



Here is the church - *Has the church lost its mojo?*

STRUCTURED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: pick 4-5 for the group

What was the first church you ever attended and how was it different from Sunridge today? (If you've been at Sunridge for a few years, how is the Sunridge of today different than then?)

Do you know any *Nones*? What conversations have you had with them about God?

Do you agree or disagree with the idea that the discrepancy between the impact of today's church and the early version is our fault? Why?

What does Paul say in Eph 1:4-6 about how and why God chose us? How does the idea of that we have always been on God's mind, and part of his plan affect your perspective of God?

What do the following verses say about the calling of believers and the church (Matt 5:16; Ro 15:6; Eph 1:12; 1Pe 2:12)? What unique aspect of glorifying God do each of these verses highlight? Which of these verses poses the biggest challenge for you?

The following is an excerpt from Sunridge's *Vision and Values* document. In what ways do these values reflect the idea that the church is God's idea and exists to glorify God? Do you think it is important for Sunridge to have clearly stated values like this? How can values like these help Sunridge glorify God? What pitfalls can stated values like these help us avoid?



Sunridge Values

Our core values are rooted in the gospel, which is the good news that Jesus died and rose from the dead to restore our relationship with God. We never outgrow our need for the gospel.

1. **We exist because of—and for—Jesus.** At Sunridge, we put Jesus first. We understand that through Jesus we have access to the gift of grace that leads to salvation, as well as transformation. *Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:16-17*
2. **We worship Jesus.** Worship is a celebration of who God is and what He has done. We believe worship is more than music and permeates all facets of our lives. A life filled with worship is essential for us to grow and know God better. *1 Corinthians 10:31; Psalm 145; Colossians 3:1-4*

How does the fact that *committed Christians will attend church less this year than in years past* give you concern? (Under 20% of church attenders attend on any given weekend) What do you attribute the downturn of church attendance in America to? In what ways are you an active part of the life of Sunridge church?

Do you think Christians feel they *need* church today? Why? In what ways has church been a necessity for you?

What did Jesus say about the church in Matt 16:18? How does Jesus' declaration square with the church attendance statistics mentioned in the message?

What steps do you sense God saying you should take to take more ownership of your calling through the church?



CONTEMPLATIVE DISCUSSION MODEL

Ask these of the group or break into groups of 2-3 to allow people to interact more.

Why do you think the church is shrinking in America?

What are you learning about God from the message?

What are you learning about yourself from the message?

What questions did the message leave you with?

What is God doing in your heart lately?

What things do you feel are getting in the way from what God wants to do in you?

How can I pray for you?

Leader's Guide: Here is the church. *Has the church lost its mojo?*

“Here is the church; here is the steeple. Open the doors; see all the people.” You may remember that little rhyme - along with its hand gestures - from your childhood. But studies tell us that in America this year, when the doors open there will actually be less people to see inside than in years past. Has the church lost its mojo? Our *Here Is the Church* series rediscovers why church matters and just how much you matter to your church.

Less than 20 percent of Americans regularly attend church.

17.7%

The fastest growing religious group in the US are the “nones.”

- **Nones: 23% of US adults - Up from 16% in 2007**



Nones: People choosing no religious affiliation. They are not hostile to the church; they are just not affiliated with it.

- From “none of the above” in surveys. The “nones,” a category that includes people who self-identify as atheists or agnostics, as well as those who say their religion is “nothing in particular.”
- Unchurched & Dechurched.
- Not hostile to the church, just not affiliated with it. May not be done with God, but done with the church. Most say they believe in God.
- 1/3 say religion is important to them.

FACT: Most committed Christians will be in church less this year than in years past.

What we mean when we say *Christian*:

- 1/3 Cultural Christians
- 1/3 Congregational Christians
- 1/3 Convictional Christians.

What we mean when we say *Church*:

Church = Ekklesia: always a group of people, assembly, even a mob (Acts 19)

A Church is a group of people who gather to follow Jesus

In Jesus day there was no formal church

Peter preaches the first post-Cross gospel message

Acts 2:21 everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’

2:37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

2:47 And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.



Why the discrepancy between church origins and now?

It's the church's fault!

People who were nothing like Jesus, liked Jesus.

The church has lost its perspective. Historical. Biblical. Christological.

1. You need to know why you're here

Eph 1:4 For **he chose us** in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love ⁵ he predestined us to be **adopted as his sons** through Jesus Christ, **in accordance with his pleasure and will--** ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

You have always been on God's mind and part of his plan

2. You need to know why you're here

Eph 2:6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,
7 IN ORDER THAT in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.

We are the display of God's incomparable grace and kindness

Heb 10:24 And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. 25 Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

A prayer: Lord, help me today to show your unimaginable grace and kindness today.