

# starting<sup>®</sup> point

## PART 8: INVITATION

Jesus predicted that he would start a gathering, a movement... what we call *the church*. And it would spread all over the earth bringing change everywhere it went. It would even outlast the Roman Empire. His prediction must have sounded outlandish to even his closest followers. But here we are, two thousand years later, and the Roman Empire exists only in history books, while Jesus's gathering is still going strong. So, what exactly is this movement called *the church*? And what could it mean for you?

### CONNECT

Talk about a time when you were a member of a team or group with a shared goal. How did that experience help you grow?

### DISCUSS THE PODCAST EPISODE

1. What do you associate with the word “church”? How is it different from Jesus’s word “ekklesia”?
2. In the podcast, we were asked to imagine how Paul would feel if he knew just how much the world would change as a result of the movement Jesus began. What thoughts or feelings did this evoke?
3. Do you feel like the church has drifted from what Jesus originally intended? If so, how?

### LEARN

Watch the short video.

### APPLY

After giving your group members an opportunity to share what stood out from the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. What made the first-century version of Christianity so compelling?
2. Have you ever known someone who just seemed like they “got it”—meaning they understood what the church and Christians were supposed to be about and they did it. What did that look like? How did they impact you?
3. In **1 Corinthians 12**, Paul refers to the church as the “body of Christ” with different parts playing complementary roles to carry out his work in the world. How could you see yourself using your unique passions and abilities to participate in what God is doing in the world as a part of the body?



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## WRAP UP

This Jesus movement that began all those years ago on the streets of Jerusalem is still moving in and around the world today. And you and I are invited, not just to observe, but to participate in this multiethnic, multinational, unstoppable activity of God on earth.

So, whatever your next step may be, we believe your uniqueness finds its fullest and best expression when connected to God's purpose in the world. So, take a step. It's the most significant thing you can do in your life.

## PRAY

Take some time to pray as a group and thank God for the things he has taught you over the last eight sessions. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how you can partner with him in what he's doing in the world.

