

ACTS: I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH (PART 2)

Matthew 16:18-19 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

If Peter was given the KEYS of the kingdom of heaven, we need to obey what he says and do what he does in the book of Acts!

THE CHURCH IS THE ONLY THING THAT CANNOT BE SHAKEN!

Individual saints and local assemblies may have problems, but the church is as solid as the rock of revelation it is built upon.

- The earth is to be shaken (Isaiah 2:19-21)
- The nation of Israel is to be shaken (Ezekiel 38:19-20)
- The heavens and the nations are to be shaken (Haggai 2:6-7)
- Everything that can be shaken will be shaken (Hebrews 12:26-29)

But the church cannot be shaken! The gates of hell cannot prevail against it, because JESUS IS BUILDING HIS CHURCH!

Acts 1:9-11 And when he had spoken these things, while they beheld, he was taken up; and a cloud received him out of their sight. And while they looked stedfastly toward heaven as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; Which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? this same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.

If Jesus hadn't ascended, we would not have the Holy Ghost.

John 16:7 Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

John 14:26 But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.

John 14:18 I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you.

COMFORTLESS (ORFANOS) = orphans, fatherless, bereaved
COMFORTER (PARAKLETOS) = one called alongside to assist

If Jesus hadn't ascended, His earthly work would not have been multiplied.

John 14:12 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.

Mark 16:20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

If Jesus hadn't ascended, He could not have begun His heavenly work.

Hebrews 4:14-16 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

1 John 2:1 My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

ADVOCATE (PARAKLETOS) = COMFORTER! (used only by John)

Angels appear periodically in the book of Acts to work FOR the saints, but the Holy Ghost is constantly there working THROUGH the saints!

Hebrews 1:14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?

1 Peter 1:12 Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.

THIS SAME JESUS ... SHALL SO COME IN LIKE MANNER!

Revelation 1:7-8 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

WHY STAND YE GAZING UP INTO HEAVEN?

(This is an angelic rebuke! "Don't just stand there ... go do something!")

Acts 1:12-14 Then returned they unto Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is from Jerusalem a sabbath day's journey. And when they were come in, they went up into an upper room, where abode both Peter, and James, and John, and Andrew, Philip, and Thomas, Bartholomew, and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon Zelotes, and Judas the brother of James. These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

This is likely the Upper Room where they held the Last Supper.

Notice the composition of the "Day of Pentecost" group:

- the eleven apostles (minus Judas)
- the women (who followed Jesus and his apostles – Luke 8:1-3)
- Mary the mother of Jesus
- Jesus' brethren, who didn't believe before his resurrection (John 7:5 – For neither did his brethren believe in Him.)

If your religion honors Peter or Mary above other disciples, please note that Scripture doesn't do this, and also note that both Peter and Mary were here in the Upper Room – they both repented, they both were baptized in Jesus' name, they both received the Holy Ghost with the evidence of speaking in other tongues – how much do you honor them?!

How easy it would have been for someone to bring division into this beautiful assembly of humble people! The members of the Lord's family might have claimed special recognition. They could have criticized Peter for his cowardly denial of the Savior. John might have proudly reminded the others that he had faithfully stood at the cross, and had even been chosen by the Savior to care for His mother. But there was none of this. In fact, for the first time none of the disciples were arguing over who among them was the greatest!

THEY WERE IN "ONE ACCORD" (OCCURS SIX TIMES IN ACTS).

HOMOTHYADON = compound word, literally meaning "one passion"

Psalms 133:1-3 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded the blessing, even life for evermore.

"WITH ONE ACCORD IN PRAYER"

Prayer is everywhere in the Book of Acts!

The believers prayed for guidance in making decisions (Acts 1:15-26) and for courage to witness for Christ (Acts 4:23-31). In fact, prayer was a normal part of their daily ministry (Acts 2:42-47; 3:1; 6:4). Stephen prayed as he was being stoned (Acts 7:55-60). Peter and John prayed for the Samaritans (Acts 8:14-17), and Saul of Tarsus prayed after his conversion (Acts 9:11). Peter prayed before he raised Dorcas from the dead (Acts 9:36-43). Cornelius prayed that God would show him how to be saved (Acts 10:1-4), and Peter was on the housetop praying when God told him how to be the answer to Cornelius' prayers (Acts 10:9). The believers in John Mark's house prayed for Peter when he was in prison, and the Lord delivered him both from prison and from death (Acts 12:1-11). The church at Antioch fasted and prayed before sending out Barnabas and Paul (Acts 13:1-3) and upon ordaining elders (Acts 14:23). It was at a prayer meeting in Philippi that God opened Lydia's heart (Acts 16:13), and another prayer meeting in Philippi opened the prison doors (Acts 16:25). Paul prayed for his friends before leaving them (Acts 20:36; 21:5). In the midst of a storm, he prayed for God's blessing (Acts 27:35), and after a storm, he prayed that God would heal a sick man (Acts 28:8).

In almost every chapter in Acts you find a reference to prayer, and Acts makes it very clear that something happens when God's people pray! Prayer is both the thermometer and the thermostat of the local church; for the "spiritual temperature" goes up or down depending on prayer.

Acts 1:15-26 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty,) Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry. Now this man purchased a field with the reward of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst asunder in the midst, and all his bowels gushed out. And it was known unto all the dwellers at Jerusalem; insomuch as that field is called in their proper tongue, Aceldama, that is to say, The field of blood. For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell therein: and his bishoprick let another take. Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection. And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias. And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen, That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place. And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

Notice that this is the only time the early church ever makes a decision using LOTS, and that this is NOT A VOTE. With votes, you always have politics, and you always have winners and losers. So when faced with a decision, the early church drew straws and trusted the Lord to guide them rather than hold a vote!

Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the LORD.

“FROM WHICH JUDAS BY TRANSGRESSION FELL” – TRAGEDY!

Some people claim the disciples made a mistake here in choosing Matthias. They feel that Paul was actually the one God chose for this role, and their argument is that Matthias was never heard of again after Acts 1. But except for Peter and John, none of the original twelve are mentioned by name in the book of Acts after chapter one!

Paul's apostleship was different – he wasn't an eyewitness of Jesus' earthly ministry like the original twelve – but he was still an Apostle!

1 Corinthians 15:3-8 For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures: And that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve: After that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time.

Acts 1:15 And in those days Peter stood up in the midst of the disciples, and said, (the number of names together were about an hundred and twenty.)

OVER 500 SAW JESUS ALIVE AFTER HIS RESURRECTION, BUT ONLY 120 MADE IT TO THE UPPER ROOM FOR PENTECOST.

MANY HAVE HEARD THE PREACHING OF ENDTIME REVIVAL, BUT WHO IS GOING TO BE HERE WHEN IT HAPPENS?!

PAUL – “BORN OUT OF DUE TIME” (EKTROMAH – a compound word meaning “untimely birth, miscarriage, or BORN WOUNDED”)

I WAS BORN AGAIN WITH A DISADVANTAGE, BUT I STILL BELIEVE!

John 20:29 Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed: blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.