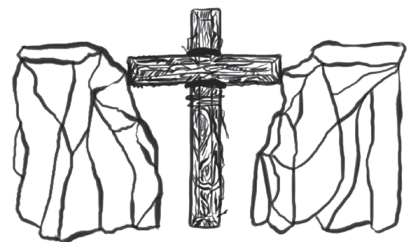
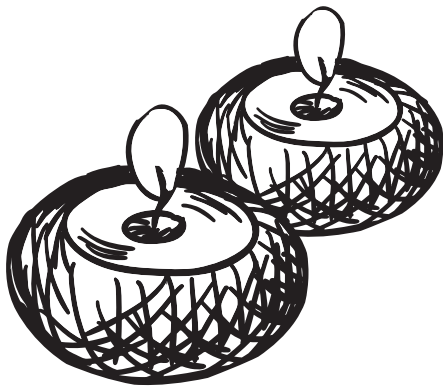
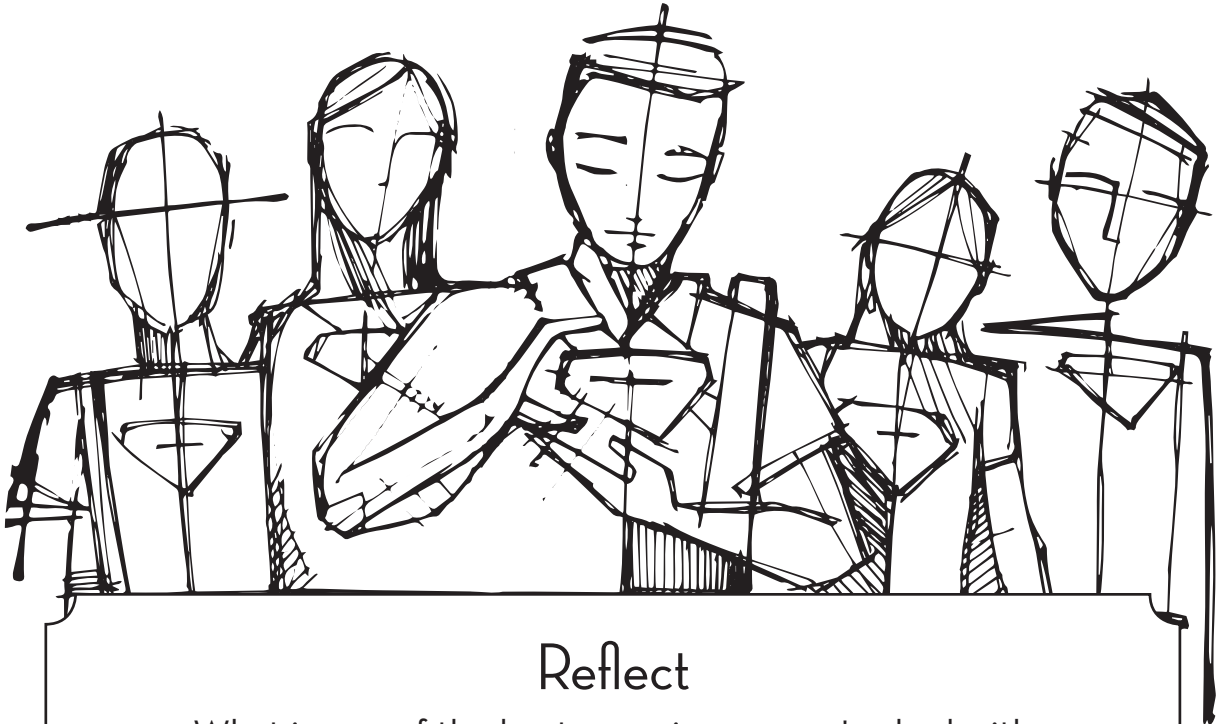


Session 13

CHURCH

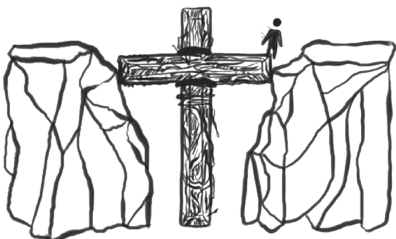
WHY JOIN A CHURCH?





Reflect

What is one of the best experiences you've had with a group of people? What was it about the group that made the experience so special and memorable?

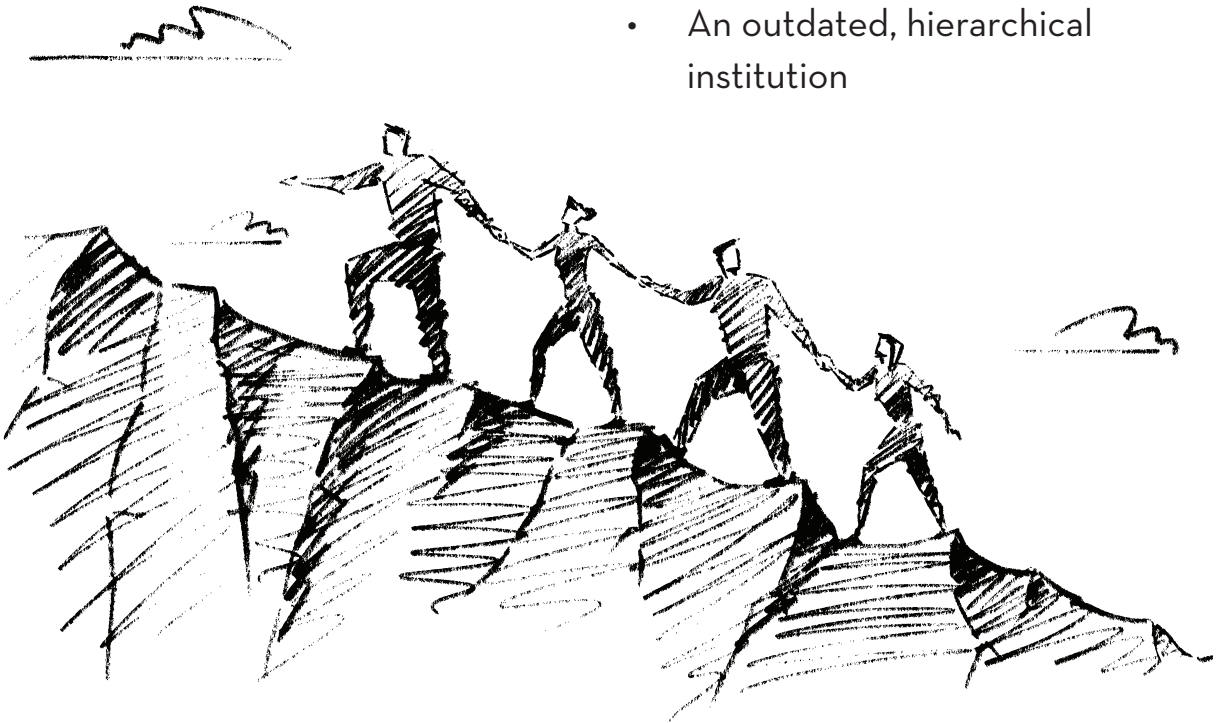


Sometimes we can think that church is:

- Boring
- Irrelevant

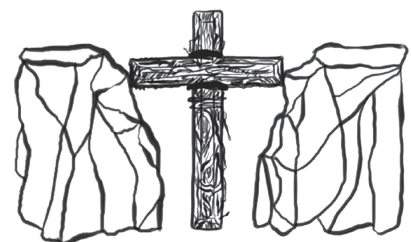
It is important to know that church is *not*:

- A building
- A program that happens once a week
- An outdated, hierarchical institution



Church is a community of people who share their faith, hope and love of Jesus! The Bible uses a number of pictures to describe what church is like:

- **A family** We are all brothers and sisters in God's family.
- **A body** An organic system of people who work together.
- **The bride of Christ** Jesus has a special love, devotion and care for the church.



The Difference Church Makes

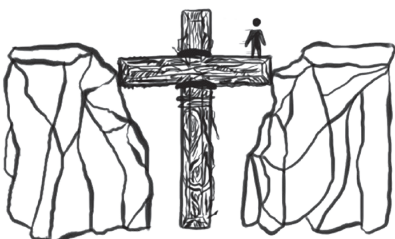
Church makes a big difference in our lives in the following ways:

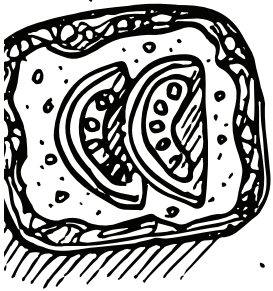
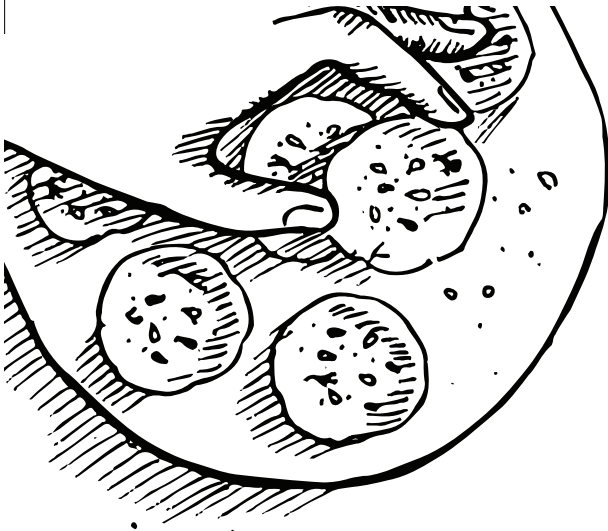
- Connects us with God.
- Connects us with other people who have similar spiritual worldview.
- Gives us a new spiritual family.
- Provides us with a spiritual home.
- Gives us the opportunity to work together with other people using the spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit has given you.

The Way the Bible Describes God's People

The Bible beautifully describes the vision that Jesus has for His church. It consists of people who:

- Believe that Jesus is the Son of God who saves people from sin and death. 1 John 5:1-13
- Trust in Jesus in this life and throughout eternity. Proverbs 3:5-6
- Make the Bible the foundation of their worldview and the way they live. 2 Timothy 3:16-17
- Love God and love the people around them. Matthew 22:34-40
- Keep God's commandments. John 14:15, Revelation 12:17
- Treasure and share the story of Jesus as found in the Bible. Revelation 12:17



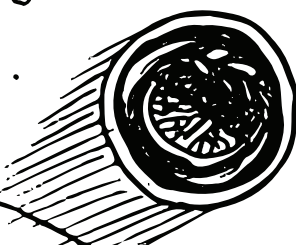
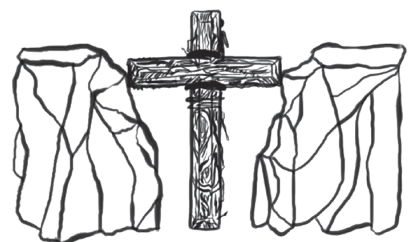
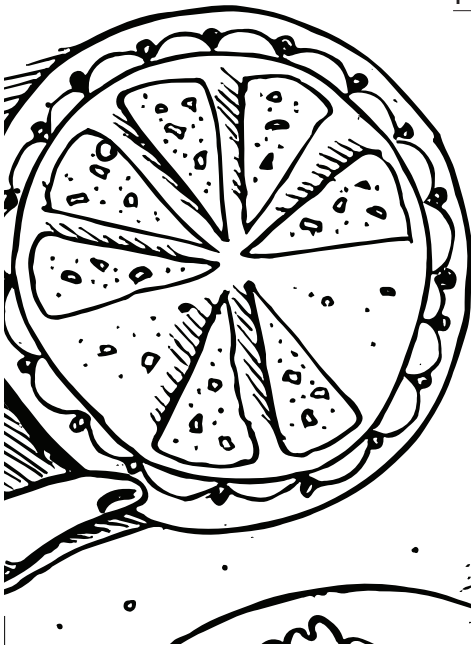
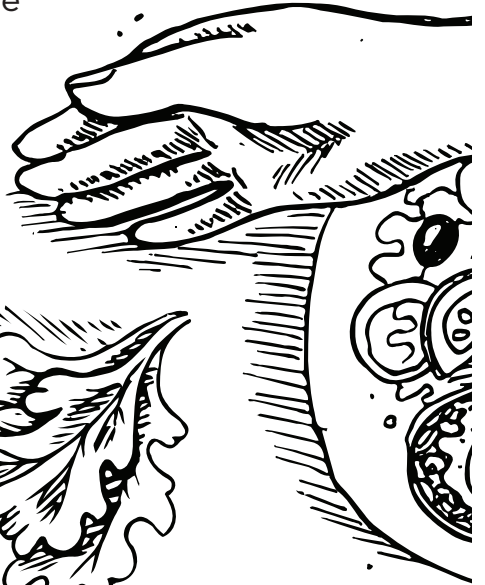


"Enfeebled and defective as it may appear, the church is the one object upon which God bestows in a special sense His supreme regard. It is the theatre of His grace, in which He delights to reveal His power to transform hearts."

—The Acts of the Apostles, p12

"Let us think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works. And let us not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, especially now that the day of his return is drawing near."

—Hebrews 10:24-25



Real Talk

QUESTION ONE

What would attract you to being part of the theatre of God's grace, where He delights to reveal His power to transform people's hearts?

QUESTION TWO

Why do you think that Jesus describes the church as His "bride"?

QUESTION THREE

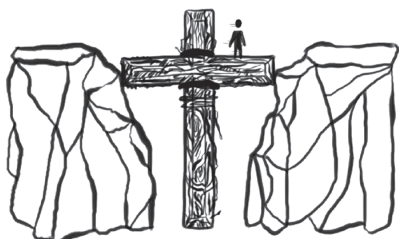
What benefits do you think there would be in being part of a church?

QUESTION FOUR

How would you like to continue your journey with Jesus?

Resources for further reading:

- The One – David Asscherick and Ty Gibson



- Why Church Matters: Discovering Your Place in the Family of God – Joshua Harris
- Church: Why Bother? – Philip Yancey



Reimagine Your Life

OPTION ONE

Take a selfie of your discussion group that have journeyed with you through the "I Am" series.

OPTION TWO

Plan a reunion of the group that you have journeyed with through the "I Am" series with.

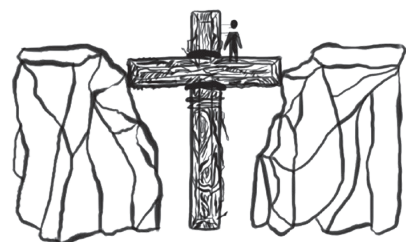
OPTION THREE

Describe your vision of what Jesus imagined church would be like.

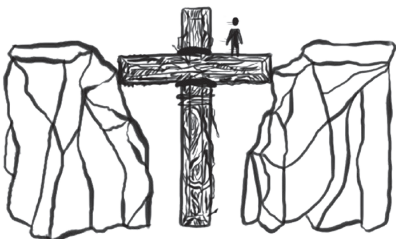


Next Step

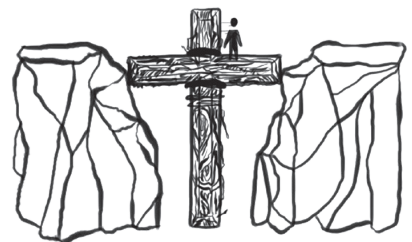
Would you like to join our group for the next stage of our journey with Jesus?



Notes



Notes



About the Author

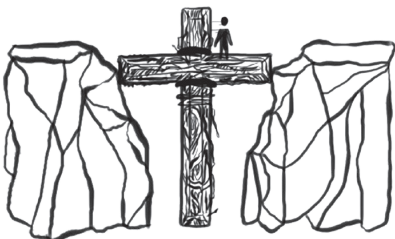


Sven Östring

Sven Östring grew up in Hong Kong, a truly global city at one of the World's major crossroads between Europe, North America and Asia. Experiencing first-hand the ebb and flow of being human in a complex world, Sven feels a fascination with the grand themes of the universe.

He loves exploring the meaning and purpose of life, and reflecting on the big concepts, like cosmology, as well as the philosophy and logic of science. The emotional beauty of epic symphonies like Tchaikovsky's 'Pathetique' Symphony, strike a resonant chord.

In his words, "The amazing thing is that I have discovered all of these big picture concepts converge in one single Person—Jesus Christ. He is the Person who answers all of the questions that I have and meets all of my deepest needs. I led out in developing the "I Am" series so that you could get to know Jesus personally too."



About the Designer



Shelley Poole

Australian artist and designer, Shelley Poole owns a company with her husband called Aesthetic Intelligence. She is passionate about sharing a radiant picture of Jesus, and believes 'joy' is co-creation with the Creator.

Her unique fusion of art and design mindsets offer a strategic edge to the people she works with. Clients have included Sanitarium Health and Wellbeing, Vitality Works, Seventh-day Adventist Church and Signs Publishing.

In 2015, she had the privilege of working with photographer Felicity Thomson on 'Unspoken', a fine art project centred on themes of mental health, violence and overcoming. Photographs were collaboratively conceived, edited and curated, alongside original text, subsequently winning a Silver Award at the 2016 AIPP Australian Professional Photography Awards.

