

I Will Build My Church – Part 1

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.

- This is the first distinct mention of the church in the New Testament, given by Jesus who is the Builder of the Church. We do not build the church on our own; we simply cooperate with the Master Builder!
- **THE CHURCH IS NOT A MATERIAL BUILDING**
The word is never used in Scripture to refer to a material building (140 times in NT). The language used of the Church could not be applied to a building. (“The Lord added to the church. Herod vexed the church. The church was persecuted. Paul saluted the church. The churches had rest.”) **Only in the traditions of men can people “go to church.”**
- **THE CHURCH IS NOT A DENOMINATION**
Denominationalism is contrary to Scripture, evidence of carnality and divisions. Denominations are usually formed around a form of church government, a doctrinal emphasis or truth, a personality that God used in some revival, or an experience. The tragedy is that each revival of truth finds its bitterest enemies in the previous group that had light from heaven, but stopped somewhere along the way! History repeats itself in each generation. The only thing we learn from history is that we never learn from history! We must constantly guard against the degenerating cycle of Message – Man – Movement – Monument. **Notice that Jesus does not say He will build His CHURCHES, but His CHURCH. There is only one church – and its message has never changed!**
- **THE CHURCH IS NOT “PLAN B” IN THE MIND OF GOD**
The church was not merely instituted after the Jewish rejection of Christ, but rather was prophesied through the entire Old Testament.
 - *All nations were to be blessed by the seed of Abraham (Genesis 22:18)*
 - *All the families of the earth were to be blessed by Abraham’s seed (Genesis 26:4)*
 - *All kindreds of the nations would worship the Lord (Psalms 22:27-28)*
 - *In the last days all nations would flow to the house of God (Isaiah 2:2-3)*
 - *The Gentiles would seek the Root of Jesse (Isaiah 11:10)*
 - *Many nations would be sprinkled with the blood of the Messiah (Isaiah 52:15)*
 - *Many nations would be joined to the Lord in that day (Zechariah 2:11)*
 - *The Name of the Lord would be great among the Gentiles (Malachi 1:11)*
 - *In His Name the Gentiles would trust (Matthew 12:21)*

- **THE CHURCH IS THE CENTERPIECE OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD**
The kingdom of God is much larger than the church, because it includes more than the church – the whole universe, all the angelic hosts, and all the Old Testament saints. However, the New Testament church is the CENTERPIECE of God’s Kingdom and its most important part. **If you live between the Day of Pentecost and the Rapture, YOU MUST BE IN THE CHURCH TO BE SAVED!** Jesus said the prophets who gave these prophecies – and even the angels – would love to participate in the things happening in our age.

Matthew 13:16-17 But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them.

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.

- *Moses would love to have seen the royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:5-9)*
- *Isaiah would love to have seen Pentecost (Isaiah 28:10-12)*
- *Joel would love to have been in the Upper Room (Acts 1-2)*

- **THE CHURCH IS THE ONLY THING GOD EVER HAD TO BUY**
God created everything else, but the church cost Him dearly! We are privileged beyond measure to be part of the Church of the Living God!

Acts 20:28 Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.

- **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!

Matthew 16:18-19 (AMP) And I tell you, you are Peter [Petros, masculine, a large piece of rock], and on this rock [petra, feminine, a huge rock like Gibraltar] I will build My church, and the gates of Hades (the powers of the infernal region) shall not overpower it – or be strong to its detriment, or hold out against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind – that is, declare to be improper and unlawful – on earth must be already bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth – declare lawful – must be what is already loosed in heaven.

Notice two principles in this passage:

- First, the church is built on a MESSAGE, not a MAN. Men come and go, succeed and fail, but the true revelation of Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church (“thou art the Christ” – Matthew 16:16).
- Second, we must build the church according to God’s BLUEPRINT if we want to have His BLESSING. 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!
- THAT IS THE REASON FOR THIS SERIES. We need to discover God’s blueprint for building His church!

PRINCIPLE #1: DO AND TEACH (Acts 1:1)

Acts 1:1 The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach,

- **Jesus’ ministry was all about DOING and TEACHING.** The one refers to His miracle-working power, while the other refers to His doctrine. Jesus did not work miracles just for miracles’ sake, but He used them to teach doctrine (i.e. healed blind man and taught “I am the light of the world,” fed 5000 and taught “I am the bread of life”). He also did not teach just for teaching’s sake, but “he taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.” (Matthew 7:29)
- **DOING without TEACHING is wrong!** It is wrong to have “spirit” without “truth” because that leads to APOSTASY. It is obedience to doctrine that saves us, not just a “move of the Spirit.” It is not your FEELING but your OBEDIENCE that makes you a Christian.
- **1 Timothy 4:16** Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.
- **But TEACHING without DOING is also wrong!** It is wrong to have “truth” without “spirit” because that leads to APATHY. God holds us responsible for what we DO with what we KNOW. Talking about revival doesn’t bring revival – revival is spelled W-O-R-K!

- **James 1:22** But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves.
- OUR CHURCH MUST BOTH **DO** AND **TEACH** IF WE WANT TO BE BLESSED BY GOD!
- **John 4:23-24** But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.

PRINCIPLE #2: WITNESS AND WAIT (Acts 1:7-8)

Acts 1:7-8 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power. 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.

- God has two words for time: **CHRONOS**, which means “time governed by the clock” (QUANTITY time) and **KAIROS**, which means “time measured by special moments” (QUALITY TIME).
- **The key is that you have to take advantage of KAIROS time at the moment it happens, or you lose it forever.**
- **Luke 19:44 (NKJV)** ⁴¹Now as He drew near, He saw the city and wept over it, ⁴²saying, “If you had known, even you, especially in this your day, the things that make for your peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes. ⁴³For days will come upon you when your enemies will build an embankment around you, surround you and close you in on every side, ⁴⁴and level you, and your children within you, to the ground; and they will not leave in you one stone upon another, because you did not know the time of your visitation.”
- **Acts 24:25 (NKJV)** Now as he reasoned about righteousness, self-control, and the judgment to come, Felix was afraid and answered, “Go away for now; when I have a convenient time I will call for you.”
- **Ephesians 5:15-16 (NKJV)** ¹⁵See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, ¹⁶redeeming the time, because the days are evil.
- **Galatians 6:9 (NKJV)** And let us not grow weary while doing good, for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.
- When the disciples asked when Jesus was going to “restore the kingdom” (send revival), He told them that it was not for them to distinguish between the “times” (CHRONOS) and the “seasons” (KAIROS), because only God controls times of supernatural visitation!

- Only God has power (EXOUSIA = AUTHORITY) over the results of our prayer, our worship, and our work. But He has given us power (DUNAMIS = ABILITY) to be witnesses.
- **The key to revival is for the church to exercise its ABILITY until God exercises His AUTHORITY.**
- We must WITNESS and WAIT!

PRINCIPLE #3: RISE ABOVE AND GO BEYOND (Acts 1:25)

Acts 1:25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.

- Sometimes we mistakenly think that the early church was somehow more “spiritual” than we are today. But the book of Acts tells us plainly that they had problems and setbacks too.
- Outside of the crucifixion of Jesus, probably no other situation was harder for the disciples to deal with than the fall of Judas. He had been ordained to be an Apostle, ordained to preach the Gospel, and given power over devils and disease. And yet he backslid and betrayed the Lord into the hands of the Sanhedrin. What a setback for the church!
- But we do not see the disciples giving up or getting discouraged! Instead, they resolutely rise above their heartache and move beyond a terrible trial to embrace their future in God.
- With God, FAILURE IS NEVER FATAL! **God never wastes a hurt!**
- **Micah 7:8** Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD shall be a light unto me.
- **Let’s rise above our past, our problems and our perplexities, and go beyond to a place that we have never been before!**