

WEEK OF AUGUST 18

THE CHURCH

CHURCH

-(ἐκκλησία, *ekklēsia*)

-the greek word for church is made up of a preposition and a verb: ἐκ (out) + καλέω (call)

-so, the word Ekklesia means '*the called out ones*', the gathering, the assembled; in fact, it is not used in scripture to refer to a building or a program, but to the people themselves!

-of the gospels, only Matthew uses the word *ekklēsia*, but most of Paul's letters have a lot to say about the church

-this week there is a portion of the New Testament for each day, along with some questions to help you meditate on what the church is, or is meant to be

-I encourage you to read the passage multiple times, then read the questions, and, if you are able, right down some of your thoughts, or 'answers' to the questions

-finally, I have added a song (youtube video) that you can listen to wrap up your time

DAY 1

Acts 2:42-47

"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts.

They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people.

And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."

-what do you see, in this brief description of the early church, regarding what they focused on?

Which of these things do we focus on at EFC?

Which are missing? Why?

-if you were to make a list of key components of what it means to be the church, what would you include on your list?

Cochren & Co. - Church (take me back) <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3eTOcrWu8mQ>

DAY 2

1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10

*“As you come to him (Jesus), the living Stone—
rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— you also,
like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering
spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” –*

*“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special
possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his
wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you
had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”*

-what does it mean to be a *‘living stone’*?

What is our purpose, as a *‘spiritual house’*?

-what specific calling does this passage identify for the church?

How does EFC live this out? How could you / we improve on this?

-how are you / we *‘declaring the praises of him who called you...’*?

Coey Redd - Church <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ol3DOKyS9Ow>

DAY 3

Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22

*“And God placed all things under his (Jesus) feet
and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,
which is his body,
the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.”*

*“Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers,
but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household,
built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,
with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.*

*In him the whole building is joined together
and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.*

*And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his
Spirit.”*

-if we, as a church, are Christ's body, and He is the head, how is His leadership evident in your life, and at EFC?

-what does being *'fellow citizens with God's people'* mean?

If this means that all believers are members of God's household, how should we treat people from other churches?

-what evidence is there that *'God lives at EFC by his Spirit'*?

Lindy Coder ft. Matt Redman - People Get Ready <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JICFbDnwlH4>

DAY 4

Romans 12:4-6a

*"For just as each of us has one body with many members,
and these members do not all have the same function,
so in Christ we, though many,
form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.
We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us."*

-have you discovered how God has gifted you, and how your gifting contributes to the body?

-how do we respond to the diversity at EFC, given that we are *'many members...that do not all have the same function'*?

-if God gives each one gifts, is it right to make one gift more important than another?

Elevation Worship & Maverick City - Build Your Church <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wegtdmbeuh0>

DAY 5

Colossians 1:17-20

*"He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.
And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among
the dead,
so that in everything he might have the supremacy.
For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him,
and through him to reconcile to himself all things,*

*whether things on earth or things in heaven,
by making peace through his blood, shed on the cross.”*

- how should EFC be organized so that Christ is truly the head of the church?
- what could we do to make Christ’s headship an ever greater reality at EFC?**

Rend Collective - Build Your Kingdom Here http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r-4bEbk1m_c

DAY 6

1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 12:12-26

*“Don’t you know that you yourselves are God’s temple
and that God’s Spirit dwells in your midst?*

*If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person;
for God’s temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.”*

“Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by[c] one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many. Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honoured, every part rejoices with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.”

- our text says that your body is God’s temple.

How should that impact or change the way that you treat your body?
-how does concern for one another at EFC demonstrate itself?
Are there things that we should do, or do better, to care for one another?
-do you ever feel unimportant?
Or that you have nothing to contribute?
What does this passage say that challenges that perspective?

Kari Jobe - Heal Our Land <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4fq8ffjcEcU>

DAY 7

Matthew 16:18-19

*“And 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.
I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven;
whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven,
and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

-Jesus gave Peter an important role in leading the church after his return to heaven.
What do you think the *'keys'* suggest?
-what does it mean to *'bind'* or to *'loose'*?
Does what we do, or fail to do, at EFC impact the ability of others to get to heaven?
In what way?

Hillsong United - Good Grace http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lbwXAbH_G00