



BIG CHURCH

Week I: BIG CHURCH

MEET

Sample Icebreaker Question:

What was the best meal you have ever eaten?

MAGNIFY

Suggested Song(s):

An Army of Ordinary People (Dave Bilbrough)

How Great Thou Art

It may also be useful to have some time here to sing and pray in tongues.

MESSAGE

It is God's will for the church to grow! God wants the church (every church) to grow and be packed full of people. Some people do not want church to grow – it makes them feel uncomfortable to have new people come or it makes them feel like the church is not the church they remember.

However, the church has to grow because God wants as many people as possible to hear the good news – so we need to ensure that we realize that church is not a social club to make us feel good but a powerful living organism that is expected to grow and develop.

Some people say “church is not all about numbers”, but when each of those numbers is a person with a story then church is all about numbers because it is all about people.

Read Luke 14.16-23

Jesus wants His house filled! Jesus wants a full house- He wants the people in London to be at the party. He waited for you to come and now you are here, He is waiting for others to come. Jesus wants your wife, your husband, your children, your parents, your friends, your co-workers, your neighbours to come to the party of knowing His grace and goodness.

God's will is more people! God's will is full rooms! God's will is overflowing churches!

God's will is mega-churches. God wants big churches because He loves people – and if you love people too you will want a big church too.

Some people miss out on God's will for their lives because they put business and friends over church. That is their choice, but they are missing out on the party.

A lot of churches position themselves as community churches, and people go there because it is the nearest church: the suburb church or the community church. Often these churches are comfortable because the whole community is from the same social strata and they never have to meet people different from themselves! But God did not tell us to go into all the suburb or all the community, but to go into all the world. A living, inspirational church is worth the drive!

If you live more than one hour away, we will plant a church near you as soon as we can. The mission is now and the mission is HUGE! The harvest is white unto harvest – it is not four months away, it is now.

Our harvest field is the entire world. Don't limit what God wants to do in your life because 30, 40 or 50 minutes is too far to drive to church! Mark 16.15 says to go into all the world, and Tree of Life is going to reach as far as it can!

Everyone who lives within 1 hour's drive of Dagenham needs to know Jesus. Needs to know His love, His health, His wealth, His joy, His peace – it is all found in Him. I want London to live in Christ – I want grace to be shouted from the rooftops!

Some people might complain that our reach conflicts with other churches. I consider that there are 9 million people living in the M25 – every church building in London could be standing room only and there still would be more people to reach and more churches needed.

We can only focus on the mission God has given us!

The Four Pillars

Before starting the church, God spoke to Benjamin and said to build the church on four pillars: full of the Word, full of the Spirit, full of the nations, full of love.

Full of the Word- every Christian knows how to read the Word for themselves, knows how to feed on the Word and meditate on it.

Full of the Spirit – every Christian is full of the Spirit, speaking in tongues, flowing in the gifts – a truly charismatic church is where the church is charismatic, not just the pastor

Full of the Nations – every nation and nationality is welcome. Every ethnicity is celebrated, but the church is not built on an ethnicity but on Christ and His work.

Full of Love – this is really about getting involved in the Living Churches, being somewhere where everyone knows your name, where you can serve and be served and love people up close.

That is the mission of Tree of Life Church. That is our foundation. So as we grow make sure you are building on that foundation and the church will grow healthily.

Choice People

Matthew retells the same story as Luke but ends it with this phrase: Many are called, but few are chosen (Mt. 22.14). Benjamin explained that the Greek could equally mean “few are choice”, as in choice meat. God has chosen many, many people to be part of the Tree of Life Church and help us impact the nations but not so many people make the hard decisions necessary to become choice – to become the best. God wants all of us in the A-team, but we have to decide whether we are willing to do that or not and put His will and purposes before our own desires.

Questions:

1. What is God’s will concerning the church?
2. What are the four pillars of Tree of Life Church?
3. Why did some people choose the field or other things over the party invite?
4. Who did the master of the house want to then fill the party with?
5. In your own words, what does it mean to be:
 - a. Full of the Word
 - b. Full of the Spirit
 - c. Full of the nations
 - d. Full of love
6. How might a church of 300 be more uncomfortable than a church of 100?
7. *(for those who heard the sermon)* What is the handbag test and why is that important?
8. Was there anything in the sermon that you found inspiring or challenging?
9. What can you do in your life to be “the choice” and ensure that you walk in your destiny?

MINISTRY

I think this is a good time to ask people how they react to new people in the church and whether they consciously go and meet new people on a Sunday – or even in a Living Church.

Then pray for boldness for people.

Then of course, pray for any needs such as healing or finances.