

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and will call him Immanuel.

—Isaiah 7:14 (700 B.C.)



The virgin will conceive and give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel (which means “God with us”).

—Matthew 1:23 (50 A.D.)

“More than any before us, an American today believes ‘I must write the script of my own life: the thought that such a script must be subordinated to the grand narrative of the Bible is a foreign one.’ Still more alarming is the idea that this surrender of our personal story to God’s story must be mediated by a community of fallen people who we frankly don’t want getting in our way and meddling with our own hopes and dreams.”

—Tod Bolsinger, *It Takes a Church to Raise a Christian*, 22-23.

Open-up

Do you agree or disagree with the above quote? How have you seen this idea become a reality in our culture?

Into the Bible—Ask “What does it Say?”

Read: 1 Peter 2:4-12

What do you notice about the passage itself? (Structure, repeated words or ideas, unique words, main points, what did this passage say to the original author and audience)

To help clarify verses 6-8 clarify what the author is saying by exploring these passages:

Verse 6: Ephesians 2:20; Isaiah 28:16; Romans 9:32-33; Romans 10:11

Verse 7: Psalm 118:22; Acts 4:11

Verse 8: Isaiah 8:14; Luke 2:34

What does this passage say about those who belong to Jesus' church?

How are these people who make up the church called to live?

 **Into my life**—Ask “What does this look like in my personal life?”

As you look back over the passage what are the promises you can claim hold of? Why do they matter?

How would you say your life lines up with verse 11 - 12? What challenges you in these verses?

How do you need to have your thinking changed about being part of a spiritual community?

How do you need to reengage with your spiritual community?

 **Into the World**—Ask “what does this look like in my world?”

In the message there was this quote by Tim Keller:

“You can't know God, change deeply, or change the world apart from community?” How do you respond to this?