

Here's a discussion guide for you to use along with our first "More Than" video. Take these questions and use them as a "launching off point" to discuss how you and/or your family view the nature of the church in light of our cancelled in-person meeting times.

I. What is Church?

We know that the church exists in interesting times, and it has a lot of us thinking about our local churches and decisions that have to be made for the safety of our society. However, we can use these circumstances to our advantage by seeking a better understanding of the nature of the Church.

Q. If someone who you didn't know were to ask you tomorrow "what is church," what would you say?

Q. When you hear the word "church," what are the top three things you associate with that word?

Q. If you could only use the Bible, where would you start? Where would you start in Scripture, and what passages might you share to help them understand?

Q. If you were tasked with planting the church in an area that doesn't have one, what would be on your checklist of "to do's" before your first meeting? Make a list and invite input if you are discussing this with someone.

II. Let's Talk About It

When we look in the New Testament, we see a vibrant community formed from many different cultures and worldviews into one cohesive society that is called "the Church."

Q. What are some common misconceptions about the nature of the church in our 21st century world? Among our own church?

Q. What are practical ways we can still "be the church," without meeting at our building? Without our big Sunday gathering? Without our whole congregation gathered together?

Discussion Guide: The Church is More Than: A Building

Here's a discussion guide for you to use along with "More Than A Building" video. Take these questions and use them as a "launching-off point" to discuss how you and/or your family can still be the Church, while we are not meeting at our building.

I. The Church Is Not The Building

Many of us grow up intuitively thinking that when we say, "I'm going to church," we mean we are going to an event at a building. However, Scripture describes the Church, not as the place where Christians meet, but as the people who are members of Christ's body who gather together.

Q. If a church loses their building, does this mean that they are no longer a church, or have become "lesser than" a church?

Q. If a church doesn't meet all together in a building in order to comply with requests for the purposes of public safety for a time, can it still fulfill its mission as a church? Why or why not?

Q. If we were never allowed to return to our church building or any church building, what are ways that we could adapt to a "buildingless" Christianity?

II. Let's Talk About It

Q. Do you see this circumstance as only an obstacle for us to overcome, or an opportunity for us to grow in our understanding of what it means to "be the church," for one another, and for our community? How might we overcome the "obstacle mentality," in order to see more opportunity?

Q. What should the church be doing while we are not meeting together at our building? Discuss and list as many ways as you can think that we can all "be the church," to one another and to our neighbors during this time of social distancing. Think of creative ways that we can share our faith and be God's servants in our communities. Look to Scripture for examples as well and list them.

Challenge: Get in contact with another church member and share some of your ideas.

Discussion Guide: The Church Is More Than A Sunday Service

Here's a discussion guide to use along with the "More Than A Sunday Service" video. Take these questions and use them as a "launching-off point" to discuss how you and/or your family can still be the Church outside of our Sunday worship service.

I. The Church Is More Than Our Sunday Service

For most Churches, the Sunday worship service is thought of as the "main event" of the weekly activities. We value our time together in our worship services as we praise God collectively and celebrate the death and resurrection of Jesus. With our Sunday worship time now online, we know in our hearts that this is good for a time, but that this isn't the ideal. We all need encouragement, so use these questions as a source of encouragement and good discussion.

Q. What's your favorite thing we do in our normal Sunday worship services? Discuss and think on these things. How can you take that thing/the spirit of that thing into the other 6 days of the week?

Q. Since our collective meeting times have been suspended for a time, what is something about the church that you now realize you have been taking for granted? How has your thinking been changed?

II. Game Plan

Let's put together a game plan! We've gathered in the huddle time and time again. Even this week we will take time to gather (remotely) and review the "playbook" and call a play. Our next step is to break the huddle, and go play the game. Discuss these things and make a "game plan" that you can put into play.

Q. How does your Christian identity impact the rest of your week? Identify areas of your life that display your Christian identity. Identify areas of your life that have not been touched by your Christian identity and how Christ can permeate even that.

Q. What are some practical ways that we can execute the play (live the Christian life)? Identify Scripture that gives us direction on what we are to do with the rest of our week. Identify some tools and methods that you can be using. Think about this in terms of our current situation during this global pandemic. Also think about this in terms of when things go back to normal and we are "back in the world."

Challenge: Do one thing this week to put your game plan into play.

Discussion Guide: The Church Is More Than A Group Of People

Here's a discussion guide to use along with the "More Than A Group People" video. Take these questions and use them as a "launching-off point" to discuss how you and/or your family can still embody Christ together.

I. The Church Is More Than A Group Of People

Of course, the Church IS a group of people. But the Church is more than JUST a group of people, because what unifies our group is unique and eternal. Jesus is the Head of the Church, and as the Head, He is the unifying factor of the Body; the Church. The Church is gathered together primarily under the headship of Christ, which means that the Church cannot be cancelled as long as He exists. The group of people that is the Church can continue as that group in any circumstance, whether that be all together, or temporarily scattered. Although the Church has not been "cancelled," we do have to acknowledge that our current mode of operation as the Church is by no means the ideal.

Q. How does the headship of Christ shape your life as a Christian? How is this shaping you in the pandemic?

Q. What are situations that you know of in Scripture where God's people temporarily operated in "less than ideal" circumstances (think in the Old Testament as well)? What can we learn from those instances?

Read Galatians 3:26-28 and discuss how the Head of the Church gathers people from all different cultures and walks of life, and how this exemplifies the "body" metaphor of **1 Corinthians 12:12-27**.

II. The Role Of The Body

We know that as the Body of Christ, we have received instruction from the Head for what we are to do with our lives as the Body of Christ.

Q. Discuss what it looks like for you and your family to continue as the Body of Christ during this pandemic. How can you embody Christ within your own family? Within your neighborhood? Within your job, whether working from home, or in the field?

Q. How can we still accomplish both the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) and the Great Commandments (Matthew 22:37-39) during this pandemic?

Challenge: Make contact with another member of the Body this week, let them know that you love them, and share some of your ideas from this discussion guide!