



The Church Is The Problem Plan | Ethan Matott | 02.22.2026
Weekly Study

SHARE

As group members settle in, take a few minutes to check in with everyone and see how their lives are going. Share an exciting story from this week, your highs and lows, an answered prayer, or something you're struggling with. If someone is really struggling, rally the group around them and take a few moments to pray over them.

- **Share a high, a low, and something interesting from this week.**

GROW

Something always has your attention. Every moment, every day, your mind is being shaped by what you focus on—whether you realize it or not. We often assume that only the things we intentionally engage with form us, but our brains are constantly scanning our environment: Am I safe? Is this a threat? Do I need to act? That constant processing shapes our habits, beliefs, and behaviors in ways we rarely notice.

As Dallas Willard said, “We are constantly being formed by something. The question is not whether we are being formed, but by what... If you are not intentionally being disciplined by Jesus, you are unintentionally being disciplined by the world.”

If you want to know who—or what—is discipling you, look at what you are becoming. Scripture reminds us that we are known by our fruit, not just our words. Ask yourself:

Am I growing more loving, patient, joyful, present, and at peace?

Or am I becoming more anxious, reactive, numb, or exhausted?

Your formation reveals its source. Even if you didn't intend it, the things that occupy your attention leave their mark on your heart and life. And the problem with this is that, for one reason or another, many of us are allowing ourselves to be disciplined more by 30-second soundbites, viral clips, and self-proclaimed experts than by God's Word and the body of Christ (the church). The church isn't perfect, and it doesn't always get it right. Social media influencers don't always get it wrong. But what we do know is that the church was and is Christ's plan to save the world - to use broken, imperfect people as a means to draw people in and point them to the King of Kings and Lord of Lords until He returns one day.

The church needs you. And you need the church.

This isn't a call to reject everything that entertains or informs us, but an invitation to fix your eyes on the source of life, joining together with God's people to be transformed into the fullness of Christ together.

Read Psalm 119:37 ESV, Acts 1:8-11

- **How did this week's message speak to you? What caught your attention? Explain.**
- **What has shaped your view of the church? Has it been mostly positive experiences, negative ones, or secondhand information from others or social media?**
- **In what ways have you been 'disciplined more by algorithms than by Jesus,' and how can you actively resist this trend in your spiritual life?**

- **How does viewing the church as 'the bride of Christ' impact the way you speak about and critique Christian communities, including those you disagree with?**
- **The sermon challenges whether your walk with Jesus compels or repels people. What specific changes might you need to make in your daily life to better reflect Christ to those around you?**

MOVE

Being the body of Christ means more than showing up on Sundays or going through the motions of church life—it means actively participating in God’s mission through community. Each of us has been given unique gifts, experiences, and passions to serve one another, build each other up, and point people to Jesus. Inside the walls of the church, this can look like encouraging a brother or sister, using your gifts in ministry, or simply showing up faithfully to support the work God is doing through the body. Outside the church, it might mean loving your neighbors, mentoring someone in faith, gathering together for community fellowship (groups), or offering tangible help to those in need. In both spaces, our participation matters because Christ works through His people, not just through ideas or messages.

Growth in Christ doesn’t happen in isolation—it happens in community, as we take responsibility for our part in the body. When we embrace humility, patience, and love, and use our gifts to strengthen others, the whole body becomes healthy, unified, and mature. The call here requires active participation: to live intentionally, serve generously, and love sacrificially so that the church reflects Christ’s character to the world and each of us grows into the fullness of who God created us to be.

Read Ephesians 4:1-16, Romans 12:1-16 NLT

- **What gifts, talents, or passions do you feel God has given you to serve others in the body of Christ?**
- **How can our small group be a place where each person’s gifts are encouraged and used?**

- **Are there ways you've been hesitant to step into your role in the body? Why?**
- **What does it mean to "walk in a manner worthy of your calling"?**
- **If someone observed your life last week, what "fruit" would they see? What does it reveal about what is discipling you?**
- **How does knowing that we are part of one body with one Spirit shape the way you see your worth and significance in God's plan?**

P R A Y

Take a few minutes to ask the group if anyone has any prayer requests, then spend some time praying over those requests.