

Three Powerful Gifts.

The Church and
Its Sacraments



SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 1 June 16, 2024

“The Purpose and Power of the Church”

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we praise you for this day and for the strength you bless us with. We ask that you would reveal something new to us today. Remove the veils in our minds that could hinder us from seeing you today and make us one with you. Help us clear our minds, give us your mercy, and fill us with your grace. In Jesus' name, Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Matthew 16:17-18 (NIV)

¹⁷Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

1 Corinthians 12:27 (NIV)

²⁷Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

Matthew 5:14-16 (NIV)

¹⁴“You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. ¹⁶In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 1 June 16, 2024

“The Purpose and Power of the Church”

INTRODUCTION

Green Bay Packer coach Vince Lombardi famously said “Gentlemen, this is a football!” during the first day of training camp. He was not trying to be funny; he was stressing that fundamentals are important. Sometimes we have attended church for so long we lose focus on what the purpose of the church is.

The Church is not a building or location, it is the people, the *Ecclesia* of Jesus. And the people of Jesus are called to be in community with one another and care for one another. But there is more to being the church than just caring for ourselves. We are called to go out into the world, as the body of Christ, and make this world more like the Kingdom of God.

QUESTIONS

1. What is your favorite thing about summer?
2. What do you think of when you hear the word church?
3. In his sermon, Pastor Eric said “Jesus started the Church, it was his idea and he wants his followers to be part of it.” Do you think you can be a fully devoted follower of Jesus without being part of a local Church? Why or why not?
4. The idea of the church as a family comes with responsibilities: families care for one another. What are some ways your church helps you to carry the burdens of other “family” members?
5. What abilities and resources has God given you that you can use to help reach troubled, helpless people with the good news of Jesus?

FINAL APPLICATION

How can you get more involved in the local church this month?