

## Christ the Center (1 of 4) Small Group Discussion Questions

Join our congregation for worship in-person or online at 10:30 am each Sunday via our [Grantham Church YouTube Channel](#). If you ever miss a message, the sermons are always posted to the [recent sermons page](#) at our website and at the [Grantham Church Podcast](#) the following day, along with the small group discussion questions under Worship Resources. Thank you for staying connected with us!

**Sunday, June 5th, 2022**



**Series Focus:** What does it look like to be a Christ-centered church that is faithful to the gospel? How can we be a church that doesn't obsess over boundaries or one that ends up erasing all lines that set us apart as faithful disciples? In this 4-part sermon series, we discover that Christ is the center of our community when we are pursuing him together, affirming historic Christian beliefs, and living out our values as Christ-followers, while simultaneously extending grace to those who are at different places on their journey.

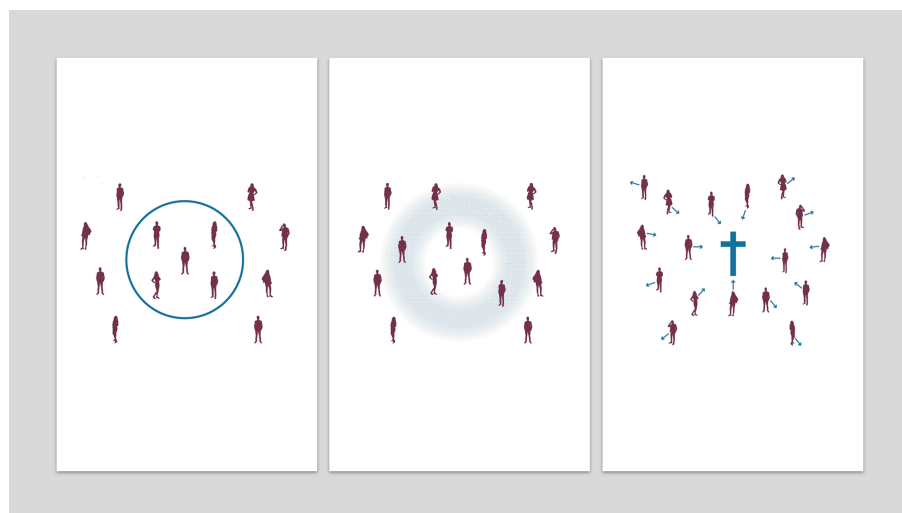
**Sermon Title:** The God of the Center

**Scripture Reading:** Matthew 16:13-18; Luke 15:1-2, 11-32; Colossians 1:15-20

**Sermon Focus:** Jesus proclaimed the gospel of salvation to all who believed. He embodied that good news, and then gave his church the task of doing the same. So, the local church is *his* idea. He wants us to form worshipping communities of disciples who actively pursue him and point others to the God who looks like Jesus. In *The God of the Center*, Pastor David shares how our concept of God, and our understanding of the gospel, will determine the sort of community and culture that exists in the church.

Thank you for going deeper in conversation with your small group in person or by video call. Use the following questions to help *guide* your small group discussion:

1. Read Matthew 16:13-18 together. The church is not our idea, nor is it an *optional* practice for Christians. Instead, Jesus puts himself and the church at the center of God's Kingdom and his redemptive plan for the world. As church attendance is on the decline, how have you seen people treating the church as optional? Also, how have you seen or experienced why the church is so critical to the proclamation and embodiment of the gospel? Why isn't church optional?
2. Pastor David gave us definitions and images of three paradigms of church community: (1) bounded; (2) fuzzy; and (3) centered. We will explore each of these over the next few weeks. What is your initial reaction to these paradigms? What has been your experience(s) in the church? Also, where do you think Grantham Church is at in this season – are we bounded, fuzzy, or centered?



3. Mark Baker, the author of *Centered-Set Church*, writes: "We must describe who God is, because our conceptions about God will influence whether we do church in a bounded, fuzzy, or centered way, and the paradigm of our church will influence how we view God." In other words, our concept of God and our paradigms become reinforcing. How have you seen or experienced this?
4. Read Colossians 1:15, Hebrews 1:3, John 1:14, and John 14:6-9. What comes into your mind when you think about God? Does it all look like Jesus?
5. Is knowing the God who looks like Jesus at the center of your life? Are you pursuing him? How do you think we can tell when Jesus isn't at the center of our life? Also, how can we tell when he is/isn't the center of our church community?