

Transcript 163-2

Shea Houdmann

Welcome the Got Questions podcast. This is part two of our episodes on frequently asked questions about the church. So I encourage you to if you have not already, listen to part one where we discussed some of the other most recognized questions and also a few episodes ago, we did one on what is the purpose of the church. So joining me again today is Nelson. He's the director of video content for Got Questions Ministries. And Gwen, who is the administrator for compellingtruth.org and is the leader, so to speak, of our volunteer services. Helps keep our our volunteers continuing to answer questions biblically. So Gwen, Nelson, thanks for joining me again today. And for today's set of frequently asked questions about the church I sorted a thought I'd start off asking Nelson this one. Nelson, when is it right to leave a church and look for another one?

Nelson Domingues

There are many answers to that question, some of them very simple. Sometimes you just get a new job and you're not in the area anymore. Or you move and you're not close enough to the church. And we talked about earlier about when you looking for a church it's really helpful to be close so that way you can be involved in the people that go there are close to you and so you can be involved in their lives and and help out with their needs. And so one of the reasons for leaving a church and a good reason at that is if you happen to move further away from that church. Or sometimes even that church, maybe they were meeting the local school or something in the church ends up moving farther away, and it just a little unattainable. And so those all legitimate reasons shouldn't be expected to have to travel half hour 45 minutes to to get to church or whatever you decide is too far for your family to go.

Nelson Domingues

I mean, there are some other reasons, you know, in the early days to leave the church you'd have to leave town, right? But nowadays churches are nearly it feels like they're on every single corner, and so there are a lot of options. And because of all these options, sometimes it always feels like the grass is greener on the other side, and I've seen people leave the church for no other reason, but because it just looks more fun over there. And that's not a good reason. Just because you just want to have a church service that's more fun or just you just want to go there, just to see. When you go and participate in church, you're not just sitting in a pew, you're not just listening to a sermon, you're not just singing songs, you're doing these things, but you're also participating, and at least you should be in the lives of the people around you. And so it's really important to stay connected and not just abandon the people around you. A lot of people don't understand that when you leave a church, you leave individuals as well at that church. Some of those people might have built and put incredible time and effort into your life or to your family's life, and when you just leave for any apparent reason, you just abandoned them. Or sometimes someone's way, depending on you at that church, for encouragement or for counsel, or for many other reasons. And again, you're not going to be there. And so we need to think about these things when we decide to leave a church.

Nelson Domingues

A good reason to leave a church and we talk about Scripture is as we look at the church and if that church is not preaching Christ as head of the church, there's a good reason. If he's not preeminent in the church, if he is not being taught there in the proper doctrines, aren't being taught there, then those are good reasons to leave church. You know, Colossians chapter one, verse 18 says, and he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning. The first born from the dead. That in everything he might be preeminent. So if Christ is not head of that church, if Scripture and the doctrine doesn't follow closely there, then that could be a reason. Again, you should talk to the pastor or to the elders if you feel they're straying or they have strayed in some sort of area, they'll just jump ship because you decided quickly. This should be done with counsel, with others around you who see the same things as you see.

Nelson Domingues

Again, something else that's very closely related to that is truth being proclaimed in that church? Have they decided to follow an agenda lately? Are they just following one cause? Are they're just focusing on areas where they shouldn't be? The church is supposed to be a beacon of buttress of truth that we see that in First Timothy, Chapter 3, verse 15, where it should be the Church of the Living God is a pillar and a buttress of the truth. And so, if the truth isn't being proclaimed and lived out there instead they're following some other truths or some fads or whatever it might be then these are good reasons why you might want to consider leaving that church. Again with counsel from other believers around you who see the same thing. Too many times as a pastor, I've heard, oh the Lord is calling me somewhere else. And you really get down into the rationale and the reasons. And really it's just they want to go somewhere else. And some of those reasons might be legitimate. A lot of those reasons are not. A lot of times because they have unresolved conflict within the church and they just think it's easier to leave, which tends to be most of the time why people do leave church.

Nelson Domingues

We just talked about in the last episode, if you don't didn't catch that while conflict resolution, I encourage you to listen to that. So we have to pay attention to those things. We have a responsibility to others in that church. We're supposed to be growing in that church, and if you're not growing in that church either, if you've been there and you've been listening to the teaching, you've been participating as much as you are able to participate in that church and you finding that there is no growth there for you. And others again have counseled you and said they've noticed those same things and that could be another reason why you should leave the church.

Nelson Domingues

I hope you see the overall theme here is that it's not just you who sees why I should leave the church. I believe as a church we are a body of Christ and we should be working together. And if you're the only one seeing what you're seeing, it might not be the problem of someone else. It might be your problem and maybe you need to resolve that issue between you and someone else, or you and God.

Gwen Sellers

Well, I think that's so important about, yeah, communication. Like, if it is time for you to leave the church, like you said Nelson, of actually talking to the leadership about hey, here are my concerns with, you know, like if it is a doctrinal thing or I'm not growing or whatever and, you know, to actually like, have that conversation rather than just silently leave. Or if it's ohh I just really don't like this other

person and I mean like then maybe that's something you need to work out. And I do think, I mean there are sometimes you know that there are good reasons to leave a church that like, I think that can be positive for both. I've heard a pastor call this a gospel goodbye. I mean, like, there are times when God is, you know, is calling somebody to to maybe, like, help support a new church plant or like you know, maybe your, God is calling you into a new aspect of ministry that just doesn't like that this church is unable to support or like doesn't have opportunity for that. But that can be a healthy and good, goodbye of kind of like, oh, you know, God is calling the church in this direction, but he's calling me to this. Those are all still Kingdom goals, like we're all still part of the Universal Church. I just need to be over here now. And you guys need to be there and like we can celebrate that with one another and make it a nice goodbye. I think that's the kind of also the key of if and when it is confirmed that it's time to leave a church, you know, do it nicely. Don't make unnecessary division and don't bad mouth other people. Like yeah, I guess be a Christian about it.

Shea Houdmann

Excellent point. And we've talked about before about how the church is a family. According to the New Testament, the bonds we have with other brothers and sisters in Christ should be stronger and closer bonds that you even have with our own biological family members if they're not believers. I mean, the church is truly a family. We are a body together. So let's not look at leaving as something that's easy to do. It's not a decision to be taken casually. No, it should only be done in clear, explicit biblical violations when work conflict cannot be resolved or is not being resolved in a biblical manner, or whether it is Nelson was saying the church is not teaching the gospel or Christ is not the head, it's got to be major things. Far too many people leave the church for trivial reasons. And may not be trivial to that person, but biblically speaking, trivial reasons. And that's the complete wrong attitude to have. Just as you cannot separate the fact that you are biologically related to your family members. You should not look at separating from your brothers and sisters in Christ and the local body you've been a part of as a decision to be taken lightly.

Shea Houdmann

Next question on our list and I'll tackle this one, is what is expository preaching and why is it important? A lot of people don't even, really know what exactly is expository preaching in comparison to other forms of preaching. And essentially the word exposit means to take a passage of scripture and explain it. So it's a saying the focus of your sermon is on a passage in the Bible. You're not just on sharing your own opinions, your own ideas. The sermon is not just a collection of nice stories that you're telling them might maybe have a good Christian application like no, an expository sermon is taking the word of God and explaining what it means, like what actually the text is saying, but then also then showing how that meaning then applies to us personally, practically today. Does not emphasizing expository preaching is not saying you can't preach an occasional topical sermon. Even topical sermons can be done in an expository manner. You can pick a say if you want to preach on patience or you want to preach on Father's Day? Find a passage in the Bible that talks about patience or passage that talks about what a godly father looks like, and then explain that passage and show how it applies to how we honor our father, respond to our earthly parents, and so forth. So it's a whole different attitude towards the scriptures that brings people to want to both preach expository, expository and also to hear it. We want the word of God explained to us because we know there's only the word of God as Isaiah 55:11 promises that we'll always have an impact. You can tell again, great stories we can tell great jokes, we

can get people laughing, get people excited. We get people pumped up and motivated. Ultimately, if it's devoid of a scriptural foundation that will eventually prove to be empty. So, expository preaching is preaching the word of God, making the word of God, helping us to understand it, being the focus of the the sermon. It is you can pointing to God's word as the guidebook for our lives, as the standard for faith and practice. The inerrant and inspired and authoritative message from God that gives us everything we need to both relate to him and know how to have a successful growing Christian life in this world. So that's why expositional expository preaching is important because it's the word of God. And that is to be the focus of our teaching and it's looking to the pastoral epistles. So First, Second Timothy and Titus repeated exhortations to preach the word, to live out the word, to preach sound doctrine, and that's what expository preaching is supposed to be all about.

Nelson Domingues

Yeah, I think it's so important. I think many times some pastors and some parishioners are OK with just using the texts as proof texts. You know, there might be a lot of teaching happening and long talk happening. And the scriptures will just be referenced as here's a proof text. Here's something related to that. Or some other times if you're not expository preaching, they read a text that they might have to read, and then they just kind of wedge in their points to it and shouldn't be like that. Pastor should be teaching the word of God, and it's applicable for everything in our lives. And there's nothing that happens to us, there's no scenario in our lives that the word of God doesn't speak to. And so whether you're going through a book of the Bible, verse by verse, or preaching on different topical subjects, you can still go through the text and hear what God has to say on that.

Shea Houdmann

Gwen, next question is to you. Closely related to the one you just answered last episode. Why is Church attendance important? This time, why is corporate worship important?

Gwen Sellers

Yeah, so, so the reason it's closely associated is worship is really, I've I've actually had a pastor explain it as worth-ship. In terms of like we're giving God then the worth that he deserves. And it really should be all of our life. So corporate is when we do that together and that's of course everything that a church does together. I mean this includes all of Sunday service like it's all of the teaching, it's all of the fellowship, it's all of the singing, it's baptism. It's communion. It's all of that. But I think oftentimes when people hear corporate worship, they think of the music because we have, you know, worship leaders who do the music. And that is a totally like worship through music is super important.

Gwen Sellers

So yeah, so why is it? And I think for a lot of reasons, you know, we talked about in a few episodes ago of seeing songs throughout the Bible in terms of like, the psalms are things that the congregation would sing together. And they even when they came from a personal experience then they were meant to be sung together. And we see singing happen in heaven. So like, this is just something that God's people do is respond to him through song. We see explicit mentions of this in the New Testament, like Colossians, yes, it's Colossians 3:16, let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom. Singing songs and hymns and spiritual songs with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And there's a very similar verse in Ephesians 5:19. And if you look at the surrounding context. Like

a lot of those are just other, it's part of just doing life together as believers and as the family. So that's one thing, it's just it's how we worship God. One way that we worship God.

Gwen Sellers

But I think like song and especially corporately, it really is instructive to us. I mean, think about how many songs. In like your childhood or your teenage years, you still remember. Maybe you haven't thought about them or heard them or sung them in years, and then you go to some reunion and it's like, you know, every single lyric. And that's just because music really sticks with us. So when we're singing theologically rich songs, like that's instructive to us and comes back to us. And so, like, you know, how many times, like during the week is just a worship song from church comes to my mind and is exactly what I need for the moment and is teaching my heart, like, this is who God is. And is that reminder of of praise to him or of comfort in him, or of his consistency, or, you know, even declaring truth about who I am because of who He is. And I think that too, like when we're doing that together, we can be sort of teaching one another. So when I hear other people sing it, that also reminds me, like, wow, all of these people believe that and know that and like hearing them teaches me that this is true.

Gwen Sellers

And you know, I think one of the, I mean complaints about church, for a lot of people is the music, like oh, I don't like the new songs or I don't like the old songs or it's too slow or it's too fast or it's too loud or whatever. But I was thinking this morning of how even that is instructive you know, maybe it is a hymn from like 200 years ago and you're like, man, this is so old and slow. But wow, what a testament to the faithfulness of God and to the continuation of his church. Like these truths about God were true then and now. Or even like new songs, you know, like that's also again, a testament to the faithfulness of God and continuation. Like wow, a new generation praises him in this way and like, isn't that great that God connects with every generation and like and it is always relevant and always faithful. So yeah, so I think those are just some of the reasons that music at church is important.

Shea Houdmann

I like your point, Gwen that so often we think of worship as only like the singing part of the service. And clearly that's maybe the most obvious expression of worship is when we're singing passionately to the Lord, telling him how much we love him, how glorious he is, those sorts of things, but the Bible never limits worship to singing. And the obedience is an act of worship, and studying God's word is an act of worship, submitting to God's word is an act of worship, encouraging one another to more closely follow Christ is an act of worship. So ultimately everything we are supposed to be doing at church is an act of showing God how much we value him, how much he is worth. As you said, not just the singing part of it, but again, it's there's no point in fighting the dominant cultural view that worship is the the singing part. But it is a good reminder to us that no, we worship God with every part of our life. Everything we do, not just singing in church on Sundays.

Gwen Sellers

Well, I think that's the whole you know like Jesus talks about, worshipping the Lord in Spirit and in truth. And so, like, I think spirit, I often think of it's with all of who I am. And truth is like it actually lines up with who God is. And so isn't that amazing about God that all those ways really are ways of worshipping him. And I, you know, and I think too of music like, wow doesn't that just show like the beauty and

artistry of God. Like, it's not all just obey me and know things about me. It's like and also express it in this beautiful way. Because God is just that big, that like that all of that is worshipped to him because he is all of those things.

Nelson Domingues

And that's and that's a moment in the service where everyone is participating. And I think that's important to think about. I mean, a lot of times you go to a service and for half the service while listening to the sermon. It's amazing. It's the teaching moment. You're listening to the teacher and you're soaking in. But a lot of times our worship is an outpouring of our hearts to God and we're doing it collectively. We're hearing other people at the same time, and those words remind us about God and oftentimes, and even if you want to pray during those other times as you're standing there, other people are singing these songs and you just be thanking God about what he's done and is doing in your life. These are all expressions of worship. I just love how in that moment, everyone is participating together.

Shea Houdmann

Nelson, next question to you, this one for me gets close to home. So the question is why is church membership important? And the reason this is personal for me is the church I attend right now, there are a number of people in the church who are as committed to the church as you can be, have been attending, some of them for up to 20 years. They have no interest in becoming members of the church. So what would you say to that person who attends regularly, gives, serves, but it's just for whatever reason, it's not at all interested in actually becoming a member of the church?

Nelson Domingues

Want to ask him why? That that's be my first question. What is it that scares you? What is it that you don't like about this term, about this definition? A lot of times, you know when people are dating they have a DTR, right? A define the relationship and membership kind of does that too. It defines your relationship with that local assembly. Are you just attending? Are you just visiting? Are you just soaking in? Are you healing? Are you just wanting to listen? Or are you there to be a member, to be a participant in that local assembly? Membership is important in the sense where we think about different things. You know, in the early church we we see that they they looked at the numbers of the people that are being saved in Scripture, in Acts chapter 2, verse 41 says, so those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about 3000 souls. So somebody's counting right. Then you skip down a couple of verses to verse 37 says praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day, those who were being saved. And so once they were saved, they were added. And so these believers are being included within that local church assembly and they were keeping track of those things. And that was important. For instance, for the deacons later on who to serve. How to serve them. Who knows these individuals who have needs. When we think about membership again, it reminds us of both those things.

Nelson Domingues

And it also reminds a pastor about his responsibilities. Could he possibly be responsible for everyone who visits that church one time? Or is he more responsible for the individuals that are there? And so when we have a membership at a church, it helps define his scope of work, his scope of responsibilities

of of who he's supposed to keep track of, and tabs on and and, and how he can speak into their lives. Because a lot of times, as in as a member, you've agreed to what membership is and that sometimes includes being disciplined. And if you're not OK with that, well then you're not OK with scripture because Scripture calls us to to be able to be willing to receive the discipline not only from the Lord, but also from our church leaders and those around who might rebuke us for sin. And and so there's that sense of the pastor being able to understand and know, and they have this agreement where I know you're watching my life and it goes both ways. We're watching each other's lives. And so that's really important to have when we consider church membership.

Nelson Domingues

It's also important when we think about accountability. If you're not a member of a local assembly, if you're not claiming to be a part of that body, then, well, then how, how can anyone keep tabs and tabs and how can you they help you be accountable to that, the call that you have from the Lord? We can't do this alone and we never meant to live our faith alone. We're meant to live it in in unity with other believers, striving after being the body of Christ together. And that accountability is a very important part of of being a part of, of a part of the body of Christ. A very important part of that accountability.

Nelson Domingues

It's also important for some practical reasons as well. Membership of church will help decide sometimes the budget of the church. Will help decide who staffs that church. Could decide the missionaries or the programs or things like that they might support financially where those budget and monies go. And so helps also again define the relationship in that sort of sense. Who has a say when those things happen, can anyone just walk in? What if they're not a believer and then they're voting on spiritual things, giving their input on spiritual things where they don't even know Christ? That's an important that's a that's a big problem. They might not understand the aspect of serving others, might not understand the aspect of giving part of the church budget to missionaries in some far off land. They don't love the Lord, that might not be a concern of theirs. So membership of a church includes believers who are known to be believers and are tested as such, meaning they've had conversations with leaders and they are counted on the role and the pastor is responsible for their families, for for tending to them. And Scripture talks about how a pastor is held accountable by God for those whom he pastors, and so he needs to be sure, and he needs to know who are the ones here who are the members who are. The ones can be receiving God's word and and whom I'm going to be accountable for as they stand before the Lord.

Nelson Domingues

So those are some of the reasons why I think membership is an important part of church attendance. We can go to church and you can sit in one. It's not essential to be a believer to be a member of a church, but I believe it is a good thing and a helpful thing all around for both the congregant and for the pastor and those other individuals. So that they can know together to keep each other accountable and they can together walk in the ways that Christ walked and following the early church's lead.

Shea Houdmann

Nelson, I like how you said that there's both biblical theological reasons and also very practical reasons, and I think that's even the practical aspect of it is that the church has decisions it needs to make, like purchasing property, hiring a pastor, deciding on a vision or mission or strategy. We want only believers

taking part in those decisions, so typically part of the process of becoming a member is like an interview with an elder or other church leader, where is trying to verify, is this someone who knows the Lord, loves the Lord, is committed to his word, and in agreement with the church's statement of faith? Because those are the type of people you want helping you and participating with you and making decisions. So even from a very practical standpoint, it's like church membership is is very important and it's, I know it's frustrating on on pastors and leaders of churches when people aren't interested in the membership, even from the perspective of God's calling me to be a Shepherd, how do I know who are the people who are actually a part of my flock? And that's one of the things that church membership is supposed to communicate.

Shea Houdmann

Next question on our list and I'll I'll tackle this one. To what degree should churches be involved in social issues? And often when this question is asked, really what they're saying is political issues. But some socialist and political issues, say, take abortion for example where I think Scripture is abundantly clear on how God views life. Christians, even as preaching the word, are going to touch on the subject. There's no way to avoid it. When you look at what the Bible says about how God forms us in the womb, or from the moment of conception, we are created in the image and likeness of God. Those sorts of things speak very clearly on this issue. And there's some other issues whether it's gender related issues, sexuality related issues that Scripture clearly talks about.

Shea Houdmann

So if the Bible talks about a social or political issue, yes, we are to be involved in those issues. We are to speak the truth and love on those issues. But with that said, I've also seen churches make the mistake of becoming so hyper focused on politics or even important social issues like abortion to the point that that's what the church is most known for. And once the church goes that far into spending all of its time, resources, money, even on a certain issue, ohh, that's the church that always has the pro-life Crusades. Or that's the church that protests that this or that. That's not what the church supposed to be known for. We're supposed to be known for be a body of people who follows Jesus Christ, who proclaims the gospel of salvation through grace alone, in faith alone, in Christ alone. We are to be about those type of things. Those are the things that's been most known for. Once we start being so focused on politics or on social issues, that that's when it becomes a distraction.

Shea Houdmann

So should churches and Christians be involved in social and political issues? Absolutely. There's no issue where we should not speak the truth and love. But let's not become so focused on whether it's an issue, whether it's a candidate. Whether it's a policy. That becomes a distraction from the gospel from our the Great Commission of making disciples. And so there's a balance here. Yes, we should be involved in social issues. We should care about politics, but not to the point that it outweighs our efforts, our time spent proclaiming the gospel and making disciples.

Gwen Sellers

Well, I think sometimes you know and it's just like involved in social issues. I I do agree that mostly most of the time people are thinking talk about politics. But I wonder how many people don't realize how like involved believers are in helping with social issues. You know, like abortion you mentioned, like there

are so many pregnancy centers. And most of them are run by believers. Or you think about a lot of churches have, like, food pantries or benevolence funds. I mean, that's being involved in social issues in terms of like helping those who are hurting or lacking in practical ways. And I think also like the churches, you know, involved in social issues by being involved in their communities, by just being good neighbors who speak the truth and love and also live out that truth. And, you know, actively help people. So that's I think you know that's different than like talking about politics. But I think there are also a lot of ways to to be involved in your local community. That's really just being Jesus to other people. Whether that's considered by our culture or social issue or not

Shea Houdmann

Last question on our list of frequently last questions about the church, Gwen, why don't you take this one? What is the importance of small group ministry, like a community group like Bible Study Ministry in addition to the Sunday service? And I think I'd like to hear your perspective on this because of the three of us you attend the largest church. And that's when I think a small group ministry becomes especially important. So Gwen, according to the Bible why is a small group ministry so important?

Gwen Sellers

And so I think this is really where we best to live out than one another's. And you know, as Shea was saying, like, churches look all different, like small group community group. There's also, like group Bible study in a smaller group and a lot of churches also do Sunday school classes. So kind of the overarching idea is you know, Sunday service, you're kind of like with everybody, however many that everybody is. And then in these groups, you're with a smaller amount of people where you can really, maybe where you can dig into teaching a little bit more or do a separate kind of study that might fit your season or your particular interest. You know, perhaps you're a parent of a young child and like, really just need some help parenting. So you do like a study on parenting while you're also attending like church that's going through a book of the Bible. But or you know, or maybe our community groups at my church, we talk through this sermon. So that's like a helps you really actually like process it and how are we actually going to practically apply this? And you know how really are we understanding this? So I think it's just that smaller arena where you can really dig into the word more deeply.

Gwen Sellers

You can also pray for one another. I mean when you're, you know in Sunday service like. Actually, the campus that I attend that like Shea said I do attend a large church. It's multi site and so my campus is relatively small and we do write prayer requests that the staff prays for. But it's in my community group where I really share like, here's what's going on for me this week. Can you be praying for me? And where where they share what's going on for them and we pray for one another. And share those updates.

Gwen Sellers

Nelson talked about church membership and that how accountability is important. And I think you know, like that's going to happen a lot easier in a smaller group of people who you're really sharing life with and doing life with. I mean the person like 2 rows behind me, who may or may not know my name isn't really going to help me like with my, you know, are you really spending time with God? Hey, you

said that like God is working on patience with you. How's that going? Like they're not going to know that. So those smaller groups are where that happens.

Gwen Sellers

And and I think 2 uh, you know, like small groups can be the place where we ask questions like maybe we're wrestling with a doubt or we're not really sure about something and you can't, you know, during the sermon on Sunday, you don't like, raise your hand and like, hey, excuse me, I have a question. You asked that in smaller contexts.

Gwen Sellers

And I think the other thing is just also that practical help of like it's where we really do life with one another. And you know I think of those practical things of like somebody sick and needs a meal train. I mean like your small group is a great place to be able to do that, or even just building those familial relationships depending on if you live close to them. Like I know people from my community group go to my same gym and so we have that like throughout the week contact. So it's not just like just on Sundays is where I get the spiritual nourishment, and then the rest of the week I'm on my own. It's no like I have people that I'm doing life with throughout the week that are encouraging me and that hopefully I'm encouraging as well.

Nelson Domingues

Yeah, I can't tell you how many times I've heard people come up to me or to other pastoral staff and they just say, you know, I feel alone, I feel like you know, I'm just here and, you know, I don't, I'm not connecting with anyone. We'll ask them well, are you involved in small groups? Are you involved in serving? And most of the time, when those people come up to complain about not connecting and and not finding meaningful relationships, they are not in those small groups. They are not serving in a large capacity. And so when we have a small group, they end up being generally a lot of times you know our our closest friends and how good is that? I mean, I'm not sure if you watching this right now, if you have a lot of close friends that are close. That really know your needs. That you've shared openly your struggles with. And that they pray for you and you pray for them and they check on you. It's really nice to have that group of believers around you, a friend, a couple of friends that you are really open and honest to. And a lot of times you don't get that in any other context, except within the small groups or community groups, whatever you have in your church. And it's just even that is an amazing thing.

Nelson Domingues

And also I always, like like you mentioned Gwen about not just meeting on Sunday, but you know also having this spiritual nourishment gathering together and expressing your, your, your united passion for Christ somewhere in the the mid week. That's why I always think it's really great when people have a small group and they don't go on Sunday and just cram everything in the weekend, but they try to make it somewhere in the middle of the week, where it supplements, it adds to their week where they're meeting with other believers. And they have an almost like this recharge in a sense where the week can be beating them down and then they get to meet with their small group and then a couple days later they get to meet again with the the large group, right? The congregation. So there's so many aspects to small group that are such a benefit to individuals. And I encourage you listening or watching now, if

you're not a part of a small group, you really should find a close community, small group of individuals that are in your church to connect with just untold blessings there.

Shea Houdmann

Absolutely well said both of you. When I look at like a a small group ministry or a community group ministry, to me it is the closest to what the New Testament in early church history describes of how the very early Christians met. They met in homes and relatively small groups. They studied God's word together. They encouraged each other. They worshipped together. They serve alongside each other. They met each other's needs. All those things that occur in small groups today are most reminiscent of what the very early church look like, and in no sense are we bashing the all believers together, necessarily speaking. Those are very good, very important things to be a part of as well. I mean something we said, but worshipping corporately with a large body of believers is just encouraging and it's powerful. But the personal contact that occurs in a small group ministry, the accountability, the more intimate prayer, those types of things are also vitally important in the Christian life. So yes, some small group ministry is incredibly important, both from a biblical perspective and also just from a practical here's where the we get really close to other believers in a way that we can actually minister to one another in meaningful ways.

Shea Houdmann

So Gwen, Nelson, thank you for joining me for the two-part episode on some of the most frequently asked questions that we receive at GotQuestions.org about the church, about what is the church about? What are we supposed to be doing in the church? What does it mean to attend church, what is the value? What is the purpose? All of those things very important questions, very frequent questions. Got questions? The Bible has answers. We'll help you find them.