



Ekklesia

August 30, 2020

#newpointechurch

Bottom Line: Right now, Jesus is building His church.

Icebreaker: What has been the hardest thing for you so far in the COVID-19 crisis? Why? What bothers others that has been least troubling to you? Why?

Key Verse: *I will build my church (ekklesia), and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. Matthew 16:18 NRSV*

When Jesus said, “I will build my church,” He was not referring to the temple or the synagogue. He said, “I will build my ekklesia,” which meant a gathering, a movement of people. In the mind of Jesus, church always referred to people, not buildings. It is noteworthy that Jesus started this in Caesarea Philippi, founded by the Romans and a major center of occult worship with three demonic centers: the Temple to Caesar, the Temple of the god Pan, and the Gates of Hades, a place where animal and human sacrifices were offered. He was saying we are to take the offensive and fight to overcome the evil entrenched in government, idolatry, and Satan.

The church would accomplish this through **koinonia**, a fellowship of people committed to each other. Fellowship is contagious as it meets the needs for which every person longs. Jesus told them that the crisis of the day was giving them a great **opportunity** to achieve and accomplish their purpose. He said He was giving them full access to the kingdom of God and the opportunity to lead others to a great relationship with Him. It would be done through the open door of love and **hospitality**. They would bring people to God through personal relationships.

This is the most significant and successful way of reaching people for a lifetime relationship with God and His people. Sadly, within 300 years after Jesus returned to heaven, people had lost this vision of using their lives and homes as a primary place for people to meet Jesus and become true disciples. They returned to the temple model, meeting in a “holy place” with “one holy person” and little connection with the people of God. This period of time in our own history seems to be a tremendous opportunity to become the ekklesia and win the world with the koinonia that is irresistible.

Each of us must sacrifice our personal preferences and prioritize the kingdom by making personal space for everyone at the table.

THINK IT OVER >>>

What impacted you most from the message?

Why do you think the church drifted away from the ekklesia model to the Old Testament temple model? Why might Christians resist it today?

The objective of ekklesia was the transformation of people and society rather than acting as a transfer station for saved people. Reflect and discuss.

Jesus intended the ekklesia, the church, to prevail against the evil entrenched in government, idolatry, and Satan. Why do you suppose we make our efforts in those directions mostly just “church programs” and causes?

The four needs everyone has: to know and be known, to love and be loved, to serve and be served, to celebrate and be celebrated. Every person Jesus encountered experienced those four things. That’s why He was contagious. How can house churches help us with this?

LOOK IT OVER <<<

A door is an opportunity. An opportunity is a favorable time to participate in or accomplish something. How do you see the COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity for the church? Do you have a hard time seeing it as anything more than a struggle and hardship? What do you think God might be doing?

Satan wants us to live in isolation. How have you found isolation personally to be dangerous?

The definition of biblical hospitality is “making space for someone you don’t have to.” On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being very hospitable and welcoming others to your home, where would you put yourself? Why? Do you feel like you could/should grow in that area? How could you?

Sometimes we sacrifice hospitality to guard our relational comfortability. Are you willing to sacrifice your relational preferences for kingdom priorities? Reflect and discuss.

NEXT STEPS

1. Consider being a part of NewPointe doing something that would so astonish our communities that they would be forced to reexamine what we believe and why we believe it.
2. Start the four things: Establish a routine for watching the weekend service. Establish a routine for meeting with your group. Keep your kids connected. Pray for NewPointe.

EVALUATION/ACTION

Realizing and reaching your full potential in Christ

Bottom Line: Right now, Jesus is building His church.

Rate yourself from 1 to 10 1 (never), 10 (always)	1	2	3	4		6	7	8	9	10
Why did you give yourself this rating?										
What benefits will you obtain by raising your rating?										
Do you know someone who demonstrates this bottom line well? What do you admire about that person?										
What specific action can you put into practice to raise your rating?										
At the end of this week, reflect - where did you see the bottom line show up in your actions throughout the week?										

PRAYER

List group members and their prayer requests for this week:

DAILY STUDY

Want to dig deeper? Check out **The Daily** this week at newpointe.org/daily:

Monday: Matthew 16:8

Tuesday: Acts 2:42

Wednesday: Romans 12:13

Thursday: Revelation 3:7-8

Friday: Romans 10:12

Don't let the conversation stop here. Keep talking it over with others throughout the week.

(Don't forget to bring this paper to your next small group meeting)