

Sermon Discussion Questions
August 17, 2025
First Alliance Church

Sermon Recap

In this sermon, Pastor Paul Smith introduces a three-week series, “It’s Your Move,” focused on three key movements of discipleship: **UP towards God in worship, IN towards each other in discipleship, and OUT towards the world in mission.** He shares his personal journey through various churches over 34 years, emphasizing how God used the local church to bless his life in countless ways. In this message, Pastor Paul talks about the reasons why God gathers us regularly for worship and the benefits that result.

Ice Breaker

Have you ever been displaced physically, or at least felt like it? Felt like you didn’t belong, like someone on the outside looking in? Explain.

Discussion Questions

1. **Read 1 Peter 2:4-5, 9-10.** What words does Peter use in this passage to describe who we are in Christ? What are the real-world implications of each description?

- 1 Peter is written to Christians who’ve been displaced, scattered throughout Asia Minor, and experiencing all the confusion and trauma that often accompanies that experience (1 Peter 1:1). Peter reminds them of what God says about them—and how precious they are as His beloved people.
- Have you ever noticed that the value of something is often tied to the price someone paid for it, or who it is who owns it? As God’s possession, there’s tremendous implications to this truth! See also Ephesians 2:19-22.

2. Pastor Paul used this passage as a springboard for talking about the value of being a part of a church community that regularly gathers for corporate worship. *Why does GOD gather us regularly for worship? How has God’s weekly rhythm of “gathering and scattering” His people in corporate worship benefited YOU personally?*

- There are rich blessings to be found in collectively gathering to worship the Lord: We experience... God’s direction—God speaks to those who come to worship Him. God’s affection—God lifts the burdens of those who seek His face (i.e., Psalm 73:16-28). God’s protection—Worship is the way God’s people maintain faith in difficult times (i.e., James 4:6).

3. How has being part of a church community helped you grow in your faith in ways that wouldn't have happened if you were just trying to follow Jesus alone? Does a specific example come to mind?

4. Pastor Paul said, *"A big aspect to the sum total of our lives is commitments made and commitments broken."* How does this statement strike you in terms of your own life?

- Discipleship doesn't happen automatically, it requires intentional commitment to worship, small groups, and using your gifts to serve. Notice passages like 1 Timothy 4:7-8 and 1 Corinthians 9:24-25.
- "No one drifts into growth as a disciple of Jesus; it's pursued within a community of faith."

5. The sermon mentioned six characteristics of a disciple: God-dependent prayer, biblically grounded, relationally healthy, equipped for ministry, personally generous, and missionally engaged. Which of these areas do you feel strongest in, and which needs more attention?

Prayer

- Pray and minister to one another out of the time you've spent in conversation.
- Read **Psalm 84**. Use this psalm as a catalyst for the group expressing their own longings for moving UP towards God in worship.
- Ask the Lord to bring specific people to mind who could use a gentle encouragement toward establishing a regular worship routine (Hebrews 10:24-25).