

## I Will Build My Church – Part 2

**Matthew 16:18-19 (KJV)** 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.

- The words “bind” and “loose” are perfect passive participles in the Greek language, indicating things that have already been forbidden or permitted. We can’t just do whatever we want and expect God to bless it; we must do what He wants, and the blessing will come automatically.
- If a contractor builds a house for someone, he sticks to the blueprint, which is the will of the purchaser. **If we want to build a church, we need to stick to the blueprint (Bible), which is the will of the purchaser (God).** Otherwise, we are not really building a church!
- This series is about discovering God’s blueprint for building His church!

### **PRINCIPLE #4: APOSTOLIC AGREEMENT** (Acts 2:1)

**Acts 2:1** And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

- **ONE ACCORD (HOMOTHUMADON)** – This unique Greek word, used six times to refer to the church in the Book of Acts, helps us understand the uniqueness of the Christian community. It is a compound of two words meaning to “rush along” and “in unison”. The image is a musical one – a number of notes are sounded which, while different, harmonize in pitch and tone. Like the instruments of a great concert under the direction of a concertmaster, so the Holy Spirit blends together the lives of members of Christ’s church to accomplish His purpose.
- There are 58 “**one another**” commandments in the New Testament that you **CANNOT OBEY** unless you are in fellowship with other Christians! Here are some examples ...
  - Serve one another Galatians 5:13
  - Accept one another Romans 15:7
  - Forgive one another Colossians 3:13
  - Greet one another Romans 16:16
  - Bear one another's burdens Galatians 6:2
  - Be devoted to one another Romans 12:10
  - Honor one another Romans 12:10
  - Teach one another Romans 15:14
  - Submit to one another Ephesians 5:21
  - Encourage one another 1 Thessalonians 5:11

- The power of UNITY is one of the most powerful forces on earth, whether for good or evil. The Tower of Babel proved this until God confused their languages to defeat their evil unity.
- **Genesis 11:6** And the LORD said, Behold, the people is one, and they have all one language; and this they begin to do: and now nothing will be restrained from them, which they have imagined to do.
- In His prayer before His betrayal, Jesus prayed that the world might see a united Church! He knew that the world would believe in **HIM** when they could believe in **US!** Disunity cost us our credibility, because the world already sees lots of that!
- **John 17:21** That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.
- Our cities are not lost because the devil’s power is greater than God’s, but because we expend our energies on our own agendas – on self-promotion instead of self-sacrifice! **We cannot pray “Thy kingdom come” until we pray “My kingdom go!”**
- Temptation has killed its thousands, but disunity its ten thousands! And babies die easiest in a fight! **No one has ever left the church because of God!** But God’s reputation can be ruined because of His children!
- **Romans 2:24** For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.
- “I would have become a Christian, were it not for observing Christians.” - Ghandi
- In Ethiopia, the church does not pray for revival or preach about revival. Instead, they pray for **UNITY** and preach **DOCTRINE**, and God sends them great revival!
- **Three Principles Of Unity:**
  1. **Unity does not depend on UNIFORMITY.**
    - **1 Peter 2:5** Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.
    - **Bricks are uniform; stones are unique!**
    - Every member is not the same shape, but all are fitly joined together by the Master Craftsman.
    - You don’t lose your personality when you gain your identity in Christ!

## 2. Unity does not depend on COMPROMISE.

- There is only ONE CHURCH in the New Testament! When Jesus prays for unity, He is NOT speaking of denominations coming together and fellowshiping around the “lowest common denominator!” (In fact, the “one world church” prophesied in the Bible is a tool of the Antichrist!) Jesus is speaking of REAL unity around the message first preached by the Apostles.
- In our society that regards all values, beliefs, lifestyles and truth claims as equally valid, there is now only one universal virtue – TOLERANCE. And if tolerance is the cardinal virtue, then there can be only one evil – INTOLERANCE. That is exactly the attitude we are seeing today!
- United Nations Declaration of Principles On Tolerance – “Tolerance ... involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism.” (Isn’t it ironic that the proponents of the new tolerance are so dogmatic about dogmatism and so absolute in their opposition to absolutism?)
- In other words, any system that believes in ABSOLUTE TRUTH is by definition guilty of intolerance! You don’t even have to say anything. If you even THINK there is an absolute truth, then you are intolerant, and thus an appropriate object of intolerance!
- To the modernist, nonagreement is phobia, nonconformity is hate, and conviction is fanaticism. This is why the proponents of tolerance have no problem being intolerant towards Christians, because we believe in Biblical truth, one God, sin, and evangelization of other faiths.
- The spirit of the “new tolerance” has in great measure infiltrated the church of the last days. That is why many “Christians” have the false idea that “all interpretations of Scripture are equal” and “to tell someone their belief or behavior is wrong is being judgmental.” But the Bible contains ABSOLUTE TRUTH!
- **Vance Havner:** “The New Testament Church was an intolerant church. At once we throw ourselves open to a broadside of protest. ‘Intolerant’ is a scandalous word to use these days, for if there is anything that is in style among our ‘progressive’ churches it is that word ‘tolerance.’ You would think that intolerance was the unpardonable sin. We are majoring as never in all church history on being broad-minded. That we have become so broad we have become also pitifully shallow never seems to disturb us. We must ‘broaden or bust.’ Of course, some experts in tolerance can be amazingly intolerant of those who do not share their broad-mindedness, but that does not disturb them either.”

- **2 Timothy 2:24-26 (AMP)** <sup>24</sup> And the servant of the Lord must not be quarrelsome (fighting and contending). Instead, he must be kindly to everyone and mild-tempered [preserving the bond of peace]; he must be a skilled and suitable teacher, patient and forbearing and willing to suffer wrong. <sup>25</sup> He must correct his opponents with courtesy and gentleness, in the hope that God may grant that they will repent and come to know the Truth [that they will perceive and recognize and become accurately acquainted with and acknowledge it], <sup>26</sup> And that they may come to their senses [and] escape out of the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him, [henceforth] to do His [God’s] will.

## 3. Unity (and revival) does depend on US!

- Jesus prayed His prayer for unity in the presence of His bickering, prestige-seeking disciples. How must they have felt? How should WE feel if we are not honoring His request?
- The will of God is subject to the will of man where the church is concerned!
- **Psalm 78:61** And delivered his strength into captivity, and his glory into the enemy’s hand.
- When a father wrestles with his child, he restrains his strength (i.e. Jacob) – his strength is made weakness, and to a great extent, the child’s will is imposed.

## PRINCIPLE #5: APOSTOLIC ALTAR CALLS (Acts 2:38)

**Acts 2:38** Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

- The most important question that anyone can ever ask is the question first asked on the Day of Pentecost: **“Men and brethren, what shall we do (to be saved)?”** And the most important answer anyone could ever give would be their response to that question!
- What about the “gospel” that is being preached in most churches and Christian literature today? Do they answer as the Apostles answered, or do they deviate from it? Do they really preach the same message - the whole message - about Bible salvation?
- The word “gospel” is from the Anglo-Saxon word “godspel,” meaning “god-message” or “good story.” We use the transliterated term “good news” in place of the Greek word “euaggelion,” and usually think of it as meaning ONLY the good tidings themselves.

- However, in the Greek language the word “euaggelion” actually signifies “a present given to one who brought good tidings,” or “a sacrifice offered in thanksgiving for such good tidings having come.”
- Therefore, the “gospel” signifies NOT ONLY the message of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (the “good news”), BUT ALSO our response in “thanksgiving for such good tidings having come” (i.e. obeying the plan of salvation).
- THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL IS THE “ALTAR CALL!” TELL ME, PREACHER, WHAT MUST I DO?
- How many confused sinners have left altars being told they were saved after repeating a sinner’s prayer, but knowing differently in their heart? Having someone repeat a prayer and pronouncing them “saved” takes away the conviction of the Holy Ghost prematurely, before repentance can lead to salvation. This is spiritual abortion! We are interfering with the work of the Spirit of God when we try to bring to birth a baby that isn’t ready. It takes not only repentance, but baptism and receiving the Holy Ghost to be saved. God would rather see one true convert than an ocean full of “decisions.”

- **Three Steps Of Obedience:**

- 1. Repentance**

- REPENTANCE is actually the first step with ACTION involved that we take toward salvation. Because we have a sinful nature, and have committed sinful acts, it is ESSENTIAL that we repent and turn to God.
- Isaiah 64:6 But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.
- Repentance is not merely “FEELING SORRY” for your sins, although that is part of it. In fact, it is this “godly sorrow” that CAUSES us to repent!
- 2 Corinthians 7:10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.
- Repentance is biblically defined as a “turning around” or an “about face” – an inward change of ATTITUDE leading to an outward change of ACTION. Unless both of these occur, real repentance has not taken place.
- Matthew 3:8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:
- When I repent, I am applying the DEATH of Christ to my life, making it effective in me!

- Romans 6:6-7 <sup>6</sup>Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. <sup>7</sup>For he that is dead is freed from sin.

- 2. Water Baptism**

- Water baptism is indeed an outward physical act, but our obedience to the terms of God’s covenant accomplishes an inner spiritual work.
- That is why in the Bible there is no such thing as a Christian who hasn’t been baptized! Some people ask, “Do I HAVE to be baptized?” A good answer is, “No, you GET to be baptized!”
- Just look at this list of some of the issues that are dealt with when an individual is baptized in Jesus’ name!

- 1. My sins are WASHED AWAY or remitted, accomplishing God’s full work of forgiveness**

Acts 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

- 2. My CONSCIENCE is washed and cleansed, so I can be free from my past way of thinking**

1 Peter 3:21 The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

- 3. My body is buried in a “grave of water,” portraying the death of my OLD LIFE**

Colossians 2:12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

- 4. I am born again “of the water,” portraying the birth of my NEW LIFE**

John 3:5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.

- 5. I am brought into God’s covenant of New Testament salvation, portraying the “cutting off” of my fleshly DESIRES**

Colossians 2:11-12a <sup>11</sup>In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: <sup>12</sup>Buried with him in baptism ...

**6. I take upon myself the name of Jesus Christ, which is the only SAVING name**

**Galatians 3:27** For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

**7. I apply the BURIAL of Christ to my life, making it effective in me**

**Romans 6:4** Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

**8. I demonstrate PUBLICLY that I am beginning a new life, committing myself to Christ and to my church family**

**Acts 2:41-42** <sup>41</sup>Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. <sup>42</sup>And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.

- The more a believer studies the Bible, the more they find out about the miraculous events that happened back at the time of their salvation experience. The small matter of saying "yes" to the terms of God's covenant leads to a lifetime of spiritual relationship and discovery, much like the small matter of saying "I do" to the terms of one's wedding vows leads to a lifetime of discovering all the implications of those two words uttered in an instant! Only Heaven will reveal the full wonder of God's work in us at the moment we are baptized!

**3. Holy Ghost Baptism**

- The baptism of the Holy Ghost provides POWER to help me live for God!
  - **It brings me rest, peace and JOY**

**Isaiah 28:11-12** <sup>11</sup>For with stammering lips and another tongue will he speak to this people. <sup>12</sup>To whom he said, This is the rest wherewith ye may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing: yet they would not hear.

**Romans 14:17** <sup>17</sup>For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.
  - **It helps me PRAY**

**Romans 8:26** Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

**Jude 20** But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost,

- **It gives me power to WITNESS to others about the Lord**

**Acts 1:8** But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

**Acts 4:31** And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

- **It TEACHES me, guides me and shows me things to come**

**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 16:13** Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.

- **It gives me power over the ENEMY**

**Isaiah 59:19** So shall they fear the name of the LORD from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun. When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the LORD shall lift up a standard against him.

**1 John 4:4** Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

- **It completes the work of SALVATION in my heart**

**Romans 8:9** But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

**1 Corinthians 12:3** Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.

- **We must always preach the truth in love, but we must always preach the truth, period!** We do not love a person when we refuse to tell them about God's plan of salvation for fear of offending them.
- **ANYONE IS WELCOME TO ATTEND OUR CHURCH, AND EVEN BE INVOLVED WITH US. However, merely ATTENDING church services does not make anyone a Christian. WE MUST BUILD GOD'S CHURCH IN GOD'S WAY!**