

INTRO

- What are you passionate about?
- Can you think of someone who influenced you because their passion was contagious?

In this series, we're looking at God's vision for His Church, and then *envisioning* it in our context of Toronto.

READ

Matt 16:15-18

REFLECT

Qu: why is the church necessary and what part does it play in God's redemptive plan for the world?

Jesus declared he'd build his church—a community of followers who believe in and trust Him. The Church is the primary means through which God accomplishes his plans on the earth.

GOD'S VISION FOR HIS CHURCH

There are 4 dominant metaphors of how God sees his church: **Family** of God [*people*]; **Bride** of Christ [*passion*]; **Body** of Christ & **Temple** of the Holy Spirit [*purpose & presence*]. This is how it outworks in our context:

*We envision being a multiethnic people of all ages (**people**), passionately following Jesus together (**passion**), on his mission to bring gospel transformation to the people and culture of Toronto and, through it, to the world (**purpose & presence**).*

Today we explore what it means to be the BRIDE of Christ, and its connection to PASSION.

HIS BRIDE, HIS PASSION

Read Rev 21:9b & Eph 5:30-32

Qu: what does the picture of marriage tell us about Jesus' relationship with his church?

God is passionate about his Church; she may be flawed, but she is deeply loved by God. This metaphor also means we need God in our lives relationally & intimately, like a spouse, not just as someone we believe in or try to obey.

OUR PASSION

Qu: why is it important to first grasp God's passion for us before trying to be passionate for Him?

Passion is contagious. God initiates, we respond (*We love because he first loved us.* —1 Jn 4:19).

Qu: Describe what it looks like for a people to 'passionately follow Jesus together'?

As we grasp God's passion for and pursuit of us, we are to respond likewise. But how do we do this practically?

PUTTING PASSION INTO PRACTICE

"Our habits do things to us." To cultivate passion for Jesus means we need an intentional, holistic approach to our lives. All aspects of our life are sacred before God and therefore impact our passion for him. At ENGTA, we try to practice passionately following Jesus by cultivating 3 primary relationships with:

- Jesus (UP—worship)
- Others (IN—community)
- The world around us (OUT—mission)

Qu: what is your plan to grow UP, IN, OUT in 2019? Where is God challenging you to focus?

Qu: who can you be accountable to?

Passion is contagious. **Let's commit to passionately following Jesus together in 2019!**

RESPOND & PRAY

- What challenged/encouraged you the most from today's discussion?
- How can you pray for one another in light of today's discussion?