



8-13-17 Sermon Discussion Guide

"Ecclesiology - You Are the Church"



Context

Throughout this summer we are talking about words and ideas that we often hear in church but rarely define. This summer provides a chance to hit "pause" and reflect upon these ideas, their importance, and their impact upon life. This series began by asking the question, "What is theology?" Throughout this summer we've looked at who God is, who we are in relation to God, and how God saves us. After discussing our response to God's faithfulness, we move into a discussion about the church – what it is, what it does, and how it works..

Checking In

Since the last time your group has met, how have each of you experienced God at work? What have you celebrated? What have you mourned?

Introduction

Ecclesiology is a discussion of what the church is and what the church does. This topic comes right after our discussion of mission. Our doctrine of the church can't be separated from our doctrine of mission. Mission is the purpose of the church. Not all churches function the same way, but the overall point of the church should deal with living out God's mission in the world. As you've seen different kinds of churches throughout your life, what are some similarities or differences you've noticed in how the churches operate?

Discussing the Text – Ephesians 4:1-16, 1 Peter 2:9-10, Genesis 12:1-3, Isaiah 2:1-4

1. What do you think it means to be a holy nation, a chosen race, and a royal priesthood? Is this always the identity of the church, even when people are making mistakes?
2. The end of 1 Peter 2:9 says that the church should proclaim the mighty acts of God who called us out of darkness and into his marvelous light. What does this proclamation look like on a day-to-day basis?
3. What is the purpose of church leaders according to Ephesians 4:11 and 12?
4. How will God's people be used in the future, according to Isaiah 2:1-4?
5. What do you think Peter means in 1 Peter 2:10 when he says, "Once you were not a people, but now you are God's people?" What significance does this have for the church?

So what?

1. How does your participation in the church equip you to do God's work in the world?
2. How would the church be worse off without you?
3. For what special work has God called you out this week?
4. How do you see the church currently living out its calling in the world?
5. If the church exists for the sake of the world, are there times when the church is called to sacrifice itself on behalf of the world? How we know?
6. In what ways could our church improve in helping prepare people for participating in God's mission?

Prayer

Share something you for which you are thankful and/or something for which you need support. Have the group thank God this week that he has called them to do his work.