

# BRAND: New

## Letting Go

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**Scripture:** Matthew 16:18; Luke 22:20; Matthew 5:17; John 13:34–35; Luke 22:19

**Idea:** The arrival of Jesus signaled an end to the temple model and the beginning of something entirely new.

### Introduction

1. Today, we begin a brand-new series entitled *Brand: New*.
2. Nineteen years ago, we launched a brand-new kind of church that was part of a general revolution in the church.
3. Remember “contemporary service” signs on traditional church buildings? These were the same services with different music. The preacher put on a sweater vest. Next thing you know, you’ve got the old people in one service, and the young people in the other.
4. Church buildings don’t look like churches anymore. Actually, no building ever looked like a church. Want to know what a church actually looks like? Look around the room . . . a church looks like *people*.
5. In our lifetime, there has been a major revolution in form, function, and approach. We have been a big part of that. You have inspired hundreds of church leaders to try new things and let go of outdated practices.
6. But, unfortunately, the church—both Protestant and Catholic versions—continues to hold onto things from the pre-church, Old Testament, temple, Roman Empire era. We still **hold** onto things that **hold** us back.
7. If this is your first time in church or your first time in a long time, you could not have chosen a better time to join us. In this series, we will address some of the thinking that has kept you away from church. What you may discover is that the things **you** resist about church are things the **church** should have resisted.
8. When you reduce church to its irreducible minimum, the church is a group of people doing their best to follow a teacher we believe was sent from God to clear the way to God and who instructed us to love one another as well as those who won’t love us back. The church is a community of people who follow the **teaching** of a man **sent** from God to **explain** God and to **clear** the path to God. “**Love** one another.” “**Love** your enemy.”
9. In the first through third centuries, Christians were persecuted precisely because of their loyalty to Jesus instead of Caesar. People thought the presence of Christians displeased the gods. They started nasty rumors—that Christians drank blood and ate children.
10. At Jesus’ trial, they chanted, “We have no king but Caesar,” because Pilate called Jesus “King of the Jews.”