Doctrine of the Church

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[0:00] Well, good evening, everyone. My name is Brent. I am a member of Eagle Heights Baptist Church,! and I'm one of the pastors, one of the elders there.

So take your Bibles and turn to Matthew 16.
We'll also flip over to Matthew 18. Matthew 16, the church glorious. Matthew 18, the church personal. Now, while you're turning there, I want to give you an assignment for later.
Maybe others have already done this. But I want you to later go up. Now, not all at once. I don't want to overwhelm anyone. But go to your leaders, whoever your leader is, and say and ask, hey, how many hours do you think it took to get ready for this week, for these three days?
Not so they can boast about it, because I just want you all to hear all the time and effort that have gone into this. Now, I've walked into a number of meetings where they were on Zoom, and I interrupted their meeting and had a good time, and we had a laugh, and then they continued to do their work.
[1:24] But I've watched them work. I've watched them put in the effort so that you all could learn more about the God of the universe and His Son, Jesus, and how we can live for Him by the power of the Holy Spirit for His great glory.

And I hope that you will just take a moment and say thank you, because here's what I know. Here's what I know. You want to be in God's will? 1 Thessalonians 5.18, be thankful.
It is God's will for you in Christ Jesus to be thankful, and you should be thankful for those who love you so well. So do that tonight. Say, how many hours? How many hours did you put in on this? And just look at them and say, thank God for you. Thank God for you. All right? So do that for me, and that will be a favor to me. Matthew chapter 16.
Have you ever heard someone say, and maybe you haven't, but I've certainly heard it quite a lot, but have you ever heard someone say, I love Jesus, but I just don't care much for the church?
[2:34] You ever heard anybody say something like that? I love Jesus, but I just don't care that much about the church. And if you haven't, and you're a part of the church long enough, and you run into enough Christians, at some point, whether it's online or in person, you're going to hear someone say, I love Jesus.

I like Jesus. He's a great guy, but I just don't care much for organized religion. I just don't care much for the church. Now ask yourself, this is a rhetorical question. Don't respond.
How would you respond to that if you were talking to them and you're like, hey, I'm a Christian. Where do you go to church? I don't go to church. What would you say to them when they say, I just don't care much for the church?
Now here's one thing you could say to them. Okay, you ready for this? Here's one thing you could say to them. That is totally a stupid thing to say.
If you wanted to use a big fancy word that also means stupid, you could say that is asinine. I did not cuss, okay? I just want you all to know that. That's a real word that means stupid.
[3:38] It's just a fancy word that means stupid. That is the dumbest thing I've ever heard in my life. Now here's the thing. If you say it that way, your speech won't be full of grace, seasoned with salt, for the moment to help build someone else up and maybe help them love the church, you're going to lose their hearing, right?

Because they're going to be like, well, why would I? You must be a part of the church. This is why I don't go to church. I don't want anything to do with the church because of you. So don't do that. But I just want to say to you, number one, that's not biblical at all.
It doesn't make any biblical sense to say something like that. So maybe I could show you a better way. There was a guy named Peter. Maybe you've heard a lot about him this week. A guy that

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really liked to let people know what was on his mind, including his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. And Peter really thought he loved Jesus. I mean, he really thought he loved Jesus. So in John 13, 37 through 38, we won't go there, but Peter's talking to Jesus and Jesus is like, hey, I'm going away.
And Peter says, hey, Jesus, I will lay down my life for you right now. I'm ready to die for you. And Jesus said, will you, Peter? Are you ready to die for me?
[4:54] And Jesus goes on to say, you know what, Peter, as a matter of fact, you're not ready to die for me. As a matter of fact, you're going to deny me three times before the rooster crows, you're going to deny me three times. You don't know what you're talking about, Peter.

And then in John 18, 25 through 27, three times, what does he do? He denies knowing Jesus, the Jesus he said he loved, the Jesus he said he was ready to lay his life down for.
Now remember, again, Peter pledged to lay his life down for Jesus, but he did exactly what Jesus told him. And then there's one of the most beautiful scenes in all the scriptures. In John 21, verses 15 through 17, there's this wonderful restoration moment with Peter after Jesus is resurrected.
Do you remember the story? There's a charcoal fire. Now, Peter was around a charcoal fire when he denied Jesus three times, and they're sitting there eating fish, and Jesus takes him aside and says to him, or maybe he was even in front of his disciples, I don't remember, but he says, hey, Peter, do you love me?
Do you really love me, Peter? Then tend my sheep. Peter said, you know I love you, Jesus, and tend my sheep. Asked him again, hey, Peter, do you really love me?
[6:09] Then shepherd my sheep. Peter, do you really? Jesus, you know I love you. Third time, then tend my sheep.

Now, if you were Jesus, what would you have said to Peter after having been terribly betrayed by Peter? Maybe you just would have said, hey, Peter, just give me three I'm sorry's, okay?
I'm sorry, I'm sorry, I'm sorry. There, it's good, we're done. Maybe you could grovel a little. Maybe you could come wash my feet. Maybe you could kiss my feet. Hey, all the things that we might think of, but of all the things that Jesus says, could have said.
He says, hey, Peter, love my sheep. You love me, love my sheep. My sheep, Peter, my people, my church.
Now, I ask you, I ask you, do you really love Jesus? Seriously, I know you all are hearing a lot of talks, a lot of grace. Ask yourself, do you really love Jesus?
[7:20] Do you really love Jesus? Then you'll really love his church. You will really love his church. Nobody loves the church more than Jesus. Let me say it again. Nobody loves the church more than Jesus.

How do we know that? Because he gave his life up for her and for us. That's how much he loves you. Do you love Jesus' church, that you would do the same, that you would lay your life down for your brothers and sisters?
That's what love is. 1 John 3, 16. So, here's what I want to do. I want us to learn from Jesus about his church so we can love him and his body and bring glory to the Father.
The church is the gospel made visible, and I want us to learn about this glorious church, this personal church, and I want us to look at two passages tonight to do that.
Two passages, both for Matthew. Now, the reason I've chosen Matthew 16, verses 13 through 20, and Matthew 18, 15 through 17, is because these are the only two passages of the four gospels where Jesus uses the word ecclesia, which is the word church.
[8:29] Ecclesia in Jesus' time, the New Testament time, just simply means a gathering. It's the only time Jesus uses the word church. Now, I want you to know when you're reading the New Testament, okay, are you hearing this?

You should be reading it and always thinking in the context of the local church. It's one of the predominant themes. It's one of the governing themes of the New Testament. But Jesus only uses this word three times, once in Matthew 16, 13 through 20, and twice in Matthew 18, 15 through 17.
In Matthew 16, 13 through 20, we're going to see the church glorious, and in Matthew 18, 15 through 17, I want us to see the church personal. The church is personal. So let's start in Matthew 16, 13 through 20.
I hope you're there. We're going to read the text together. I may stop a time or two just to describe a few things, and then I'm going to give you four reasons the church of Jesus is glorious and worthy

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of your love and commitment.
So let's look at Matthew 16, 13 through 20. Here we go. Now, when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, now let's stop right there, all right?
[9:37] I want you to look at this picture I have behind me. I want to give you a little bit of context, okay? Now, this is an, obviously this is not a real picture. This is an artist rendition of what is Caesarea Philippi.

Now, my church gets sick and tired of hearing me say this, but I was at this spot last year, at this time, almost exactly this time. So this is northern Israel. It sits right below Mount Hermon.
Mount Hermon's about 10,000 feet, often has snow on it, lots of snow, lots of rain, and then the water flows down off Mount Hermon and runs into this area called Caesarea Philippi.
Now, it's called Caesarea Philippi because Philip, one of Herod's sons, built a Roman city at the base of this cliff. If you look at this, see the rock cliff? It's probably 100, 150, 200 feet high.
He built this city where the water comes out of the rocks. It's actually the headwaters of the Jordan River that flows all the way to the Dead Sea. He built this city in honor of Caesar Augustus, and it's a Roman city.
[10:40] now this is a, again, this is an artist's rendition, but you see those different buildings. It's interesting that Jesus goes, I'm not sure what the distance is, maybe 50, 75, 100 miles north from Nazareth and around Galilee.

He takes his disciples up to this city. It's a Roman city, and it is a cesspool, a cesspool of pagan polytheism. As a matter of fact, there are at least seven different false gods being worshipped here in this place.
There's the temple of Zeus, the temple of Augustus, there's a place to worship Pan, the goat god, there's a place to worship Nemesis, and it's sort of like Jesus took his disciples up to Sin City.
And so he takes them up there, and there's all these temples, all this pagan worship, the guide that was taking us through this area, he said some of the practices that would have been going on, sexual practices, sacrificial practices, goats being killed, bestiality, you know what bestiality is?
Jesus takes his disciples up there, and they're looking at this place, and it's as though he wants them to see everything that's going on. Now listen to what he says to him and what happens.
[11:57] He was asking his disciples, who do people say the Son of Man is? That's a good question, right? Takes them up to Sin City, who do people say that the Son of Man is?

And they said, some say John the Baptist, and others Elijah, but still others, Jeremiah, one of the prophets. And that would be great. Those guys are revered, they're in the Old Testament, they're well thought of.
Verse 15, he said to them, but who do you say that I am? So he's talking to his disciples, right? So here's Simon Peter. Here's our guy. Here's our guy that talked big, but when it came time to actually stand by Jesus, he didn't.
Simon Peter answered, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God. Now can we just say about Simon Peter, good job. That's right.
You are the Messiah, the long-awaited one of Israel. You are the Christ, the Son of God. You are deity. You are somebody special. Verse 17, and Jesus said to him, blessed, favored are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you.
[13:05] This is not a human answer, but my father. Now notice these words, my father, the possessive my, my father who is in heaven.

In other words, Peter, this is from God. You got this right. The other guys are saying, Jeremiah, Elijah, man, Peter, you are telling me that you believe that I am God.
I am the Messiah. This is a magnificent answer. Verse 18, and I also say to you, now you see that little word, you? That's in the singular.
He's talking to Peter. I say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock, rock. Now look at the picture again. See the rock? See the rock where all these false gods have, all these false gods are being worshipped?
Jesus is saying, on this rock. Now, what's Peter's name? What's Peter stand for? Or what's Peter mean? Rock. Okay, so is he actually talking about, I'm going to build my church, like I'm going to build a building on top of these rocks?
[14:09] These literal rocks? No. No. On the confession of Peter, but he's doing a play on words as they're looking at this huge rock face. Upon this rock, listen to this, future tense, I will build my

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church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

I will give you, singular Peter, the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. Then he warned his disciples, and I don't know why Jesus says this, but he does.
He warned his disciples that they should tell no one that he was the Christ who they said he was.
Now, here's what I want to do. I want to unpack verses 18 and 19. Because again, I think there are four reasons the church is glorious and worthy of our love and commitment.
So here's the first reason. Look at it in the text in verse 18. I say to you, Peter, that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build.
Here's the first reason. Write this down. First reason the church is glorious is because Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the living God, is the builder. Now, what else might Jesus have said here?
[15:25] He might have said, Peter, on you I will build my church. On you all. I'm going to use you all to build my church.

He doesn't say that. He says, I will build my church. Have you all heard about the Disney World of Oklahoma?
Have you all heard about this? So, somewhere near Veneta, northeast of Tulsa, there is planned a $2 billion, 1,000 acre, American Heartland, Disney World of Oklahoma.
It's going to rival Silver Dollar City. Or maybe even dwarf it. I don't know. Now, real quick, let's do a show of hands. Let's have some fun with this. Okay? I don't want this to get out of hand. How many of you think that's going to happen?
Just curious. Okay. It's not looking good. Right? If we're going by vote and popular support, it's not looking good. Can I just tell you, I have my doubts.
[16:29] Okay? I hope so. I hope to visit it if it comes to be. But, 2 billion, 1,000 acre, Disney of Oklahoma in the middle of nowhere, Veneta? I have my doubts whether it's going to be built.

How about this? Have you all heard about this? A 1.6 billion dollar, 1,907 feet high, tallest in the U.S.
and sixth tallest in the world skyscraper in downtown Oklahoma City. You all heard about this?
Double the height of the Devon Tower. Why? That's my first question.
Why? But, but, let's have a show of hands. How many of you all think, okay, Mark, you're all in on everything. You're going to help pay for it? Okay, so a lot more.
I'm going to be honest. I have my doubts. Okay? I have my doubts. Because, that's a lot of money and a lot of material. Now, they may happen and I may be proven wrong, but to build, you have to have power, resources, and influence.
[17:35] Now, here's what I want you to know about Jesus because he says, I will build. That's a promise. I will build my church. Here's what you need to know about Jesus and here's the reason the church is glorious.

Jesus has it all. Jesus has all authority in heaven and on earth. He has all that it takes to build his church.
Do you think that highly of Jesus? Do you doubt Jesus on this? Like, I'm not sure. I mean, it's a great promise, but I'm not sure the gospel is going to go to all the nations.
Let's just consider Jesus and who he is for just a second. I just want to give you three, three, three reasons Jesus can do it. First, he's the co-eternal creator.
John 1, 1 through 4. In the beginning was the word and the word was with God and the word was God. He was in the beginning with God and all things came into being through him and apart from him, nothing came into being that has come into being.
[18:39] Nothing. Jesus always was. He's the co-eternal creator and he is God. He is the agency of creation. He is God. If he can create the universe and the world, surely he can build his church, right?

Not only that, but he is also the abundant debt payer. 2 Corinthians 5, 21. He who knew no sin. He has no sin debt.
No sin. Never sin. Never transgressed the law that Asher talked about. Not a single time. He has no debt and because he has no debt, he can cover your debt to save you, to make you a new creation and bring you to be a part of his church to build his church.
See, it's not dependent on you and me. It's dependent on Christ and who he is. And third, he's the only eternal life giver. He alone rose and defeated death.

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He alone arose and defeated death. Yes, many people have been resuscitated. There's been books written about this. People that were dead for a short moment, but they died later. Jesus rose and ascended to the right hand of God the Father never to die again.
[19:48] never to die again. So I just, I know you've heard this a lot and some of you may be tired of hearing it already, but do you believe the gospel?

I'm serious. Do you believe the gospel? Do you believe that Jesus has the power as God Almighty, second person to the Trinity to save and to change and to transform and bring enemies together that were once at odds with each other to build his church that the gospel might go to the ends of the earth, that all people, all people groups might worship at the throne of God above?
Have you given your life to this Christ? to this Christ? Christ? Jesus promised he would build his church. Who can stand against him?
No business, no country, no organization has a builder like King Jesus. Now keep this in mind. Who is Jesus' construction crew? 12 knuckleheaded Jewish guys. 12 knuckleheads, one a betrayer Judas, right?
[21:11] And he says, I'm going to use you guys to build my church. I'm going to build it, but I'm going to use you guys to build it. The church is glorious because its builder is glorious and uses inglorious people like you and me.

Never forget that. He can use you and me. He can use you and me because of who he is, not because of who I am, but because of who he is. The second reason the church is glorious, verse 18 again, notice, I will build my church.
Here's the second reason. The church belongs to Jesus who is the Christ. I love this little phrase. My church. My church.
There's something really healthy about you saying wherever you go to church saying, Mustang First Baptist Church is my church. Eagle Heights is my church.
Whatever church is represented here, it's my church. There's something healthy about that. Ownership and buy-in are good, but know this, know this, we belong to Jesus above all.
[22:18] We are the sheep of his pasture. He purchased us. It's his church. It's his church first and foremost above all. He's the authority of his church, but there's also something encouraging here and comforting about the possessive my, my church.

Now, when I think about John 21, 15 through 17, remember that story I told earlier about Peter, right? Betraying, denying Jesus. Jesus says, hey Peter, do you love me?
Do you love me? Tend my sheep. Tend my sheep. Here's the thing. And Peter's a part of that. Jesus claims us. Jesus says, Brent belongs to me.
Parker belongs to me. Paul belongs to me. Eli belongs to me. And we belong to Jesus together. He calls us my sheep. And I would submit to you that this is actually a loving and warm possession.
So I have a little daughter. She's not really little anymore. She's 12. About 5'7". Already as tall as her mom. But I tell her all the time.
[23:27] All the time. You are my daughter. You are my daughter. And I'm your daddy. And there's nothing you can do to turn me away.

I'll never quit being your daddy. And you'll never quit being my daughter. father. And I think there's a sense in which when we give our lives to Christ and we become children of the father through the son by the power of the spirit and we come into Jesus church despite the mess we are.
Jesus says, I bought them. They belong to me. Hear this tonight. Jesus doesn't need you. But Jesus wants you and will use you.
You are his bride and his special possession. He owns us for the father's glory. Third, verse 18 again. Sorry about the mic.
And the gates of Hades will not overpower it. Here's the third reason. The third reason the church is glorious. Jesus guarantees the church's victory. Hear it again.
[24:34] And the gates of Hades will not overpower it. Now let me tell you about the gates of Hades for just a second. Now you see that building. I think it would be on your left.

Let me make sure I've got my direction. Yeah. See the building on the far left? That's the temple of Augustus. You see behind it there's a dark spot? There's a cave there. I've seen this cave.
You know what the cave's called? The gates of Hades. And so Jesus is using this. He's taking them up to Sin City. There's sacrifices of goats.

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There's demonic devilish worship going on. And Jesus is saying I'm going to build my church over the top of all these devil worshiping religions and the gates of Hades whatever you fear and are concerned about whatever you're afraid of and concerned about the gates of Hades will not overcome it.
Think of all the organizations and institutions and countries and empires and businesses that have been swept into the dustbin of history. I googled today how many countries have ceased to exist in the history of the world.
[25:46] How many countries do you think no longer exist the way they once did? Hundreds if not thousands. Gone.

Swept into the dustbin of history. Babel. Tower of Babel. Remember when those people came together like hey we're going to build a tower to God and remember there's sort of this anthropomorphism which sort of tells it in the story of mankind.
God had to come down and look at it and come down out of heaven because it was so little and small and he destroyed that. Babylon the great. Babylon the great harlot gone.
Dustbin. A few foundations that have been found by archaeologists. Rome. Gone. Rome did last a long time. The Mayans gone. Businesses. Blockbuster video.
Gone. And despite its fledgling start 120 people left over in Acts 1 15 after all the crowds fled Jesus and it seemed like Jesus was a loser and a failure he rises from the grave overcoming sin and death and all the opposition he faced and still faces today and yet the church thrives and grows.
[26:58] Now you may hear of churches demise and the secularism and that the world are winning but we will triumph because of whose church it is Jesus.

Church. Local churches may falter and fail and die but the church universal see if you recognize this is inevitable. The church is inevitable.
Until Revelation 7 9 when we're before the throne of God above worshiping with people from every tribe, tongue, and nation because we obeyed Matthew 28 19 go therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit teaching them to observe all that I've commanded for lo I'm with you always and to the end of the age until that is a reality it will grow under the sovereign hand of the almighty God.
If you want to be a part of something great and awesome and something that will last and something that's bigger than yourself give yourself to the church because you've given your life to Christ.
The resurrected and ascended Jesus will build it. He will build it. The church is glorious. Fourth reason the church is glorious look at verse 19 notice again I will give you and that little word you there singular I will give you Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound and heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loose in heaven.
[28:28] Now there's a let me tell you something there's a lot there. We cannot get into the weeds tonight on what all that means. Okay? There's a lot there but here's what it does mean. Jesus gives his church authority to do his work.

Jesus gives his church the authority and the power to do his work but particularly here the authority. You see where it says I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven that's just Jesus saying I'm going to give you the ability to do the work that I've given you to do.
Think about keys. Like hopefully like if Parker wanted to come over to my house and use my house I would give him the garage door opener or the keys I would give him the authority to come over to my house.
Now Parker and I get along we like each other but hopefully Parker wouldn't just come over and invite himself in and say hey I'm going to take the authority since we're friends just to come into your house. Now I would give him the keys so he could come in so he could have authority to do it.
Jesus gives his church the authority to do the work that he's called them to do. Look at Matthew 18.18 real quick. Matthew 18.18 See if this sounds familiar.
[29:35] Truly I say to you. Now you see that you? You think it's singular or plural? It's plural. It's plural because he's talking to all his disciples.

Now see if this sounds familiar. Whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. That sounds like the same thing that he says in 16.19 where he's just saying I'm going to give you the authority to do the work that

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I've called you to do.
I'm going to give you the authority to do the work I've called you to do. If Jesus is for us who can be against us? Because Jesus has given us the authority. Remember in Matthew 28.18-20 all authority is mine I'm giving it to you to make disciples.
Again if Jesus is for us who can be against us? So here's a summary. Jesus has given us four glorious reasons for us to trust him when he says we should commit to loving his church.
Four glorious reasons. If you're going to love Jesus' church you have to see that the church of Jesus is glorious. Now turn to Matthew 18. And I want you to see very quickly I will not spend as much time on this one but the church of Jesus is personal.
[30:54] The church of Jesus is personal. Now I want to I want to tell you this real quickly see if you track with this. I would go to Matthew 16 and I think the local church is there but I would use that passage to talk mostly about the church universal.

Do you know what I mean by the church universal? The church in all places for all time across history. Okay? Now here the church gets really local.
It gets visible. The church universal is invisible to us like in my own city of Stillwater I don't know all the people that are Christians. Right? In Mustang you don't know all the people that are Christians. In Piedmont you don't know all the people that are Christians.
Jesus knows who are his. Right? But I know the people in my local church. I know who are members and here we're talking about a more visible personal church. As a matter of fact here's how I'd say it.
Mark Dever talks about this. The local church is sort of like throwing paint on the invisible man. Right? Have you ever watched Hotel Transylvania? There's an invisible man. How do you know where the invisible man is?
[31:57] Well he's got clothes or glasses on. Right? And so the church is sort of the church the big C church is sort of invisible to us but we can see it when it gets local because we're committed to one another and we see each other when we show up to do church together.

And I think Matthew 18 is a good depiction of the local church so let's look at it. Now Matthew 18 is really about Matthew 18 is really about Jesus' people and community.
So look at verses 12 through 14. What do you think? If any man has a hundred sheep and one of them has gone astray. Now notice the word has gone astray.
Does he not leave the ninety-nine on the mountains and go to search for the one that is straying? So there's twice that word straying. If it turns out that he finds it truly I say to you he rejoices over it more than over the ninety-nine which has not gone astray.
So it will be with your father who is in heaven that one of these little perish. Now here's what I want you to see in this passage. What's this passage about? If you were to go astray from King Jesus who would come find you?
[33:08] Think about that. Listen everyone as you get older and you leave your home and you go to another church I wouldn't go to a church where the church wouldn't commit to come find me if I went astray from Jesus.

If I ran off into deep sin. So here Jesus is saying the church because I think this is about going and finding lost people I don't think this is so much about evangelism I think Luke's passage is about evangelism but here Jesus is saying if someone in your church runs out into sin it's the church's job the leaders of the church and the church to go find them and bring them back in.
Now read Matthew 18 15 through 17 let's read that. If your brother sins go and show him his fault in private. if he listens to you now there's five commands here the first two go and show so if your brother sins now some of your translations are going to say go or they sin against you that's not in the earliest manuscripts so I think the best reading is if you see a brother or sister sinning go and show him his fault in private if he listens to you you have won your brother so you see a brother or sister sinning what's your job?
they're sinning over and over they're sinning outwardly and publicly what's your job? it's your job to do the hard thing and go confront them listen to me this is hard keep you up at night keep you awake at night work this is what Jesus has called us to do how is someone going to do this for you if you're not a part of his church read on so if that doesn't work he does not listen to you here's the third command take one or two more with you so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed so now watch the circles expanding you went one on one to your brother and sister now you're taking two or three witnesses now look at verse 17 if he or she refuses to listen to

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them to the two or three here's the fourth command tell it to the church if he refuses to listen even to the there's our word church ecclesia the gospel made visible the gathering of God's people who were saved committed to him on mission for him let him be see that let him be that's your fifth command to you as a gentile and a tax collector in other words
I don't know if your churches do this but they should be working toward it you remove them from the church because they're giving you no evidence that they're actually a believer in Jesus now that's a summary of this passage question are you committed sufficiently to a church so that your brothers and sisters would see your sin and pursue you and love you by telling you the truth let me ask you this has anybody ever corrected you from the church because of your sin are you that committed to the local church you know who I'm responsible for as a pastor responsible for myself responsible for my family but you know who I would do this to if Parker ran off the
[36:48] Jesus rails right pastor Parker elder Parker family pastor Parker I would go to him and I would hope he would do the same for me and I would confront his sin and rebuke him now I know a lot of people in our city that go to Sunnybrook Christian church they're not even a Baptist church and if I saw one of them sinning I might say something to them but I'm not even sure who all goes to church there I'm not even sure who all is a member of that church and it's not my primary responsibility to go confront those people who are part of the universal church about their sin my job is to be committed to some people who love Jesus and love them enough to tell them the truth even if it's hard and listen to me students listen to me the world is going to tell you the world is going to tell you you cannot tell the truth to people because it's unloving and I'm going to tell you tonight it's unloving if you don't tell your brothers and sisters the truth about their sin you're actually being unloving if you won't tell them the truth and here

Jesus is calling us into community to sharpen one another to help one another follow Jesus because you know what's best for you do you know what's best for you the best thing for you in the world is always to say yes to Jesus that's what it means to be a part of the church you all familiar with Proverbs 27 17 you know what that says is iron sharpens iron so one person or man sharpens another now do you know what is required for people to sharpen one another what do you got to have to sharpen something friction right there's got to be contact right like if you were sharpening a knife blade you would have contact you would be bouncing like there would be friction and that would sharpen that knife I want to show you something real quick just to illustrate this does anybody know what this is what okay
I'm just making sure you guys are still with me so this is you're right this is a rock so this is a special rock can you tell you know why it's a special rock because my oldest son and I like to go on hikes every December and I took this as a 26th 2022 December 26th through 29th we found this on the Ozark Highland Trail and I always pick one of these up and take it home so I can remember the hike I know it's a weird thing to do my office is full of rocks but I picked this up it's a weird thing I always have something to throw at intruders if I need it but so this rock way up on the top now this rock came from the same area you know where I got this rock yeah
I got it actually out of the creek now same same same area right probably the same I don't know how you'd say it geologically same formations maybe a little bit different why is this rock rounded off and this one got rough edges there's a term called hydraulic abrasion so this rock has been in the creek or the river and as the river comes up and pushes other rocks down the river this rock bumps into other rocks like this and takes the rough edges off and makes it smooth that's why when you go down into a river except for in central Oklahoma where all we have is red dirt that's disgusting but if you go to places where they have clear water and lots of rocks like this you found rounded rocks because they're constantly bouncing off and knocking off the rough edges you ever met a Christian with rough edges you know what happens when people have rough edges you ever heard that the rough around the edges haven't been sanctified they hurt people and I want to submit to you that one of the things that happens when you're a part of a biblical community in a personal way and God gets a hold of you and he puts you in community where there's contact with one another he starts to take the rough edges off of you and sanctifies you for his glory and the good of others and so you're actually withholding the blessing of being sanctified and rounded out by the
Holy Spirit by not engaging with God's people in a meaningful way in which you're in contact with him you're not being sanctified the way you ought to let me just ask a few questions here or let me just make a couple of statements you have to know your Bible if you're going to be rightly a part of a church and understand that the New Testament is written in the context of the local church do this

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when you're reading the Bible always read it as an individual member of the body but always think of yourself in the context of the local church always think about how do I live this out individually but how do I live it out with others you have to actually be committed what does commitment look like in your church in ours it's membership we commit to love one another we have a covenant we keep you have to be there regularly listen to me the church is not any good to you if you're not there regularly Hebrews 10 24 and 25 you have to be intentional about personally knowing people under the authority of God's word you know what you ought to do to make a difference in your church you ought to try to show up five to ten minutes early and say hello and get to know people you don't know commit yourself to people that you don't have anything in common with you have to know that to obey
[42:55] Jesus is to love God's people as a part of the local church you have to be in close contact you have to be committed so you can help other people with their sin and love them and build them up and edify them and so they can do that to you so here's the summary and then I want to tell a story and I'm done here's my summary Jesus commands us to be committed to a church a local church so that we love and protect one another from sin and so we are shaped into the likeness of Jesus let me say it one more time Jesus commands us to be committed to a local church when it's easy and when it's hard so that we love and protect one another from sin and so we are shaped into the likeness of Jesus question do you love Jesus do you love his church now let me confess something and then we'll pray and I'll just tell you a story about myself I haven't always loved the church when I was 22

I went to a conference over Christmas break and they had these breakouts there were about 10 or 11,000 college students there and they had these breakouts and so we could each choose a breakout and I chose a breakout and I went to a breakout and there was a guy named Neil McClendon speaking at this breakout so he was talking about the various ways just like you guys have heard this weekend or this week various ways that we can love Jesus and make a difference in the world and God can use us and man I was enjoying it we were going through and finally he came to one part of his talk where he said let's talk about the local church and he said you know some of you slap the local church around and beat the local church up you beat the bride of Christ up and I'll never forget he told this story he said you know if you came to my house and started started trashing my wife and slapping my wife around he goes you know what I would do to you no I'm not really but I'm sure it wouldn't be good and he goes some of you now let me give you a little back story
I was a youth minister at a local church and had been for several years and I had a lot of problems with our church I didn't like that the pastor preached too long amen don't say amen I didn't like that the pastor preached too long I didn't like the music that we did I didn't like a way I just thought they could have gone a lot better and it's not like I was slandering the church but I was just inwardly disgruntled you know what I mean like I was just sort!
of put out with it I was ready to move on I was ready for some place that was doing it better and I realized that he was talking about like slapping the church around like somebody would slap another man's wife around what that husband would do to the person that was attacking his wife!
I realized you all I realized I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I I
fathers I me there was a girl over here and a guy over here and there's another guy here and there was a girl behind me we were all sitting on the floor you know cross-legged and I was just bawling like a baby trying to cover it up you know I don't know how many times I wiped my eyes but I was like and it was one of the best moments of my life because I realized that I needed to repent for not loving the church the way that I should love the church and I asked the Lord to forgive me for beating up his bride maybe all of you love the church like you should but I hope you've heard tonight that the church is glorious and if you realize that the church is glorious Jesus should be up close and personal for you in the way that you love his disciples do you love Jesus then you will love his church I want you to bow your heads and close your eyes and I just want you to ask yourself for a second and then I'm going to step off and Graham's going to lead us but I want you to pray I'm not going to pray for you I've been doing that already I just want you to pray for your own heart and your own mind in your own actions in your own theology of the church and ask do I see the church glorious and am I personal with the church do I love the church and if you need to confess and repent then do that and maybe even later you need to go talk to one of your sponsors or adults or your or your leader and just say hey I need some help with this just take about a minute

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and reflect on that and then Graham will lead us you

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