

Church Without Walls

Great Commission
September 6, 2026

Introduction

Aloha everyone! If we haven't met, I'm Mark and I want to welcome you to service. Now, notice I did *not* say, "I want to welcome you to Church?" Can anyone tell me why I didn't say that? See we've been in a season where we're trying to be very intentional in our understanding of what Church is and what the Church does. And what we're discovering is that Church is not merely a service. In other words, Church is not merely what we do or where we go on Sunday mornings. Now, can the Church host a Sunday morning service? Absolutely. Most do. But we need to be careful not to equate that service with the sum of what Church is.

In one of only two passages where Jesus explicitly uses the word, 'Church' He says,

"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," (Matthew 16:18 NIV).

How many of us know, when Jesus said He would build His Church, He was not talking about a physical structure, establishing a brand new religion, or holding a weekly gathering.

He was talking about building a brand new people. And I don't know if Peter fully understood what Jesus was talking about but later he would describe it this way,

⁴ "As you come to Him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to Him— ⁵ 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,"
(1 Peter 2:4-5 NIV).

So the Church that Jesus is building is not one of brick and mortar but of people. God is building a spiritual temple made up of His people, in whom His Spirit will dwell. Have you surrendered your life to become a living stone in the Church of Jesus Christ? If you have, this is what Peter goes on to say,

⁹ "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. ¹⁰ 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," (1 Peter 2:9-10 NIV).

The Bible says, once we were isolated, we were alone, we were cut off, but now God has brought us into His chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation. No longer do we live in darkness but now we declare His praises to a lost and hurting world. Not just here in service but to the young man fixing the windows at our house, to the parents at Tae Kwan Do practice, to the people God places all around us.

Last week we heard a clear and simple presentation of the good news that we could take and share with others. Did anyone have an opportunity to share the bridge illustration or another gospel presentation with someone this past week that could share?

Testimony - Hanalani Substitute

The Harvest Is Plentiful

I believe we are experiencing a unique window of time where there is a greater openness to both sharing and receiving the gospel. I've spoken to other Pastors around the island and they're experiencing the same thing. A good friend of mine was sitting in service some weeks back when Pastor Earl was talking about how we gather to scatter. That week, as he went back to work, he no longer saw his job at the shipyard as just a place to collect a paycheck, but as the place God scattered him to spread the good news. And for the very first time he had an amazing conversation with a coworker about faith. Another guy in the Church was telling me that the Vice President of his company approached him about the Bible Study he was holding at work. And this guy thought he was going to be asked to stop. But instead the Vice President of the company said he had questions about the Bible and was wondering if they could talk.

Sometimes we think it's the Pastor's job to share the gospel. But the Bible says, we are all a chosen people, a royal priesthood. Church is not somewhere you go or something you do, it's who you are. You are one of countless living stones that Jesus has built into His Church. You are a royal priest or priestess. You are a minister of the gospel! You are not an electrician. You are a minister of the gospel who has been cleverly disguised as an electrician. You are not kindergarten teacher. You are a minister of the gospel who has been cleverly disguised as a kindergarten teacher. You are not a stay at home mom. You are a minister of the gospel who has been cleverly disguised as a stay at home mom. On Sunday we gather to worship, to be encouraged, and equipped, and then after we gather we scatter to all of our respective jobs and assignments to shine as lights in the world. Don't confuse your occupation with your vocation. Your occupation is what pays the bills but your vocation (your calling) is to point people to Jesus.

If you would like to grow in your desire and ability to share the gospel with others, I want to encourage you to talk to Pastor Earl about the 'My Miracle Story' he is offering through the Transformation Academy.

Group Discussion Questions

1. If you were asked, "What is Church?" How would you answer that? What do you think Jesus had in mind when He said He would build His Church in Matthew 16:18?
2. When the Bible says you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and God's special possession, what comes to mind? How do you understand that for your own life?
3. After we "gather" on Sundays, where are you "scattered"? Where do you spend most of your time throughout the week? With whom do you spend the most time? How can you partner with the Holy Spirit to share God's love there?