

They Like Jesus But Not the Church

Join us as we explore the six main objections to the church during our **Grand Opening Month*** and beyond:

April 26* – Understanding how our culture is changing... Christianity in a post-Christian era.

Pastor Mike

Big Idea: In J.R.R. Tolkien's *The Fellowship of the Ring*, Galadriel, the elf queen, says a classic line about the changes happening in Middle Earth. She says to Frodo, "The world is changed. I feel it in the water. I feel it in the earth. I smell it in the air." We need to recognize how this world has changed in order to present the Good News of God's love in a relevant manner.

May 3* – The church is an "organized religion" with a political agenda; the church is judgmental and negative.

Pastor Mike

Big Idea: Madonna summarizes the feelings of many when she said, "I don't think there is anything wrong with the teachings of Jesus, but I am suspicious of organized religion." To many, the church is a personality-driven organization that is all about power and control. To make matters worse, the church is best known for what is against... often presented in a very negative and judgmental fashion.

May 10* – The church is male dominated and oppresses females.

Pastor Mike

Big Idea: Consider this comment from Alicia: "I feel the church is very sexist, yet I don't believe that Jesus was sexist. From what I have observed, women in the church basically sit on the sidelines and are only able to work with children, answer the phones, be secretaries, and serve the men. They seem to be given no voice. The church seems pretty much like a boy's club for adults." Is the Church little more than a "Boy's Club for Adults"?

May 17* – Gala Musical Grand Finale Celebration a break from our series for a special event – begins at **6pm** followed by an ice cream social

NO WORSHIP AT 4PM TODAY ONLY! We conclude our Grand Opening with a special celebration of just how big, how wide, and how grand our God is by joining with others in a special celebration in music. Along with our own 2819, we will hear from a Christian rap artist, a Gospel Choir, and a Christian rock band (*Whosoever Will*).

May 24 – The church believes Christianity is right and all other religions are wrong.

Pastor Corey

Big Idea: Duggan, when speaking about his conversations with Christians, says, "They seem so closed-minded and even look at other religions as enemies." Duggan would be happy to carry on a dialogue about faith. However, Christians come across as naive and arrogant when they can't even carry on a conversation about the religions they reject. How can we change this? Christians need to be sensitive in how they talk about other faiths and not come across as unintelligent, primitive, closed-minded, and uncaring of people who hold different views.,

May 31 – The church is full of fundamentalists who take the whole bible literally.

Pastor Corey

Big Idea: ***The bible says it. I believe it. That settles it.*** Ever hear that one? Or maybe you have heard someone say something like, "Christian fundamentalists seem to use the Bible like a weapon, quoting verses out of context like bullets to shoot anything or anyone they don't like." These words from Penny hurt... because when Christians behave in this fashion, they drive people away from a relationship with Jesus. What is at the center of the Bible? What is "the core message"?

June 7 – The church is Homophobic.

Pastor Mike

Big Idea: Can a homosexual be a Christian? Should same-sex marriages be permitted? There is a perception by many outside the church that the church is homophobic and does not demonstrate the love of Jesus toward the homosexual community. This topic causes a lot of tension within the church on several levels. Issues include not only the question of practicing homosexuality but how homosexuality and homosexuals are addressed *in* and *by* the church; celibate homosexuals; the role of "sexual orientation"; and the covenant of marriage.
