

# **CHURCH Series...**

**Sep 19: Why are we a church?**

**Sep 26: Are we becoming the church God calls us?**

**Oct 3: From the past to the future**

**Oct 10: What will becoming God's church do to us?**

# WHY ARE WE A CHURCH?



Sermon by Pastor Fernando del Rosario, St. James Presbyterian Church, San Francisco | September 19, 2021

why

**C** CHRIST LOVE JOY PEACE  
**H** PRAYER WORSHIP GOD FAITH MUSIC  
**I** SOCIALIZE SAVOR COMMUNITY  
**R** TOGETHERNESS REACTION FAMILY  
**T** TRUTH SCRIPTURE STRENGTH  
**H** LEARN HOPE PROSPER LIVE  
**?**

mc

# WHY ARE WE A CHURCH?

- **OUR OWN REASONS**
- **GOD'S REASONS**
- **WHICH IS RIGHT: OURS OR GOD'S**
- **WHY DO WE NEED TO BE SURE?**

# **We are a church: OUR REASONS**

- **TRADITIONS**
- **SOCIAL & CULTURAL LIKES**
- **PERSONAL/FAMILY REPUTATION**
- **WE COPIED OTHERS**
- **WE WERE TOLD, WE DID NOT QUESTION**

MAN'S  
TRADITIONS

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*vs.*

GOD'S  
TEACHINGS

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# **We are a church: GOD'S REASONS**

- **God's Covenant with Abraham,**  
*Genesis 17:3-8*
- **God calls His people to be a holy people,**  
*Ephesians 1:3-5, 1 Peter 2:9-10*
- **God intends His church to be a visible proof of His presence,**  
*Ephesians 3:4-6, 10-12*
- **Christ builds and owns the church,**  
*Matthew 16:18*

**Genesis 17:7, NIV**

**I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you.**

**1 Peter 2:9-10**

**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. 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.**

## **Ephesians 3:6,10-11**

**This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.**

**His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

## **Matthew 16:18**

**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.**

# So, which is right: our reasons or God's?

- If our church is only because of our own reasons, what usually happens?
- If it is God's reasons that define why we are a church, what happens?
- Is St. James Presbyterian Church God's church, or ours only?

# So, which is right: our reasons or God's?

If our church is only because of OUR OWN REASONS, what usually happens?

- ✓ Personal conflicts = chaos!
- ✓ Same old stuff = we get tired + bored
- ✓ Money issues? = more chaos!
- ✓ Blame, blame, blame = leave!
- ✓ Compare with other churches = leave!

The background image shows the interior of a church. A large, dark wooden cross is mounted on the wall in the center. Below it, there is a altar area with a table and some items. The church has a high, vaulted wooden ceiling. In the foreground, there are rows of dark wooden pews. The lighting is warm and somewhat dim, creating a solemn atmosphere.

# 10 Reasons Why We Don't Invite Other People to Our Church

# So, which is right: our reasons or God's?

If it is GOD'S REASONS, what would happen?

- ✓ As God's chosen and holy people, we live as good and holy people
- ✓ As humbled, loved, and forgiven people, we will love and forgive others
- ✓ We are ordinary people called by God to show His greatness to others
- ✓ We commit and work together to give glory to God

A photograph of a stone wall with a large, reddish-brown stain in the center. The text is overlaid on the wall.

**IS ST. JAMES PC  
DEMONSTRATING GOD'S  
POWER TO CHANGE LIVES?**

# So, which is right: our reasons or God's?

## Is St. James God's church, or ours only?

- ✓ In the 80s, you took over the white congregation. Why & how did that happen?
- ✓ Then, you had two Filipino pastors. Did St. James grow during those times?
- ✓ Your 2<sup>nd</sup> Filipino pastor departed and Covid forced you to shutdown more than 1 year.
- ✓ In February, you thought of reopening the church. What are your top 3 reasons?

# **Why do we need to know and be sure why we are God's Church?**

- Let me put this as straight and simple to you... I would have said NO...**
- There could be many in your church who feel more of a “wait-and-see” attitude in the next 6 months...**
- But to those of you who have deep faith and strong hope in what God is now doing, I commend and encourage you!**

A silhouette of a person wearing a cap, looking out at a sunset over a horizon. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow that fades into a darker sky. The person's silhouette is centered in the upper half of the image.

**TO MOVE OR WAIT?  
FOLLOWING  
GOD'S PLAN**

# **My prayers for you...**

- **May your reasons to continue St. James be the same as God's reasons**
- **May you humble yourselves before God and ask Him to bless your efforts**
- **May our Good and Faithful Savior Jesus bless all families in St. James to continue being the Chosen, Faithful, and Holy people for His glory!**

## **Ephesians 3:14-20, NIV**

**...I kneel before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name. I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people,**

## **Ephesians 3:14-21, NIV**

**to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.**

**Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.**