

Start Here

Week 3 – Start with the Local Church

Teaching Notes

Matthew 5:14-16

1. Our faith is personal but not **private**.

Matthew 12:46-50, John 3:5-6

2. **Spirit** is thicker than blood.

Matthew 16:16-18

3. The **Church** is God's plan for a hurting world.

Psalms 68:6

4. The Church is God's spiritual family.

Matthew 20:25-28, Acts 2:42-47

Six Characteristics of Spiritual Family

1. They were fully devoted to **God**.
2. They were **generous**.
3. They spent time **together**.
4. They were **joyful**.
5. They were **inclusive**.
6. They were **exclusive**.

Ephesians 2:19b-22

Small Group Discussion Guide

Overview

In a world full of division and sin, a world filled with everyone's opinion, it becomes more important than ever to look to the Bible for truth and answers. And the Bible teaches us the importance of not only the Local Church but belonging to the Local Church. We, together with the church, are the light of the world that cannot be extinguished.

Opening Question

How do you view the Local Church?

Read & Discuss

1. Read *Matthew 5:14-16, Matthew 12:46-50, John 3:5*

Discuss Explain what it means to say our faith is personal but not private. How do these scriptures reflect this thought?

Discuss From the time of Jesus' very first message, He reminds believers that our good deeds, what we say and do, are a reflection of Him and an example to others. How has this message influenced you overtime? How is God calling you to grow in your good deeds?

Discuss Little is known about Jesus' interaction with his natural family members, but scripture provides us insight into Jesus' interaction with His spiritual family. What does Jesus's message mean for you and your spiritual family members?

For Further Study

Read

Matthew

2. Read *Matthew 16:16-18, Psalm 68:6*

Discuss God promises to build His church and evil will not overcome it. How does the Local Church help heal a hurting world, and how does it help a person to belong?

3. Read *Matthew 20:25-28, Acts 2:42-47*

Discuss What are the characteristics of a Spiritual Family? What impact has your spiritual family had on your own faith journey and relationship with Jesus?

Discuss When members of the very first spirit spiritual family gathered, they "shared meals with great joy and generosity." How does this serve as an example of encouragement to you and your spiritual family?

4. Read *Ephesians 2:19b-22*

Discuss How do these scriptures describe us and our role as members of the local church? What is your role is in our church?