



In this session, we'll talk about the local church and its role in the life of a growing Christian man. We'll also speak of the role men play in the effectiveness and leadership of the church. It's important that we get past habit and tradition and see exactly why the Church exists.

Opening Narrative:

The oft used cheesy church marquis says it: "What's missing in C H \_ \_ C H? U R!" To be frank, many men are missing from the local church for a myriad of reasons. However, when men see themselves as integral to the expansion of God's Kingdom through the Church of Jesus Christ, anything is possible. Show me a healthy, powerful, effective church, and I'll show you a congregation with men not afraid to lead.

### **Question:**

**Give me some reasons why a Christian should become part of a local church.**

Maybe the biggest reason for the local church's existence is due to the fact that God loves to work in relationships. He wants us to have community, to join together and to draw strength from one another. When the Holy Spirit made His presence known in Jerusalem, the early believers saw the need of coming together.

### **Scripture Reading – Acts 2:42-47 (NLT):**

The Kingdom of God does not have borders and boundaries as other kingdoms do. Every believer in Jesus Christ is a part of God's Kingdom. Therefore, it is all the more important for us to come together frequently.

### **Question:**

**Give an example from your life of a time when you received something or learned something crucial from your experience of being joined with other believers. (Ask the guys how their experience in this class has helped.)**

Here's how the Lord imagines us together. Let's look at Paul's analogy of the church being compared to a human body.

### **Scripture Reading – I Corinthians 12:12-13 (NLT)**

# 360° DISCIPLE FOR MEN

The Body of Christ is made up of all races, genders, cultures and backgrounds. We have one thing in common: “we have all been baptized into one body by one Spirit”. In other words, we have the shared experience of receiving God’s free gift of grace, given to us by Jesus’ act of love on the cross.

There’s something special that occurs when God’s people come together for one purpose. Here’s one example:

## **Scripture Reading – I Corinthians 12:24b-27 (NLT)**

### **Question:**

**These verses speak of members caring for one another. Can you give me an example of a time when your church suffered or wept with you and the spiritual effect of that experience? Give me an example of a time when the church rejoiced or was glad with you? How did it affect your celebration?**

Nothing great is accomplished alone. Everybody needs somebody. There’s a reason why the Holy Spirit was made known during a Jewish holiday celebration. The Lord wanted as many people in on this as possible. And when Christians coordinate their efforts and movement toward the same goal, they are unstoppable.

### **Question:**

**What do you think are the three biggest needs of the Church right now (the Church as a whole, not our congregation)?**

There are many challenges facing the Church in the 21st century. One of the biggest we have faced in the last couple of decades is the need for spiritual male leadership. Overall church attendance has seen a decline in the number of men. Because of this, there are fewer men who are available to be leaders in their church. In the Assemblies of God, we ordain women for ministry and have them serve in leadership positions. However, men cannot give up their responsibility to be leaders of their congregation.

Why is male leadership so important? Because it sets a human example of the pattern laid out for the home. If only women are leading in the local church, it will distort the biblical pattern of husbands and wives in the home. Every congregation must have men who are influencing others and living a scriptural example of leadership. When this occurs, women thrive. They sense the umbrella of authority and protection within

their church and can use their gifts to their full extent. When men lead, it literally frees everyone to be who they are in Christ.

## **Question:**

**What kind of spiritual battle do men in leadership face?**

That's not limited only to pastors. Whether it's serving in an elected position, leading a ministry or influencing others, men who want to be leaders in the church will be attacked by the enemy of their soul. Satan hates the Church, and he will do whatever he can to have it disgraced. His forces will do whatever they can to discourage and frustrate us into fading back into the scenery or leaving the church altogether. But to have the level of effectiveness God desires, we have to be willing to be a target. But we need not be afraid.

## **Scripture Reading – Ephesians 6:10-13 (NLT)**

We don't need to be intimidated. With Christ on our side, we will prevail!

Being a leader is not easy. It takes courage, wisdom and patience. But if we're willing to take our place, we can have a huge impact on many lives.

Illustration:

(Give examples from your personal experience [you or someone you know] of men in church leadership who have made a difference in your life or your church.)

## **Question:**

**How can we prevent men from fizzling out or burning out in church leadership?**

Not only must we look out for each other, but we need to make a special effort to be a blessing to our pastors as much as possible. They are carrying a heavy burden, so it's important for them to know we are by their side in their efforts to lead our church.

## **Scripture Reading – Exodus 17:8-13 (NIV)**

Your pastor can't do it alone. Spiritual men are needed to "hold their hands up". This takes on different forms. First, we need men to surround our pastor with prayer and assistance. We need to make a regular habit of praying for our pastor by name. Pray

# 360° DISCIPLE FOR MEN

for them in the midst of your time with God, and pray with them occasionally. It makes a huge difference!

We can also hold our pastor's hands up by putting an end to any gossip in the church. It's up to us to make sure that people handle conflict biblically. Occasionally, there are going to be people who are upset or offended by a decision our pastor makes. But if someone attempts to gain support by talking to others instead of the pastor, we need to be guardians of truth. We need to tell them to take their complaint directly to the pastor and keep the church from becoming divided in any way. In doing so, we are providing an incredible service to our community of believers.

That doesn't mean we will agree with everything our pastor does, but we have to remember that we are accountable to our pastor, and our pastor is directly accountable to God. We wouldn't want anyone to undermine us in the home, so we must give the same respect to our spiritual leader. We can't truly call ourselves a healthy church if men are not taking their scriptural role of leadership.

## **Response:**

**Either lead the men in prayer for your pastor, or ask 2 or 3 of them to lead out in prayer for your pastor and you close.**

If time allows, split the men into small groups and have them share either a recent report of victory or a prayer need. Give them a chance to "be the church" for one another.