



CHURCH

The story isn't over yet. Jesus, whose name means "God Saves," and who was the fulfillment of the ultimate plan and promise of Emmanuel, "God with us," lived, died, resurrected, ascended, and sent the Spirit of God to you for you to believe in Him, be redeemed and reconciled with God, and join His Kingdom mission of sharing and showing this good news throughout the whole earth with people from every tribe, tongue, and nation. He gave a new promise that He would continue to be with us and would return as King of Kings to reconcile heaven and earth and establish His Kingdom forever. When you trust in Jesus' perfectly good words, works, and ways on your behalf, your sins are forgiven and removed, and your relationship with God is restored. Instead of trying to achieve fulfillment by your own merit while continuing to struggle with ungratefulness, entitlement, and separation from God, you gratefully receive the abundant life He selflessly provides by His grace because He has defeated sin, death, the evil one, and separation from God for you. When you believe and trust in Him, you will be able to rejoice in how you now understand and know the good news that though you were more broken, selfish, and rebellious in yourself than you ever dared believe before, you are more loved and accepted in Jesus than you ever dared hope. When you receive this gift of life with God in Jesus – like God has always done with people who walk in His ways – He dwells with you by His Spirit so that you become part of His family and His temple. In loving relationship, He gives you His name, baptizing individuals and households in the name of the Father, and the name of the Son, and the name of the Holy Spirit. He also gives a celebration meal called Communion or Eucharist (i.e., thanksgiving) where Jesus' body broken and blood shed for us, represented in bread and wine, help us remember what He did and that He is with us until He comes again. He gives you the responsibility to dwell with Him and walk with Him to bless people and His creation throughout the world. By trusting His Word and walking in step with His Spirit, you will be able to embody His purpose for humanity to showcase glimpses of His Kingdom in your community and city by demonstrating and declaring the good news of God's reign in and through Jesus with those who know they are sick and lost. You will also be able to remain faithful to Him even as many will reject you for following Jesus' words, works, and ways as many rejected Jesus when He walked the earth. But in faith in God's providence and the power of His Spirit in you, you will be able to strive on faithfully in life with God, each other, and all of creation because of His grace, and His growing desire in you to see restoration happen in others and the world around you. Your family, food, and work will be able to be received as gifts from God, and you can give them to others freely in Jesus' name. By His Spirit, you will be able to love both neighbor and enemy as Jesus did. You will join Jesus in welcoming the sojourner and foreigner to believe in His salvation. And you will share His compassion in caring for the weak, the oppressed, the widow, the orphan, and the poor in spirit. As you discover that people across all ethnicities and cultures are your family in Jesus' name, you will be able to lay down your prejudices and privileges so that you join with sisters and brothers in God's family to represent His Kingdom of priests to the world. You will suffer because much of the world did and many still do reject Him as King of kings and Lord of lords. But, as Jesus promised, He will be with you in the suffering, and will bring others who will suffer with you.

We follow Him and do this together as His Church – His multiethnic family of Kingdom servants who are redeemed by His shed blood and empowered by His Holy Spirit. Jesus has called us to be God's light to the nations together. We can love, forgive, and sacrifice in Jesus' name for each other. We can enjoy family, food, and work for the glory of God, doing all for Him rather than for our value or greed. And we can serve those around us, and the world in the spheres of our neighborhoods, workplaces, avenues of art, and the environment as a preview of what Jesus will soon completely fulfill when He returns to bring God's good, right, and beautiful Kingdom of heaven to earth.

– Mike Sullivan

Scriptures

Mark 16:15; Colossians 1:11-22; Matthew 16:16-18, 25:31-46; Luke 10:25-37, 14:7-14;

Mark 10:42-45; Matthew 28:18-20; Luke 24:46-47; John 20:21-22; Acts 1:8; Acts 2:42-47, 4:29-35;

2 Timothy 1:9-10; 2 Corinthians 9:6-12; Ephesians 1:15-23, 2:13-22; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21, 6:16-18;

1 Peter 2:9-12; Romans 12:9-21; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:23-24; John 17:6-26; Romans 8:18-23

Main Street Church - Life Group Guide

Series: The Grand Story

Message: Scene V - CHURCH

Speaker: Shawn Vandop

Date: October 29, 2023



Connect (30min)

*For *Connect* and *Prayer*, you may want to break into two groups, or groups of 3-4 people to enhance participation.

1. HIGH-LOW-HERO

a. From this past week in your life:


Share a High, a Low (Challenge), and one way that *Jesus has been the Hero* of your story this week.

2. FALL FOCUS

a. Share a highlight from your October devotional journey, and your plan for November.

What have you been reading or focusing on in your Bible reading, devotions and prayer?

3. BLESS GOD

a.  Read [1 John 5:1-5](#).

b. Take 2min (timed) to *Bless God* with short prayers of thanksgiving and praise. “*Lord, I Bless You...*”

Message Discussion (45min)

1. CHURCH HISTORY

a. What’s the most beautiful or interesting *Church Building* that you’ve ever visited?

What did the building (architecture, layout, art, story...) tell you about God, the gospel, life...?

b. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the word “Church”?

Have you ever thought of the Church as a movement, and how so?

c. Have you ever considered the incredible journey that *The Grand Story* (Gospel) took from Jesus and the early Church (see the Book of Acts) to get to you and your story? ([Acts 1:8](#)) *From Jerusalem to Judea to Samaria to the Ends of the Earth...over 2000 years >> We are part of the Ends of the Earth.*

How many people do you think make up that chain of evangelism and discipleship? Mind-blowing!

d. Who was the first person to introduce you to Jesus and invite you to church?

e. Briefly share one of your best experiences with (any) church during your life, and how your connection to a church body impacted your personal growth in Christ,

f. Have you had the blessing of sharing Jesus with someone, inviting someone to church, praying for someone, baptizing someone...? Can you think of one highlight from your part in sharing the story?

g. How many churches have you been actively a part of before Main Street Church?

h. How long have you been a part of Main Street Church and what is one reason that you started attending?

2. THE GRAND STORY - CHURCH

a. Share your feedback on *Sunday's Message*.

What connected with you, encouraged you, challenged you, or confused you? What did you learn?

b. READ [Matthew 16:13-20](#).

i. What *Promise* does Jesus make in this passage?

ii. What do you think Jesus is saying in this passage?

Is Peter being referred to (personally) or is Jesus referring to Peter's statement about Him?

iii. What is Jesus talking about when He says, "*The Gates of Hell will not prevail...*"?

iv. How does that promise encourage you?

3. WE ARE THE CHURCH

a. Shawn talked about the CHURCH as part of *The Grand Story*, where God specifically writes you and I into the story. How do you feel about God writing you into the story? Does it excite you, scare you, challenge you...?

b. Since God has written YOU into His story as part of HIS CHURCH what does that say about how God sees the church? How should we respond and relate to the local church?

What does it tell us about how God thinks of you?

c. How would your life change if you took your role in God's Grand story more seriously?

What would change IN you and what would change AROUND you?

4. LIVING STONES

a.  Share the reading of [1 Peter 2](#).

b. *Prayerfully Consider* -- How can you personally and we as a Life Group continue to be a part of the ongoing fulfilment of Jesus' promise to "Build His Church?" Be specific. What role or part is Jesus asking you to do?

Prayer (15min)

> Pray for One Another

> Pray for Main Street Church

> Pray for the Church in Chilliwack, Canada, and Globally (Ends of the Earth)

Resources

 Watch these short videos on YouTube.

*The Bible Project (YouTube Channel): [The Royal Priesthood](#), [Acts 1-7](#), [8-12](#), [13-20](#), [21-28](#)

Sign up for our upcoming **Set Free Retreat**. November 3-4 at MSC. www.mainstreetchurch.ca/set-free

