



WHY WE NEED CHURCH—Matthew 16:18

Beverley Watkins

THIS IS CHURCH Series

When the world look at the church, the *church for them is irrelevant*. The church has lost credibility by and large with the world. They think we don't have anything to say that's worth listening to. And when they look at us they see division and fighting, and scandals. That's unfortunately one part of what we face today.

But we also have a challenge because *even in the church*, where we have believers, *many believers don't see the need for church anymore*. Because we live in a time where we have access to any kind of teaching on every topic that you could look for, you could find it on the internet today. And many believers will say, I can get better teaching out there than I do in my local church. So I don't need to be in the local church because I can get the best teaching from the best teachers, and I can get it 24/7. I don't need to wait till Sunday. I can every day get as much teaching as I want. And they say sometimes, I don't need to come to church to worship with other people, I can really be inspired putting on my favorite worship playlist, listening to the best music from amazing musicians, with resident anointing in it, and really, I can engage with God and worship much better on my own, listening to my worship playlist than I do in church. Maybe in church the worship team is not Elevation worship, or not as good as Bethel Music. And we don't connect us much.

So unfortunately, even in the church we have believers saying, *We don't really need the CHURCH. I got Jesus. I know how to connect with Him. I've got the Holy Spirit. I've got access to teaching. I've got worship playlists I can listen to. I don't really need to be in CHURCH.*

So I'm asking us today, *Do we still need the CHURCH?*

WHY DO WE NEED THE CHURCH?

➡ The number 1 reason why we need CHURCH is— **CHURCH IS GOD'S IDEA.**

God is the one that wants a CHURCH. Because right in the beginning, *God has always wanted a FAMILY He could live in the midst of*. God the Father has God the Son, but He's always wanted to have a whole FAMILY of sons and daughters. That's the reason why He created the Garden of Eden. He put Adam in the garden and He drew the woman, Adam's wife, out of Adam's side. And they had children. And God said, I want you to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Because...

➡ **GOD WANTED TO HAVE A FAMILY** that He could live in the midst of.

After fall man was separated from God, but God never gave up His idea. Jesus gave His life. God's desire is to have the greatest, most diverse family.

But we know what happened, the enemy got in that situation, and the woman was deceived, and man was disobedient, and sin came in and separated us from God.

God cannot be around sin. So we were separated—after the fall—man was separated from God, but God still longed to have a FAMILY. He wanted to have a HOUSE. He never gave up on that idea.

And He sent His Son JESUS. And Jesus went to the cross and shared His blood as the perfect sacrifice that we, man, might be reconciled to God. That we could, once again, know that He is our FATHER and have a **RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM AS A FATHER**. And that we could **be a FAMILY together**, with our Father, and with Jesus.

And God never changed His mind about that. He still wants a FAMILY. And He wants the biggest Family He can get. In every generation, *His heart is that all would come to know JESUS. All would be forgiven of their sins—All would put their faith in JESUS.*

➡ Because He wants to have the *largest, most diverse, most wonderful FAMILY*.

That is GOD'S DESIRE. And He is not changing it.

➡ **JESUS ALSO WANTS THE CHURCH**. Because it was Jesus, when He came to earth, when He hung on the cross, do you remember how blood and water flowed from His side. That is a picture for us, just as Adam's wife was taken out of his side in the garden, *the CHURCH came out of the side of JESUS, at the cross.*

The CHURCH was BIRTHED AT THE CROSS—And the **CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST**. It's **HIS BRIDE**. JESUS gave His life for the CHURCH. *He gave His life for His Bride*. And He loves her. And *He is waiting for her*. —Because when the FATHER says so, He is going to get His BRIDE.

So He hasn't given up on the CHURCH, His BRIDE. He doesn't say, Well, in 2025 there is no more need for me to have a BRIDE—That's not what's happening.

So we need the CHURCH because It's always been **GOD'S IDEA—He wants a FAMILY**. — And **JESUS is waiting for His BRIDE**. He died for her. And He is waiting for her, and he loves her.

This are some of the pictures we have of the CHURCH. We know...

- The Church is the HOUSE OF GOD
- It's the BRIDE OF CHRIST
- It's a FAMILY
- It's an ARMY

There are many different metaphors to describe the church. And each of them bring out different elements of the CHURCH. And we're going exploring some of those in the next few weeks.

Today we want to refresh ourselves, **WHAT IS THE CHURCH?** Because the CHURCH has been around for 2000 years. And it's gone through some changes. It looks a little different. And it keeps looking different. But WHAT TIS THE CHURCH ACTUALLY? What is that thing that JESUS loves and is coming back for? And what is this Church, this FAMILY that the FATHER is looking for?

What actually is the CHURCH and that family the Father is looking for?

Matthew 16:18— And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

This is the first mention of the word CHURCH in the New Testament. And it's Jesus using that word.

➡ It's the first time JESUS talks about HIS CHURCH

👉 The Greek word used was **Ekklēsia** {ἐκκλησίαν}, a word that Jesus borrowed from the culture of the time. It's a word that was well known in the Greco-Roman Culture. Because an *Ekklesia* was something everybody knew about in those days. Because in those days, in Greek and Roman Culture, a "city"— they had what was called a "city state"— so a city was its own state, and it was *self-governing*. The way they governed was that, in the city, every male over 18 years old, who had completed their military service, from time to time they were called out out to come together in a public place. And as they gathered together they would listen to preachers. And as Pastor Faisal explained last week, preachers were people who accessed the realm of the spirit. They worshipped other gods, and they would stand and speak on behalf of those gods and those people, and they would preach to the crowd. And in the *Ekklesia* they would have preachers that would be called out. When there was a meeting, they would come and listen to the preacher—and then they would together discuss and take decisions about their culture in their city, about how they would govern their city. About whether they would be going to war, what they would be doing. All the issues that pertained to their city, it was in the *Ekklesia* that they discussed them, talked about them and made decisions about them.

That's what it was in the culture when you talked about an *Ekklesia*. That is what came to mind. Because they knew what it is.

If we talk about an *Ekklesia* today, we don't know what that is. We have no idea what an *Ekklesia* is. But when Jesus said, "**I am going to BUILD MY EKKLESIA**", immediately his disciples knew what He was talking about. He was saying that...

➡ He was BUILDING something that was GOVERNMENTAL in nature

➡ that would AFFECT THE CULTURE of the day

➡ and that the would ALL need to be ENGAGED in it—because it would affect their city and the community, and the place where they lived.

They understood that.

When Jesus said, *I will build My **Ekklesia***, the word He used means

👉 CALLED OUT ONES

Because the *Ekklesia* when it gathered, they were CALLED OUT—They lived in the city. Everybody went about their work. They did what they did. *But at certain times, they were CALLED OUT*, they were told, *You must come out from your house, your business, wherever you are, come to this public place*—because we are *GATHERING AS THE EKKLESIA*

➡ to **HEAR the preachers**

➡ and to **MAKE DECISIONS that will AFFECT OUR CULTURE**

and that will **AFFECT us** in THE WAY THAT WE LIVE

That was their understanding of being an ***Ekklesia***, being *CALLED OUT ONES*.

Jesus used the words, *I will **BUILD** My Ekklesia*

👉 that word *Word BUILD* in Greek is *oikodomeō* {οἰκοδομέω} made up of two words
—*oikos* {οἶκος} meaning a *family, a community*
—*domeo* {δομέω} meaning *to build*
so the word actually means the **BUILDER OF A HOUSE**

So when Jesus said, *I will BUILD MY EKKLESIA*, He said...

👉 I am going to BUILD A HOUSE—A FAMILY—that is an EKKLESIA

So the EKKLESIA is part of the MISSION

- **What they will do**
- **Who they will be** as a FAMILY and as a HOUSE

They will be a FAMILY—which means, there is a **commitment**—FAMILY is a *unit*. Family is, we know who our *mother* and our *father* is. We got *brothers* and *sisters*. We *live in the house*. There is a way we *live together* in our family.

So when Jesus is saying, *I want to BUILD MY CHURCH*, He is saying...

👉 I AM BUILDING A HOUSE that is going to have this GOVERNING MISSION that's going to AFFECT ITS CITY, state, and its region that it lives in.

👉 And EVERYBODY in the HOUSE is going to be INVOLVED in that MISSION.

So Jesus said, *I am going to build my church*, but what is He building it out of? In the beginning of this verse He said, "*You are Peter and **on this rock I will build my church***" (Mt. 16:18) And what is He talking about? He is talking about the fact that Peter just had a REVELATION that Jesus was the Anointed One. God the Father kind of lifted a veil off of Peter, and allowed Him to have a REVELATION—which means he got an *understanding* that this Jesus, standing in front of him, was

➡ The CHRIST—The **MESSIAH**—The **ANOINTED ONE**

➡ The One that had been prophesied

➡ The **SON OF GOD**.

It is this REVELATION that Peter had, that Jesus is saying,

👉 This is the KEY 🔑 IN BUILDING MY HOUSE.

Because I am only BUILDING My House with people who had this REVELATION !!

Because when you have that REVELATION you become a STONE, a ROCK. —You see, Peter's name was *Simon*, which means "God hears", or "I was heard". And when he had this REVELATION Jesus says, now I call you *Peter*, which means ROCK or STONE. You see, you become different the moment you have a REVELATION of JESUS as the CHRIST, the SON of the LIVING GOD.

You recognize you've been separated—sin had separated you from God—but here is JESUS, the MESSIAH, the One who came and gave His life on the cross, and ➡ you turn from your sins, and

➡ you believe in Him ➡ You change ➡ You become a NEW CREATION.

In our lingo, we call that BEING BORN AGAIN.

You got to understand, The minute you have that REVELATION, you are different **!!**

You are a new species of origin.

*2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Something changes in you. You actually become a LIVING STONE. You have to know, that's a reality. You may not have changed on the outside, but on the inside—whoever you were before that REVELATION—**You now have become a LIVING STONE.** And the Spirit of God is on the inside of you.

And Jesus is saying that He is going to take these stones and **He is BUILDING THEM INTO A HOUSE, A FAMILY.** And that FAMILY is going to have a MISSION to CHANGE the world around them. That's who you are when you're the CHURCH.

➡ When Jesus is talking about the Church *He is talking about the CHURCH He is going to BUILD.*

➡ The CHURCH IS **JESUS'S HOUSE**—It is HIS HOUSE

➡ God is the **FATHER** of that FAMILY, but **JESUS IS THE BUILDER OF THE HOUSE**

➡ **JESUS is the one who HAS THE BLUEPRINTS**—He knows where every stone is meant to go, where every stone fits. Because He himself came to earth and He became the *cornerstone*. He is also the *Foundation*—because everything is BUILT ON CHRIST.

- This is THE CHURCH
- It is a HOUSE
- It has STRUCTURE
- And it is made up of PEOPLE who are LIVING STONES.

You become a **LIVING STONE**, but a LIVING STONE on its own is just a stone. This is why Peter tells us here that LIVING STONES have to recognize that **there is A BUILDER**—whose name is **JESUS**—*who knows where you have to go, and where you fit.*

*1 Peter 2:4-5 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 **you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house**, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ*

The stone has to come to JESUS. Because He is going to BUILD YOU INTO THE HOUSE that HE IS BUILDING. Because He is saying, *I got a MISSION. You're not just meant to stay a stone, sitting on the side forever. **The stone is to be built into something.** Because I have a MISSION.*

*1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may **proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light**; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.*

When you get BORN AGAIN, and you go through that CHANGE, and you become a LIVING STONE, *that is simply the BEGINNING.*—We've got to come to JESUS and **LET HIM BUILD US INTO HIS HOUSE**, build us into the **HOLY NATION**, build us into the **PRIESTHOOD**. Because **we got to become A PEOPLE—A NATION.**

Before we know Him, we are not a NATION, we're not a PEOPLE. But the minute you had a REVELATION OF HIM as the CHRIST, you became part of a PEOPLE. *You were born again into something.* Your experience of the REVELATION OF JESUS as the Christ was intensely personal. You had it. You felt it, and everything that went with it.—But I want you to know, *it doesn't just stay with you.* **You were BORN INTO SOMETHING.** And that something you became a part of, is a HOUSE, a NATION, a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, a PEOPLE, the CHURCH OF JESUS.

You are not your own. You were bought with a prize by the BLOOD OF JESUS.

The reason that you can be part of a HOUSE, is, because JESUS paid for it with His blood,

👉 that you could come and 👉 be reconciled with God and 👉 be a PEOPLE 👉 with a CALLING, with a DESTINY to bring LIFE to dead places. To bring His GOODNESS and His LIGHT to those who are in darkness.

**THE CHURCH—IN THE SIMPLEST FORM—ARE THE COVENANT PEOPLE OF GOD
CARRYING OUT THE COVENANT MISSION OF GOD**

You want to know what the Church is?

**WE ARE THE COVENANT PEOPLE OF GOD,
CARRYING OUT THE COVENANT MISSION OF GOD**

You were BORN AGAIN not just to be BORN AGAIN. But you were born again TO BE PART OF A PEOPLE, to be part of a HOUSE, to be part of the BRIDE that would carry out the MISSION that God has always had for the earth.

We want to understand what the CHURCH is. Do we really need the CHURCH? We're wanting to make sure to understand what the CHURCH is, it's made up of LIVING STONES that come to JESUS and say, “

BUILD ME INTO THE HOUSE. Because I recognize, this is not only about me, this is about YOU. And this is about WHAT YOU'RE DOING. And **YOU HAVE A MISSION.** And you want to **BUILD US INTO YOUR HOUSE.**”

CHURCH

➡ Made up of LIVING STONES

➡ With a MISSION

The CHURCH of Jesus is not just a thing that's out there. It's about spiritual realities that we have to ground here on earth. Sometimes we have this idea of the CHURCH that is just this thing. Because how do you explain LIVING STONES that make up the HOUSE? It's a FAMILY that love one another. And it is also a BRIDE. But we are also sheep who follow a shepherd. It can get confusing.

I want us to understand that JESUS is not confused about HOW HE BUILDS THIS HOUSE.

HE BIRTHED THE CHURCH when He was here on earth. *He knew* that He would be going to the cross and that He would birth the CHURCH and *that there would be people coming, who His Father would give a REVELATION of Him as the CHRIST.* That they would then *REPENT OF THEIR SIN*, and they would have *FAITH IN GOD*, and they would be *RECONCILED TO THE FATHER.* He knew that was going to happen.

So in preparation, Jesus already chose His twelve disciples, His apostles. And He had them with Him. Jesus knew what the CHURCH would look like. And He was training them. And He was teaching them. That's why these first apostles—what we call the apostles of the Lamb—they were with Jesus all the way through, and they were eye-witnesses to His death, burial and resurrection. Because He needed them to see everything.

He needed them to be trained. He needed them to sit under His teaching. Because He was and is **THE GREAT SHEPHERD who knew, there are more sheep coming.** In John 10 Jesus says, *I have a whole flock you don't even know anything about that. But there is a whole lot of sheep coming into this flock.*—So Jesus was already beginning to prepare those who would be—what we would call *under-shepherds.* They would be those that Jesus would say,

*Okay, I'm calling you to have oversight over MY SHEEP in MY HOUSE. Because I am going to the Father. **I have done my part. And I am going to the FATHER. And you're going to have to continue.** And this is going to grow. And THIS HOUSE IS GOING TO BE BUILT. And I AM going to be building it. But I am not on earth anymore. So **I need some PEOPLE who are going to be SUBMITTED TO ME, and I AM going to APPOINT THEM AS LEADERS or as OVERSEERS** to carry out **WHAT I WANT DONE**—and **HOW I WANT MY HOUSE BUILT.***

This is how CHURCHES WERE BUILT in the New Testament. We know what happened. Even on the first day when Peter preaches, 3000 people get a REVELATION of Jesus being the CHRIST. They got baptized, boom. There is 3000 people in the church.—And people continuously are having this REVELATION, and then they are coming because they want to hear more. They are coming back to where they heard about JESUS.

And those APOSTLES had to figure out what the CHURCH was going to look like. They've been with Jesus. They know everything He said, but now they had to begin to figure it out, teaching them what He said. No wonder they were praying to figure it out. They didn't know how to build this thing.

The first apostles saying, **We're not the builder—JESUS is the BUILDER**

*So we have to have **TIME TO SIT WITH HIM**, and read from His Word, and look back on the scriptures and **LET THE HOLY SPIRIT ILLUMINATE THEM TO US**—because **we have the RESPONSIBILITY to do what HE wants to be done**, so that this thing grows in our generation.*

That is WHY **GOD APPOINTS LEADERS**

You don't just decide, "I want to have a Church... We can do this and that. We know how to... We know what to say, and we can do this whole thing." ⚠️ That is not how the CHURCH IS BUILT !!—You can, you can build an organization that has a lot of Christian stuff attached to it, and it will be very popular probably indeed, probably—because that's how the world systems work. But this is not HOW JESUS BUILDS HIS CHURCH.

👉 **THE WAY JESUS BUILDS HIS CHURCH IS, HE CALLS PEOPLE**

He calls LEADERS. And then He says to them, I want you to be an OVERSEER of the Sheep. I want you to take on this RESPONSIBILITY.

We see a wonderful example of it in Scripture in John 21. This is after the resurrection, Peter—we know He betrayed Jesus at the time of the Crucifixion—Jesus is risen and everyone is wondering what's going on. And the disciples don't know what to do. And Peter says, *I'm going back fishing*. Remember, he was a fisherman. And He's like, *I've messed this thing up so bad. I don't even know where Jesus is. I don't know what's going on. So let's go fishing. Let's go do what we know to do.*

And he is out fishing, and he comes back, and Jesus is at the shore. We know this story, and we call it, *When Jesus restores Peter*. And I want you to see something. Three times Jesus says to Peter, "**Do you love me?**". Jesus was not only restoring Peter, but He was calling Him out of what he was used to, being a fisherman, Jesus saying, I want you to tend the sheep.

*John 21:15-17—So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me** more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "**Feed My lambs.**" 16 He said to him again a second time, "**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?**" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "**Tend My sheep.**" 17 He said to him the third time, "**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?**" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "**Feed My sheep.**"*

Not only is Jesus RESTORING Peter, and saying,

"Yeah, you messed up. It's okay. I love you. You're going to come through this thing. You've learned a lot. But Peter, you're not a fisherman anymore. I am calling you and I'm changing what you're called to do. I want you to feed My sheep."

Jesus was calling him and saying, "You got to leave behind what you know, what you love, what you're good at. You got to leave that because right now I need some shepherds. I need some people who will feed my sheep, who will tend for the sheep."

So that's why Jesus was saying, "IF YOU LOVE ME..."—and I want to tell you that when God calls a leader to be an overseer in His House, there were other things they could be doing, things that they loved to do, things they were probably really good at, things that were enjoyable to them, maybe even something that was handed to them. But because they LOVE JESUS, when He calls and when He says, "I want you to feed My sheep. I want you to tend My sheep. Like Peter, they respond and they say, "**God, I will do what You want.**"

Because God calls leaders—we call them under-shepherds—because HE'S the GREAT SHEPHERD. But in every generation, in every place, God calls people who will steward the flock, who will care for the flock, who will build the House in the region, in the place, in the generation at that time. Because

God knows people. We're all sheep. *We need to have someone who's overseeing, somebody who's leading, somebody who's hearing from God and leading.*

And so **GOD CALLS LEADERS**. Every real CHURCH—and I'm saying this because I want you to understand, not every church out there is a church that Jesus is building. And I know that's a wild statement to make. But there are churches out there because people want a church, because people want a platform, very many different reasons—But the CHURCH that JESUS IS BUILDING, it has leaders that God has called.

**EVERY CHURCH THAT JESUS IS BUILDING
IT HAS LEADERS THAT GOD HAS CALLED**

That's why in this Church (CLM), Pastor Faisel, he tells us many times, he reminds us of how God called him. He came from Pakistan, came to Canada, was first in Toronto, and he had different times God encountered him, told him to keep going West. He was being trained under his pastor. Then he was travelling and he was ministering. And then the Lord brought him here to Langley, to Langley specifically and He said, "Now I want you to stop traveling and I want you to BUILD the HOUSE OF GOD into the mountains of the world—because..."

➡ **IT'S GOD'S PEOPLE FROM GOD'S HOUSE THAT CARRY OUT GOD'S MISSION**

And he tells us this story regularly. And he tells us that to remind us **GOD IS BUILDING THIS HOUSE**. Jesus called him. Jesus called each of the leaders here—We are called here by JESUS. And he said, "*Feed the flock. Tend the sheep*"—because we want you to know

➡ **THIS IS GOD'S HOUSE**

➡ We are here just *temporarily* We're here to STEWARD what **JESUS IS BUILDING**

And in the future, there will come other shepherds. Should Jesus tarry and not return soon, there will be other shepherds that will continue this work because this is HIS HOUSE. This is HIS HOUSE.

We have to get this **!! THIS IS JESUS'S HOUSE !! THAT HE IS BUILDING**. It belongs to HIM. It doesn't belong to us. We are simply here to *tend the sheep*, to be overseers. And every leader knows that they stand before the LORD to answer to the LORD about how they oversaw that flock.—And you know, Peter got it. Towards the end of his life when he writes his letters, Peter's talking now to the **ELDERS** and the **LEADERS** that have been set in place.

1 Peter 5:2-4—Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 3 nor as being lord over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; 4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

Peter has learned what it means to feed the sheep. He's lived it. He's walked in it.

☞ And now he's speaking to the **NEXT GENERATION OF LEADERS** that is coming.

And he's telling them, "Just as I was told to do this, **now you've got to do this in your generation**. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away."

➡ **GOD SETS LEADERS**

➡ We are **LIVING STONES** BUILT INTO A HOUSE BY JESUS
but **GOD SETS OVERSEERS** to help us to help HIM build the HOUSE

The **MARKS of a REAL CHURCH**—I'm going to just be a little careful here. The marks of a "real CHURCH", because I know the Bible says, "*Where two or three are gathered together, there I am in the midst of you*" (Mt. 18:20). Yes, He is. Yes, He is. And when we gather together to worship God, He's there. He's with us. ☞ But the **HOUSE THAT GOD IS BUILDING**, there are some things that must be present in that HOUSE—just like there's A LEADER that GOD SETS in a HOUSE.

➡ In the **HOUSE of GOD** the **WORD OF GOD** is preached—Not man's opinions—Not inspirational messages. Not, "Here's how to live your best life"

📖 *The WORD OF GOD IS PREACHED faithfully every week. We don't preach anything else. We preach from the WORD of God.*

And in this HOUSE, I really want to honor Dr. Faisal in this. I know from the moment that I came here, this is what he always says to me, every time before we minister, he wants to know that, "Where are you preaching from the WORD? Your foundation has to be in the WORD. We have to preach from the WORD." — We have to preach the WORD. He tells us to it every single time. Because he understands...

**FOR THE REAL CHURCH THAT JESUS IS BUILDING
THE MESSAGE THAT IS PREACHED, IS THE WORD OF GOD**

And there might be parts in the WORD that I'm like, "Oh I wish we'd left that part out". But you know what? *It's our RESPONSIBILITY to preach the FULL COUNSEL and the FULL WORD OF GOD.* And we have to figure it out.

So that's the first thing. And I want you to see this.

I'm going to a lot of Scriptures today because I want you to see, We're talking about **GOD'S HOUSE** —and **WHY WE NEED IT**. And we are called to PREACH THE WORD.

And this is Paul writing to Timothy right at the end of Paul's life. These are some of the last words that Paul would write. And you know when someone's at the end of their life, they're saying the things that they know I have to say these things. And this is what he says to Timothy. Timothy is the overseer, the main overseer, senior pastor for one of a better word at the CHURCH at *Ephesus*. And this is what he says.

*2 Timothy 4:2 (AMPC)—Herald and preach the Word! Keep your sense of urgency [stand by, **be at hand and ready**], whether the opportunity seems to be favorable or unfavorable. [Whether it is **convenient or inconvenient**, whether it is **welcome or unwelcome**, you as **preacher of the Word are to show people in what way their lives are wrong.**] And **convince them, rebuking and correcting, warning and urging and encouraging them, being unflagging and inexhaustible in patience and teaching.***

He is saying, **PREACH THE WORD!** Preach the Word.

- Whether you like it, whether you don't like it
- Whether they want to hear it or they don't want to hear it

👉 You have to PREACH the WORD ➡ so that we can see where we're falling short of the WORD. And continue to do it patiently, and keep helping, and keep doing it because he says...

*2 Timothy 4:3-5 (AMPC)—For the time is coming when [people] will not tolerate (endure) **sound and wholesome instruction**, but, **having ears itching [for something pleasing and gratifying]**, they will gather to themselves one teacher after another to a considerable number, chosen to satisfy their own liking and to foster the errors they hold, 4 And **will turn aside from hearing the truth and wander off into myths and man-made fictions.** 5 As for you, **be calm and cool and steady, accept and suffer unflinchingly every hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fully perform all the duties of your ministry.***

This is Paul. 👉 **WE GOT TO PREACH THE WORD IN THE CHURCH**

The other thing

IN THE CHURCH THAT JESUS IS BUILDING...

👉 **The SACRAMENTS are administered** —In the Protestant tradition, there are two sacraments and they should be being done in our Churches regularly. The first one is BAPTISM. The second one is COMMUNION.

➡ These are things that JESUS told us to do. *They are outward signs of an inward grace that we have received.* **BAPTISM.** We know, if you have been born again, when you are baptized, *when you go in the water, you're dying with Christ.*

➡ *And when you come up, you're being raised up into a NEW LIFE. You're being resurrected with Christ. The reason we have BAPTISMS and we do them in our services is because they're meant to be done IN THE CHURCH, in the COMMUNITY of the CHURCH.*

Why? Because the person being baptized is testifying to powers and principalities, but also to the CHURCH Family, "Hey, I had a REVELATION of the CHRIST, and I am now part of you all."

But you don't get baptized and disappear. That's not the way it should be. We are baptized because we understand we're being baptized INTO THE CHURCH and we are witnesses of those who say "I have been BORN AGAIN."

COMMUNION. We receive Communion together. It's one of the sacraments in the CHURCH OF JESUS. We should be **receiving COMMUNION together regularly.**

And the third thing that should be present in the CHURCH THAT JESUS IS BUILDING...

👉 That we should **PRACTICE THE AUTHENTIC CARE AND DISCIPLINE OF THE BODY**

Now, I know we don't like to hear that. And you're kind like, "Really? We have to have that?" Well, ladies and gentlemen, part of the reason the CHURCH has lost credibility is because we haven't done DISCIPLINE well in the CHURCH. We don't confront people on their sin. We don't hold people accountable in the way that we should. And so therefore, we have what we have. And everybody says, "Yes, Amen. We need that"... until it's you that has to be confronted, until it's you that one of the leaders is saying, "Hey, can we have a little chat about something?"

➡ *But if we're going to be A CHURCH that really is HOLY and is SPOTLESS, and is becoming who Jesus called us to be, we are going to need some DISCIPLINE.*

IN THE CHURCH THAT JESUS IS BUILDING

* THE WORD IS PREACHED BOLDLY

* THE SACRAMENTS ARE ADMINISTERED

* PRACTICE OF AUTHENTIC CARE & DISCIPLINE OF THE BODY

WHAT THE CHURCH DOES

Number 1

IT FORMS CHRIST IN YOU—That's the first job the CHURCH does.

Romans 8:29—For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

➡ **You are meant to look LIKE JESUS**—When you are first BORN AGAIN, you don't. You might think you do, but you don't. Okay? We don't yet show the IMAGE OF JESUS. *And that's why the church, as we are BUILT INTO THE HOUSE OF GOD.*

👉 **There is a FORMING that happens IN THE CHURCH that will cause you to begin to look like Jesus.** But for that to happen, you have to be inside of a church that has people that you see, that you're around. Because FORMATION happens when we're around people. When you have to forgive somebody, when you have to humble yourself in front of somebody, when you have to confess your sins one to another.

You see, God made it that the **CHURCH is the PLACE where we are FORMED and SANCTIFIED and begin TO LOOK LIKE JESUS.**

You see, when we sit at home on our own and we just listen to teachings and we watch things, *nobody's challenging you on anything.* You can listen to and go, "Oh, yeah, I'm doing that. Oh, yeah, I'm doing that." And you just go about your life thinking that you're wonderful because *nobody's there to point out your blind spot.* Nobody's there that you need to forgive because they were rude to you.

The issue is, the way God created this thing called **THE CHURCH, the HOUSE OF GOD— it's a CORPORATE ENTITY made of very imperfect people.** None of us is perfect. We all have stuff going on. And *when GOD put us all together, and HE KNOWS HOW to put the right people together,*

often times you sandpaper against each other. You're like, "Ah, this person irritates me. I don't like the way they do this. I don't like this. I don't". Tough. **GOD PUTS US TOGETHER**. So we're going to HUMBLE OURSELVES and we're going to say, "**LORD, teach me to love like you do. Give me YOUR LOVE for this person. LORD, deal with me and my thick-headedness, and my hard-heartedness. And LORD, help me.**" I don't like anybody. Well, then God, help me that I can help, so that I can love some people.

You see, **you got to be IN THE CHURCH**. Because otherwise you start thinking everyone else is the problem—when you're the problem. That's WHY WE NEED the CHURCH.

In the Bible, there are more than 59 "ONE ANOTHER"s—Love one another—bear one another's burdens—confess your sins to one another—forgive one another. How are you going to practice one "anothering" if there's no "another"? **And the ONE ANOTHERING is actually how Christ is formed in us**. And we are predestined to be conformed.

👉 So once you got BORN AGAIN, *you're on the track to be CONFORMED*.

👉 *You signed up for the program*

And God's going to put you around those people that are going to help you be formed. So the sooner you go, "Okay, God, **let me surrender to You. And LORD, FORM IN ME**"—the better it gets because GRACE begins to flow. And we're able to do it.

➡ But **WE NEED TO BE TOGETHER TO DO IT**

➡ But **we need to be committed** to BEING TOGETHER

➡ We need to **be committed** to STAYING when it's tough, STAYING when it's boring, STAYING when everybody else is like, "Oh, there's something more exciting."—No, **you got to be committed to stay in it and be part of it** because **WE WILL LOOK LIKE HIM** eventually.

👉 It is not only you being FORMED PERSONALLY—it's US TOGETHER being FORMED TOGETHER into the BODY of CHRIST —That's what He's looking for—**US TOGETHER**.

➡ We've got to begin to look LIKE HIM

Ephesians 4 Paul is talking about how **God has given some to be LEADERS** in the CHURCH and He's put GRACE on them

Ephesians 4:11-13—And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

THE REASON WHY WE GOT TO BE IN THE CHURCH
AND LET THIS FORMATION HAPPEN IS
BECAUSE **JESUS IS LOOKING FOR HIS BODY TO BE SEEN**

He's looking for the BODY TO BE BUILT UP

- **JESUS is the Head—but the ONLY BODY He has on earth is us.** Jesus is in heaven.
- He's got to BUILD His CHURCH. And *He's looking at us*.
- **CHRIST IS FORMED IN US** and we form the BODY OF CHRIST together.

WHY? 👉 Because we have to **EXTEND THE KINGDOM**

➡ The CHURCH is the only body and agency on earth through which the agenda of Heaven can enter the earth. So for "God's will to come on earth as it is in heaven", He NEEDS A BODY. That's us. **He needs a BODY to extend the Kingdom. He needs a BODY to disciple others.**

So, *do we really need the CHURCH?* Yes, we do. You and I, we need the CHURCH.

⚠ **We never grow into who we are called to be without the CHURCH.** You just won't. You'll be BORN AGAIN. You'll be saved. You may know a lot about God—but *if you never allow Jesus to*

BUILD YOU INTO HIS CHURCH, which means getting plugged in in a local CHURCH, being around people, and sticking in in it, *you're never going to come into what God called you to be.*

➡ **JESUS NEEDS HIS CHURCH TO COMPLETE HIS MISSION**—Without the BODY of CHRIST, the MISSION of Jesus won't be fulfilled. His return will continually be being delayed.

And the third reason that WE NEED THE CHURCH
BECAUSE THE WORLD NEEDS THE CHURCH

WE ARE THE ONLY HOPE THE WORLD HAS

In the midst of darkness, so much brokenness in the world, so much anxiety, so much violence, addiction, loneliness. Where would they go for help? Where would they? Where is their hope? We can't look for governments for hope. We can't look to people for hope. Where will we look for hope? There's only one. HIS NAME IS JESUS. *But how will they know unless HIS BODY, the CHURCH, is here?*

👉 **WE ARE THE LIGHT.** We are the LIGHT in the world. We have to shine. That people will know as things are getting darker and darker and more difficult, 👉 **THERE IS HOPE**—There is A WAY. They should look at the CHURCH. They should come to the CHURCH and say, *"I want to know, how are you living in PEACE? How are you not concerned about what's going on in our world? How are you living and raising your children in the midst of a world like this, raising them to have a HOPE and a FUTURE?"*

You know, **the CHURCH through history has always been what has made this world better!** It was the CHURCH who started orphanages. It's the CHURCH, William Wilberforce, that actually eventually abolished slavery. It's the CHURCH that makes things beautiful. Michelangelo, all these people, they were painting pictures of heaven. I want to tell you, some of the most enduring, beautiful music that came out is it's Christians who wrote it.

We make the world beautiful with things GOD HAS GIVEN US

We can create a CULTURE that says, *You can have FAMILY. You can have PEACE.* We can enjoy, there's LIFE to be had.

THE WORLD NEEDS THE CHURCH and it needs it more than ever before.

👉 And WE are the CHURCH !!

We cannot be tempted in this day and age to think CHURCH is an optional extra. That's something I'm a part of just on a Sunday. That's not the CHURCH.

➡ **The CHURCH is a LIVING BODY** made up of LIVING STONES. That is, JESUS is building us together using overseers, His under-shepherds.

➡ Jesus is BUILDING US TOGETHER. He is **FORMING CHRIST on the inside of us that there would be a TESTIMONY in the earth of WHO HE IS and HIS LOVE** 👉 *that ALL might be SAVED.*

THE CHURCH—JESUS'S BODY ON EARTH—IS THE ONLY HOPE FOR THE WORLD

COMMUNION

In the church we should receive COMMUNION regularly together. By doing so we recognize that we are a FAMILY. We are going to walk with one another. We confess our sins to one another. We will care for each other.

When we take COMMUNION we honor the LORD—and we honor the BODY.
We want to honor the LORD and His BODY today together.