said, “It is not good that man should be alone...”* It’s not good because it’s not how He created us to live. Alone and isolated were never to be used to describe His children. It’s not good because we were created with a deep need for rich and meaningful connection with other people. Without it, we don’t reflect the image of the One who created us. And without it, bad things happen—like lost perspective, fear of intimacy, selfishness, and poor health. The quality of our lives is determined by the quality of our relationships.

- What are some ways we can fight the urge to isolate ourselves?

3. **Consistency and longevity.**

Jeremiah 17:8: *“...and will not be anxious in the year of drought...”* People who are rooted in relationship can hold fast and remain consistent throughout the changing of seasons of life. When you are in relationship with people who know you, and you are going through a tough season, people who know you — reach out to you. Those who are planted in God’s House are not afraid of dry seasons in life because they understand seasons have an end. They know they have others with them on the journey. **Galatians 6:9:** *And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*

4. **Productivity.**

Jeremiah 17:8: *“...nor will cease from yielding fruit...”* When you are planted in healthy relationships in church, your life will be productive. You are pushed to make an impact and be your best. You are being challenged to grow and be coached up. We are the salt and light to this world. We are the net God throws out into a broken world to bring people into the kingdom. The relationship knots strengthen the net. **Matthew 16:18:** *“...I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.”* Together, we can be committed to one another and what God wants to do through us, His Church, His Body.

- Give some examples of how we can share the love of Christ together as the Church.

LIFE CHALLENGE

Think about different ways you can grow in your godly relationships. Pray about how you can continue to grow, be a part of the Church, and make a difference in our community and world!

PRAY TOGETHER