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# Ignite

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*“Dear Lord, we are grateful for Your love to each of us with Your covering and protection upon DUMC as a church. We cry out to You now, Lord, asking that You would revive Your church and rewire the culture, using the words of the prophet Habakkuk 3:2 ‘I have heard of Your fame; I stand in awe of Your deeds, Lord. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.’ Amen”*





# SERMON SUMMARY

**Note to Word Facilitator:** The sermon notes below is a summary of the sermon. You may choose to further summarize it according to the needs and context of your CG members. The goal is not just to go through it “verbatim” but to prepare well, allowing members to recall and engage the message in the best possible way.

## The Local Church 1: A Spiritual Authority

Senior Pastor Chris Kam

### Matthew 16:13-19

*When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 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. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”*

### Hebrews 13:17-18

*Have confidence in your leaders and submit to their authority, because they keep watch over you as those who must give an account. Do this so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no benefit to you. Pray for us. We are sure that we have a clear conscience and desire to live honorably in every way.*

### Introduction [Eph 3:10-11](#)

With the Covid-19 pandemic, we have become socially connected but physically separated from each other. Christ intended that we should keep our covenant

relationship with the Church and so, we should not use social distancing as an excuse to avoid assembling in a physical church. When we do so, we tend to become individualistic. We could begin to lose sight of our purpose in God's kingdom, be alienated from the Body of Christ or fail to partake in the Holy Sacraments.



*Photo by Jeremiah Higgins on Unsplash*

What is 'church'? It comes from the word "ekklesia" which means an assembly of Christians. It is an idea initiated by Jesus that would fulfill His purposes and bring glory to God. In the present day context of our local church, there are four areas we can look at how a local church may function - as a spiritual authority, a safe home, an equipping station for its people and a global mission field.

**BIG IDEA: The local church is the visible expression of God's invisible kingdom and authority for His people**

## **1 The kingdom of God and a kingdom people. [Mark 1:15](#), [Matt 6:10](#), [Hebrews 10:24-25](#)**

One may wonder if the kingdom of God is here yet. Well, yes, but not yet. Yes, as God is the creator of all things. The kingdom of God is the good news which we believe in. The kingdom of God is not a territory with boundaries as God is invisibly sovereign over His people. It is not yet here, not until Jesus' second coming when there will be a new heaven and a new earth.

In order to identify and organise the people of an invisible kingdom, we would need to bring them together in a visible organisation - the local church. This church should be known by the congregation's shared confession, its mission and value system.

## **2 The kingdom of God and the church as the custodial authority for kingdom people. [Matt 16:18-19](#), [Matt 18:18-20](#) & [Matt 18:15-17](#), [Titus 1:5-9](#). [Timothy 3:1-7](#), [4:14](#), [Hebrews 13:17-18](#)**

Jesus called on Pete (Petros), which means a small and movable rock. Then, He mentioned that on the rock (Petra) He will build His church. This bigger rock is unmovable. It refers to Jesus Himself. Jesus then gave Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven (a symbol of authority). This means that the church can decide on what to bind (forbid) or loose (allow). For example, in dealing with sin in the church, an unrepented Christian can be equated to that of a pagan or a tax collector.

Thus, the need and importance of appointing suitable custodial authority (the Elders, Overseers and Deacons) in a church. While God alone knows if one is a true believer in Him, the church is a visible form that can examine and verify if one's life is Christlike and belong to the kingdom of God. Is the lifestyle that we live in a reflection of what a Christian should be? If it is not, we fail then, in the profession of our faith.

A leader in a church is one who loves and fears God. He or she is not placed in that position by popular vote or favouritism. The leader ought to ensure the following:

- (a) Teaching and preaching God's word faithfully and living out a life of faith. [2 Tim 2:15](#)
- (b) Proper interpretation and faithful administration of the sacraments. [1 Cor 11](#)
- (c) Biblical exercising of restorative discipline. [Matt 18:15-20](#)
- (d) Equipping each member toward holiness and effective service. [Col 1:28](#)
- (e) Strong missional emphasising on reaching the world of Christ and training believers. [Matt 28:19-20](#)

## **3 The kingdom of God and the church**

The local church is the visible community of those who belong to God's invisible kingdom. When we reflect on ourselves, it isn't just about asking if we see ourselves as Christians, but rather that others in the church see as one too.

Remember the time when you went through the process of becoming a member of DUMC, there were many questions asked about your salvation, faith, and baptism. You would have pledged to live a Christian life, faithful to Christ's holy church. Likewise, the congregation responds to also welcome and recognise you as part of the church too.

**Conclusion** [Matt 7: 21-23](#)

As the church was given the keys, it has a spiritual authority over its people. Submission to the local church is likened to the submission towards God. Just as the church has a responsibility over us, we too have some form of responsibility towards her. Meanwhile, think about what you can enjoy from being a part of the local church.

# SERMON REFLECTION

I heard a story shared by one of my Ignite team members on how he would frequent a cafe to pack healthy lunch for his family. This cafe is unique in that it only opens 3-4 hours a day selling healthy meals. When asked how business was doing, the cafe owner (and chef too!) said that it was actually doing better during the MCO & RMCO! Curious as to why that is the case, my fellow writer asked how so? Chung, the cafe owner then proceeded to share how he does the business as a hobby. Hence they would open only for a short window of time each day so that they can spend more time with their family members. Even with the short opening hours, business picked up as customers would often do takeaways. .

When Chung was asked how he sustains it all financially if he opened his cafe just as a hobby, he did not hesitate to share the two reasons he and his wife opted to take this pathway now - 1. They had some savings in their younger days. 2. They keep their lifestyle simple. He drives a Kelisa and his wife, an Exora, instead of going for an Alphard (in his own words). But the time will come, after their kids have grown up, that they will do it as a business, fully decorating the cafe well. Curious about his attention to family and simplicity of life, my Ignite fellow writer asked Chung if he was a Christian (to be living out a certain value system). He answered no, that they were Taoist. He seemed apologetic that he wasn't really a pious person but said that his parents are. Right there and then, what was realized was that there was a very clear and bold value-system lived out from a certain world view or religious ethos by Chung and his wife.

As believers and Christ followers,, how do we then live out our values as Kingdom people made visible through the local church? Is there a mark of distinction? Do we stand out well as the body of Christ? Or is there no difference at all in how we live? Living holy lives (being set apart) as a local church, is such an important reminder to us all.

I was also truly encouraged watching the IMPACTNow Story shared over the weekend by Brother Kelvin Khoo, a CG leader of Bukit Tinggi, Klang. It spoke of how the local church has impacted our local community. I can truly see the intricate workings of God through the gathering of His people in agreement with various church leaders in DUMC.

What better way for kingdom people to do His Will but to submit to the spiritual authority of the local church. It was an example of the responsible role played by the leaders in keeping watch over kingdom people which enabled the visible community of God's kingdom to do His Will.

A covenant with the local church not only enables its members to enjoy its benefits but to also embrace the responsibilities that come along with it. In conclusion, we need to belong to the family of God that is bold to practice biblical teachings, living holy lives and impacting others for Jesus.

*Contributed by Michelle Chuah and the Ignite Team*

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# APPLICATION



**Note to Word facilitator:**

*As you prepare for this session, this is a great time to pray that the Holy Spirit will guide you to use the questions efficaciously. You can select, modify or entirely create your own questions, according to the needs of your CG, especially if you feel that there are too many questions than required for the allocated time. The questions below are crafted with a certain flow in mind. You could use these towards the end or insert them in between your own sermon reflection and summary.*

**Suggested Icebreaker Question** (for Welcome that would link to the Word time)



*Photo by Benjamin Sow on Unsplash*

- Peek into your phone apps or your wallet. Name some of the establishments, shops, clubs or credit card companies that you are a member of, or are you a member of activity groups such as a musical band, or sports team? What made you decide to sign on as a member? If you are not a member of any groups, then why not? What were your reservations?

**Suggested Word Introductory Question:**

- From a scale of 0 (zero influence & impact) to 10 (maximum influence & impact), how do you rate Christians and the Church's influence and impact in our society? Why do you rate it this way? Provide some examples and

reasons for your answer.

### **Suggested questions linked to each main point:**

#### **The kingdom of God and a kingdom people**

- Are you assured that you belong to God's kingdom?
- How do you view church membership? How is it different from other types of club membership?
- As Kingdom people, how are we living out our Christian lifestyle?

#### **The kingdom of God and the church as the custodial authority for kingdom people**

- What is your opinion about 'submitting to the spiritual authority of a local church'?
- As the referee in a match is the key of authority, what or who holds the key of authority over your daily living?

#### **The kingdom of God and the church**

- How do you view the connection between the kingdom of God and the church?
- Are you a member of DUMC? Why or why not? What benefits do you see and what responsibilities would you shoulder as a member of the local church? (*eg in the context of CG, ImpactNow, passing it on, serving, etc*).

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**Question Bank** (*Extra questions you can use to bring discussion further as you see fit*):

- Do my CG members say that I am a true disciple of Christ?
- Do you think you are doing the will of our Father in heaven?
- Do you want to be renewed in the body of Christ?
- How can you assist in caring for your immediate neighbours?
- Share a story of how you have personally or as a cell group been engaged with the community to be an influence and impact in society?



How can we increase our influence, impact and witness so that we see true and lasting change?

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## WHAT'S YOUR STORY?



Photo by Judit Peter from Pexels

### Story of the week...

*"Kamu adalah terang dunia. Kota yang terletak di atas gunung tidak mungkin tersembunyi. Lagipula orang tidak menyalakan pelita lalu meletakkannya di bawah **gantang**..."*

*When I read the word **gantang** in this passage of scripture, I paused to think about it a little more. **Gantang** (in Bahasa) is a tool to measure rice. My family members are farmers. We grow our own rice. Hence I am very familiar with the word **gantang**. It is made from wood. One **gantang** of rice is less than 1 kg. It is not as big a measure as some would imagine it to be. I imagine putting a lighted lamp under it. It likely does not take long for the light to go out...*

- Steffi Ann, Bahasa Congregation

\* Read the rest of Steffi's story on [dumc.my/blog](https://dumc.my/blog)

"There is no greater agony than bearing an untold story inside you."

- Maya Angelou

If you or your CG member(s) has a story to share related to today's Word or any other story that speaks of His goodness, **share their/your story** [\[HERE\]](#)

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# PRAYER

**Note to CGL:** You (or someone you assign this portion to), may lead by praying OR reading these prayers together as a CG during worship.

## Today's Prayer

### ***Middle East - prospects of peace***

*Recent agreements between Israel and UAE as well as Bahrain raise hopes of peaceful co-existence between Israel and its regional neighbours. Pray for*

- *Genuine efforts at diplomacy for the sake of the people, rather than political posturing*
- *The major power brokers of the region - Saudi Arabia and Iran - to be amenable to diplomatic negotiations*
- *The Church in the Middle East continue to grow in strength in spite of difficulties*

## **DUMC**

*As a church, we continue to function though differently due to the pandemic. Pray that*

- *The leadership led by Pr Chris continue to focus and push forward on our mission*
  - *Cell groups will find new and different opportunities to encourage and build up one another on a regular basis*
  - *We as the people of God and followers of Christ will show love to people in need around us, to IMPACT them for Christ*
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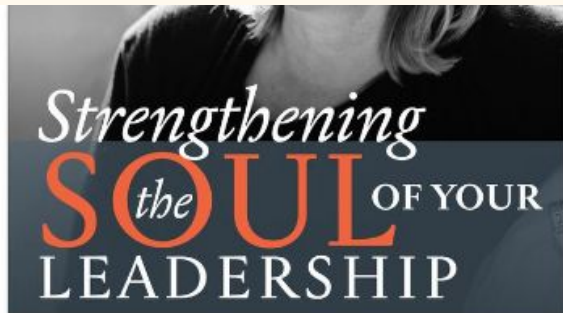


# **OTHER RESOURCES**

*Below are some links to resource you. Do **CLICK** on the images below!*

## **FEATURED**

*In view of our current changing landscape that affects us individually and corporately, here are some featured resources for you this month!*



**Strengthening the Soul of Your Leadership ...**

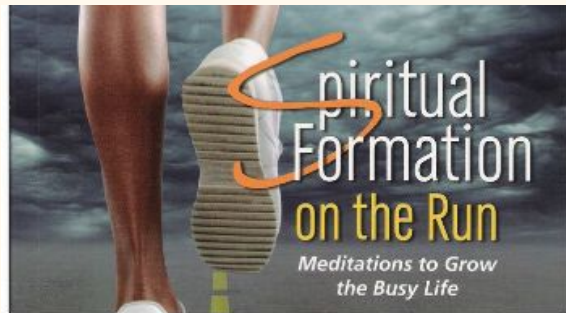
30 minutes on average

transformingcenter.org

Ruth Haley Barton

Prayer & Spirituality

Podcast



**Spiritual Formation on the Run**

188 pages

kairos2.com

Alex Tang

Prayer & Spirituality

E-Book (Free)

**The Lausanne Movement**

**Workplace Ministry**

9 clips (8 minutes average)

lausanne.org

Mission Vocation Work

Video Series Course

**OTHER RESOURCES**

*Discover a host of other resources curated for you here!*



### **DUMC STORIES**

*Be blessed by a compilation of inspiring DUMC Stories that you can share with others!*

