



SPACE FOR THE CHURCH

CRAIG REES

KEY IDEA: The church is God's 'visible and invisible' space.

KEY SCRIPTURE:

Matthew 16:18

Romans 12:4-8; 16:5

1 Corinthians 1:2; 10:32; 12:12-27; 16:19

2 Corinthians 1:1

Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 4:11-16; 5:23-33

Galatians 1:2

Colossians 1:18, 24; 4:15-16

1 Thessalonians 2:14

Rev. 21:27

1. In the message Craig shared the example of Sir Edmund Hilary who was inspired to climb Everest for what Michael Griffin called, 'real reasons.' Hilary shared how he never had a vision to climb mount Everest, it just grew. While we may not know the long-term vision, Hilary believed that this is never an excuse to 'sit in a recliner eating cookies and milk.' When it comes to important, life-changing decisions that we make, at some point we all balance 'real' and 'acceptable' reasons. With that as background, consider the following questions.
 - a. How do you balance real and acceptable reasons?
 - b. Of 'real' and 'acceptable,' which is the biggest driver of what you do?
 - c. Why do you think that is and how is that working for you?
2. "The church is both invisible and visible, universal, and local. It is a living organism that requires organization to be fruitful." Notice the set of correlating pairs.
 - a. Why do you think articulating the nature of the church requires the use of word pairs?
 - b. What is gained by connecting pairs and what is lost if we remove one word from each pair?
3. Read Romans 16:5. What is the significance of this verse for the way we both understand and communicate what the church is?
4. The P and A, in the acrostic of SPACE Craig used to define the church, addresses the invisible foundations for the visible church. At the head of the church is Christ as Lord, and at the heart of the motivation for the church's ministry is the kingdom mindset. What do you understand the kingdom of God to be? *If you need help with this, you can go back to Central's teaching series in the Fall of 2015 entitled, Kingdom and Empires.*
5. We champion local churches. Citing Leeman, we heard, "The gathering of a church is both an 'embassy' of Christ's kingdom and the temporary 'geography' of that kingdom. We gather in order to represent heaven's rule and judgments, establish a visible outpost of Christ's kingdom, testify to the King, identify citizens of the kingdom, form a people, mobilize a people, and exalt the King." When the ministry of the church is expressed like this, what runs through your mind?
6. Read Galatians 1:2 and 1 Thessalonians 2:14. Spend time praying for the pastors leading in our family of churches. Pray that the Lord would continue to give them favor and that through their ministry, a move of God would break out in the region He has called them to be.