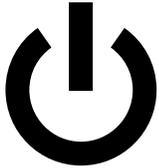


Title: A Church-less Faith Will Fall

Speaker: Tim Sprankle

Key Verses: 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 2:19-22; 4:7-16; 1 Timothy 5:1-2; Acts 2:42-47

Summary: God shapes and strengthens our faith in the local church family.



Power Up: Take a moment to prepare

Tim gives a brief history of his church experience, including time in a moderate, mega-, micro- and misfit congregation. What's your church like?



Replay: Take some time to watch

Note Tim work through five topics about the church: **1)** powerful metaphors; **2)** timeless practices; **3)** startling trends; **4)** hopeful trends; and **5)** how to stand firm in the faith.



Comment: Take some time to talk

Tim shares the story of "getting lost" in his church as a child. ***Have you ever felt "lost" in the church?*** Explain.

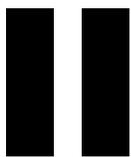
Tim mentions four biblical metaphors for the church: body, temple, army, family. ***Of the four, which one do you most appreciate and why?***

Read Acts 2:42-47. ***What are key practices of the early church? How does your church live out these key practices today?***

Tim addresses the value of doubt. "It's not a great place to land," he admits, but it does encourage lasting faith. ***What doubts do you have concerning your faith? Who in church helps you work through these doubts?***

What is the 5:1 ratio Tim references? Who are your 5?

"The church needs you," Tim says. ***How can you serve in your church?***



Pause: Take a moment to pray

Thank God for your local church. Thank God for not allowing us to grow in isolation. Ask God for deeper connections with your church family and a lasting faith. Ask Him for clarity concerning where and how to serve.



Take Action: Take a step forward

Strong faith does not happen by accident. God wants us to partner with Him by plugging into our local churches. Consider one of the five commitments mentioned at the end. Decide what next step you need to take and move.

Bonus Features | Additional Notes and Quotes from Tim Sprankle

Power Track Summary: God calls no one into His kingdom to live in isolation. He saves us into spiritual families. Quirky, needy, messy, lovely, powerful families of the faith. We call them churches. You need a church. The church needs you. In this Power Track you will learn the purpose of the local church in maturing your faith; where you fit into its service; and how to navigate dysfunction you'll face in any spiritual family (i.e. church).

About the Speaker: Tim Sprankle is a husband, father, pastor, author, speaker; he's published several magazine articles and two forthcoming commentaries in the Kerux series.

Theological Note on Ephesians 4:7-11

The "army" metaphor of the church comes from Paul's use of Psalm 68 in Ephesians 4. It is a military song, celebrating God's victory in the Exodus. Paul repurposes it to describe Jesus' victory over sin and death. Instead of God's people (i.e., Israel) giving Him gifts, Paul says God gives His people (i.e., the Church) gifts.

Startling Trends:

- 50% of high school kids drift from God/church
- In 1940s, 5% of the US population was considered "Nones" (i.e. No religious affiliation)
- As of 2016, 23% of the US population is considered "Nones"
- Therefore, youth leaving the church today are entering a far more secular society!

Hopeful Trends: Factors that Form Standing Faith for Today's Youth

- They can **relate** with younger and older people (i.e., multi-generational)
- They are given **room** to doubt
- They hear **robust** preaching and teaching
- They participate in **relevant** local service and global outreach opportunities
- They interact with **real** people in our airbrushed/filtered world.
- There is a correlation between faithful involvement and fewer moral **collapses**, as well as greater **convictions** and **contentment**.

How to Stand Firm: Growing Strong Faith in Your Church

- Worship weekly with your family
- Connect monthly with a spiritual leader
- Serve faithfully in an area of ministry
- Reflect on and live out the sermon
- Grow up with others who aren't just like you.

Sources: Powell, et. all, *Sticky Faith* and *Growing Young*; Kinnaman and Lyons, *You Lost Me* and *Good Faith*; Dean, *Almost Christian*; White, *Rise of the Nones* and *Meet Generation Z*.