

## I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH

### Matthew 16:13-20

#### I. INTRODUCTION: I

1. **2** Several weeks ago we began a series of lessons with the general theme of “*grow[ing] in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.*” (2 Pet. 3:18)
  - A. These lessons are designed to help Christians grow and be strong in the Lord (1 Pet. 2:2).
  - B. We cannot remain “*babes*” in Christ (1 Cor. 14:20); and even if we’ve been Christians for many years, we need to be reminded of these first principles (2 Pet. 3:1)
2. While Jesus was on earth He said, “...*I will build My church*” (Matt. 16:18). The purpose of today’s lesson is to help us understand all about the church that Jesus built. This is so extremely important because...
  - A. Jesus only promised to build only one church, “...*I will build My church*” (Matt. 16:18; “My” is singular!).
  - B. Paul confirms this great truth when through inspiration he said, “*And He [Christ] is the head of the body, the church,*” (Col. 1:18) and “*There is one body...*” (Eph. 4:4).
  - C. Thus, the church Christ built is not a humanly devised institution, nor is it made up of several denominations. Christ church is unique, distinctive, and singular.
  - D. Christ’s church also has no human creed to follow for its authority comes solely from Christ and the word of God (Matt. 28:20; Eph. 5:24; Col. 3:17).
  - E. There is probably few truths in God’s Word that you will be challenged more than this great truth (1 Cor. 16:13-14: “*Watch, stand fast in the faith, be brave, be strong. 14 Let all that you do be done with love.*”).
3. **3** Let’s study what the Bible teaches about the unique, distinctive, and singular church that Jesus built (7 points).

#### II. DISCUSSION:

1. **4** The church: its meaning:
  - A. The word “church” is any group of people that have answered a “call.”
  - B. “Church” is from the compound Greek word, “ekklesia”:
    - (1) “ek” means “out of,” and
    - (2) “klesis” comes from the word which means “to call.”
  - C. Thus the church consists of people that have been called out of one thing and into another.
- D. **5** Examples:
  - (1) Detroit Tigers: “opening day” 2017 is Friday, April 7, 2017. Those that buy a ticket to Comerica Park and assemble there to watch the game have answered a call and the purpose of that call is to watch the Tigers play the Red Sox.
  - (2) Acts 19:23-41
    - (a) v. 25 the “call.”
    - (b) vv. 32, 39, 41 “*the assembly*” (people that answered the call).
- E. **6** So then, the church refers to that group of people who have answered God’s call through the gospel (2 Thess. 2:13-14), and through obedience to God’s call they have left the world and

are saved (**1 Pet. 2:9-10**: “But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.”).

F. When a person hears the gospel (Rom. 10:17), develops faith (Jn. 8:24; Heb. 11:6), repents of his sins (Acts 17:30), confesses faith in Christ (Rom. 10:9-10; Acts 8:37), and is baptized (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal. 3:27), he is saved...the Lord “adds” him to the church (Acts 2:47).

G. In describing His people the Lord uses the word “church” in two senses:

- (1) The “universal” sense describing all the saved (Matt. 16:18; regardless of time, geography).
- (2) In the “local” sense describing a local congregation (1 Cor. 1:2; Acts 9:26).

2. **7** The church: its establishment: elegant: “of scientific, technical, or mathematical theories, solutions, etc.; gracefully concise and simple, admirably succinct. (*Dictionary.com*)

A. The church planned by God before the creation of the world (Eph. 3:10-11; not 2<sup>nd</sup> thought).

B. The Bible prophesies of the coming of the church:

- (1) 1 Tim. 3:15: the church is the “house of God.”
- (2) **8** Notice these divine predictions concerning the church:

**Isa. 2:2-3**: “Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. 3 Many people shall come and say, ‘Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.’ For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.”

- (a) **What?** Church is the “house of God” or “the LORD’S house” “shall be established” (1 Tim. 3:15; Isa. 2:2); i.e., “I will build My church” (Matt. 16:18).
- (b) **Who?** “all nations shall flow to it” (Isa. 2:2; cf. Eph. 2:16).
- (c) **When?** “it shall come to pass in the latter days” (Isa. 2:2).
- (d) **Where?** “For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem” (Isa. 2:3).

(2) **9** **Dan. 2:36-45**

- (a) **What?** “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed” (Dan. 2:44).
- (b) **Who?** “it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms” (Dan. 2:44).
- (c) **Where?** Doesn’t say
- (d) **When?** “in the days of these kings” (Dan. 2:44).
- (e) **\*\*** In the days of which kings? \$64,000 question
- (f) **10** Dream consists of “a great image” (v. 31) with:
  - ☛ **\*\***“head was of fine gold”
  - ☛ **\*\***“its chest and arms of silver”
  - ☛ **\*\***“its belly and thighs of bronze”
  - ☛ **\*\***“its legs of iron, its feet partly of iron and partly of clay”

(g) Interpretation: **11**

- ☛ Nebuchadnezzar (king of Babylon): “you are this head of gold” (v. 38).
- ☛ **\*\***“after you [Babylon] shall arise another kingdom inferior to yours; then another,” etc. (v. 39). After Babylon, in succession there were three successive great world empires:
  - ✓ **\*\***Medo-Persian (e.g., Cyrus, Artaxerxes),
  - ✓ **\*\***Greek (Alexander the Great and his successors; Ptolemy, Seleucus, Lysimachus, Cassander, Antigonus),
  - ✓ **\*\***Roman (various emperors).

(h) **\*\*** “and in the days of these kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed” (v. 44). Which kings? The kings (Tiberius: AD 14-AD 37) of the fourth great empire...Rome! **\*\***Lk. 3:1-3; Mk. 1:14

(3) **12** How “at hand” was the “kingdom of God”?

**\*\*Mk. 9:1:** “And he said unto them, ‘Verily I say unto you, That there be some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.’”

- (a) **\*\*** The kingdom so imminent that “some of them that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.”
- (b) **\*\*** Notice how kingdom was to come... “come with power.” If we can find when this “power” came, we can determine when the kingdom came.

(4) **13 Lk. 24:47-49:** “and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And you are witnesses of these things. 49 Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high.”

- (a) **\*\*** First, notice where “repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (v. 47). Notice three key connections here:
  - (i) **\*\*** “all nations” exactly as predicted in Isa. 2:2 (“all nations shall flow to it”),
  - (ii) **\*\*** “beginning at Jerusalem” exactly as predicted in Isa. 2:2 (“For out of Zion...from Jerusalem”),
  - (iii) **\*\*** “preached in His name” exactly as predicted in Isa. 2:2 (“shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD”).
- (b) **14** Also notice that Jesus instructed the apostles that they would receive “the Promise of My Father” “in Jerusalem” when they were “endued with power from on high” (v. 49). Notice three key connections here:
  - (i) **\*\*** They were to be in the same place where Isa. 2 tells us the “the LORD’s house” would be established.
  - (ii) **\*\*** They lived in the same time as the kings of the last empire identified in Dan. 2 ruled when “the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed”.
  - (iii) **15** They were promised the “power from on high” (Lk. 24:49) exactly as Jesus said would signal the coming of the “kingdom of God” (Lk. 24:49) before “some of them

*that stand here, which shall not taste of death, till they have seen the kingdom of God come with power.” (Mk. 9:1).*

(iv) When the apostles received “power from on high” THEN the kingdom of God would “come with power”!

(5) **16 Acts 1:4-8**

- (a) **\*\*** First, let’s notice that the apostles are in the right place, “*He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem*” (v. 4; Lk. 24:49: “*tarry in the city of Jerusalem*”).
- (b) **\*\*** Second, notice that the “*promise of the Father*” was the baptism of the Holy Spirit they would receive “*not many days from now*” (v. 5; Lk. 24:49: “*promise of the Father...endued with power from on high.*”).
- (c) **\*\*** Third, the “*power*” was “*when the Holy Spirit has come upon you*” (v. 8; Lk. 24:49: “*promise of the Father...endued with power from on high.*”).

(6) **17 Acts 2:** All of these events converge at one point (Acts 2 “Hub of the Bible”):

- (a) **\*\*** First, the apostles are in the right place because they are in Jerusalem (v. 5; Isa. 2; Lk. 24; Acts 1).
- (b) **\*\*** Second, these events are taking place “*in the days of these kings*” (i.e., the days of the last great world kingdom in Nebuchadnezzar’s dream; Rome); in which “*the God of heaven will set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed*” (Dan. 2:44).
- (c) **\*\*** Third, the events in Acts 2 are transpiring just a short time after Jesus foretold them in Mark 9:1; hence, some are still alive; i.e., “*will not taste of death...till...see kingdom of God...come with power.*”
  - ☛ As Acts 2 records (“*rushing mighty wind...divided tongues, as of fire...they were all filled with Holy Spirit*”).
  - ☛ Jesus described it as the “*power from on high*” or the “*promise of the My Father*” (Lk. 24:49), (i.e., “*baptized with the Holy Spirit*”; Acts 1:4 or “*receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you*”; Acts 1:8). All referring to the coming of the Holy Spirit on the apostles as God promised (Joel 2:28; Jn. 14, 15, 16).
- (d) **\*\*** Fourth, the apostles identify that what is taking place is taking place “*in the last days*” (v. 17 quoting Joel 2:28) just as prophesied in Isa. 2 and under Roman rule as prophesied in Dan. 2.
- (e) **\*\*** Fifth, the apostles tell that salvation is now available to “*whoever calls on the name of the Lord,*” (Acts 2:21; quoting Joel 2:32) i.e., “*all nations*” exactly as predicted in Isa. 2.
- (f) **\*\*** Sixth, Jesus is sitting on God’s throne ruling His kingdom (vv. 29-33), the kingdom set up by “*the God of heaven*” and “*which shall never be destroyed*” as prophesied in Dan. 2:44 (Col. 1:13).
- (g) **\*\*** Seventh, for the first time the church Jesus promised to build (Matt. 16:18) is spoken of as in existence (Acts 2:47) and those obeying the gospel enter the church or kingdom (Col. 1:13).

C. The rest of the book of Acts tells us of the growth and spreading of the church or the kingdom “*a kingdom which cannot be shaken*” (Heb. 12:28) or “*which shall never be destroyed*” (Dan. 2:44) throughout the whole world (**Acts 1:8:** “*But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*”).

D. Sadly the religious world is chock full of error and false teaching.

(1) The Bible warns about this over and over again:

**Matt. 7:15:** *“Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing...”*

**I Jn. 4:1:** *“Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits, whether they are of God; because many false prophets have gone out into the world.”*

(2) The teaching we’ve just reviewed is, for the most, part, rejected by the overwhelming majority of people claiming to be Christians.

(3) This is especially true of the Bible’s teaching on one true church.

(4) **I 8** But what does the Bible say?

**Eph. 1:22-23:** *“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”*

**Eph. 4:4-6:** *“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”*

**\*\****“the body” = “the church”*

**\*\****How many bodies? “one body”*

**\*\****∴ How many churches? ONE!*

E. That the Bible teaches “one body” and one “church” cannot be denied.

(1) When you teach and believe the truth on this essential topic you will be vilified and ostracized by the world, especially the denominational world.

(2) **I 9** Ramifications:

**\*\***

<b>Church</b>	<b>Established</b>	<b>Place</b>	<b>Founder</b>
Roman Catholic	607 AD	Rome	Boniface III
Episcopal	1520 AD	England	Henry VIII
Presbyterian	1536 AD	Switzerland	John Calvin
Baptist	1607 AD	Holland	John Smythe
Methodist	1739 AD	England	John Wesley
Mormon	1830 AD	America	Joseph Smith
Adventist	1830 AD	America	William Miller
Jehovah’s Witness	1872 AD	America	Charles T. Russell

(3) Notice what all of these “churches” have in common and how they differ with the one true church of the Bible:

① **\*\***Established by the wrong person.

② **\*\***Established in the wrong place.

③ **\*\***Established at the wrong time.

④ **\*\***Established with the wrong name.

(4) None can be the one true church of the Bible! The Bible says: *“the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.”* (Acts 2:47) To which church did He “add” them?

### 3. **21** The church: its name:

- A. **\*\*** The church is identified in the Bible by various names—all of which express the Lord's ownership:
- (1) **\*\*** Church of God (1 Cor. 1:2).
  - (2) **\*\*** Kingdom of God (Rom. 14:17).
  - (3) **22** House of God (1 Tim. 3:15).
  - (4) **\*\*** Church of Christ (Rom. 16:16).
- B. **23** The members of the church are called by several names:
- (1) **\*\*** Christians (Acts 11:26).
  - (2) **\*\*** Saints (1 Cor. 1:2; sanctified or set apart by God; not “saints” in Roman Catholic sense!).
  - (3) **24** Disciples of the Lord (Acts 9:1; one who follows another's teaching).
  - (4) **\*\*** Brethren (1 Cor. 1:10; common spiritual relationship with God).
- C. Any of these names would be appropriate for they show our relationship to the Lord and are found in the Bible (1 Pet. 4:11).
- (1) Some say “there's nothing in a name.” Is that true? Paycheck, deed, marriage license, etc.
  - (2) Names mean something (e.g., in the Bible names were very significant; Abraham: “father of a multitude”; Moses: “child”; Jesus: “salvation”; Immanuel: “God with us”); names also suggest things (e.g., Adolph, Saddam, Jezebel, Judas, etc.).
  - (3) **25** Using man-made names, not found in the Bible is wrong! Any Bible name is appropriate, but not the names devised by men! 1 Pet. 4:11
- 1 Cor. 1:10-13:** “Now I plead with you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. 11 For it has been declared to me concerning you, my brethren, by those of Chloe's household, that there are contentions among you. 12 Now I say this, that each of you says, ‘I am of Paul,’ or ‘I am of Apollos,’ or ‘I am of Cephas,’ or ‘I am of Christ.’ 13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?”

### 4. **26** The church: its importance:

- A. The importance of the church is fully realized when we understand Christ's relationship to it. Note the relationship between Christ and the church described by these Scriptures:
- (1) **\*\*** Church purchased by His blood (Acts 20:28; Eph. 1:7).
  - (2) **\*\*** Jesus is the church's foundation (1 Cor. 3:11; cf. 1 Pet. 2:6-7).
  - (3) **27** Jesus is the church's builder (Matt. 16:18).
  - (4) **\*\*** Jesus is the head of the church (Col. 1:18).
  - (5) **\*\*** Jesus is the savior of the church (Eph. 5:23).
  - (6) **28** Jesus loved the church and gave Himself for her (Eph. 5:25).
  - (7) **\*\*** The church is Jesus' body; His “fullness” (Eph. 1:22-23)
- B. **29** To be “in Christ” is the same thing as being in the church! 2 Tim. 2:10; Eph. 5:23; Acts 2:47

- (1) There is no salvation outside of Christ thus there is no salvation outside His church (“in Christ” and “in the church” are synonymous).
- (2) **Acts 4:12**: “Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”
- (3) Is the church important?!

5. **30** The church: its organization:

- A. In the universal sense, Christ is the “head” of the church and Christians are “members” of His body (Col. 1:18; 1 Cor. 12:12-14).
- (1) **31** Where is the “headquarters” of the church? Rome? Jerusalem? NYC? London?
    - (a) “Church of God” over a dozen different denominations claim the name!
    - (b) Various headquarters: Anderson, IN; Dallas, TX; Tyler, TX (2!!); Charlotte, NC (2!); UK; Edmond, OK; Wadsworth, OH; Milford, OH
  - (2) **\*\*** The “headquarters” of the church is where the “head” is “quartered” (Col. 3:1).
    - (a) Heb. 1:3: Jesus sits “at the right hand of the Majesty on high”
    - (b) Dan. 7:13-14: Jesus “was given dominion, glory and a kingdom” when “He came to the Ancient of Days”; i.e., when He ascended into heaven!
  - (3) **\*\*** Christ’s church has no earthly headquarters! Jn. 18:36
- B. **32** In the local sense, each local church is a complete organization within itself. Each church is independent, equal, and self-governing (Phil. 1:1).
- (1) Deacons are “servants” (Acts 6:1ff; 1 Tim. 3:8-13).
  - (2) **33** God ordained elders (also called bishops or pastors) to be appointed to oversee the local church (Acts 20:28).
  - (3) **\*\*** Elders are also called **\*\***“bishops” (i.e., “overseers) and **\*\***“pastors” (i.e., “shepherds”); hence, **\*\***elder = bishop = pastor.
  - (4) **34** These men (not one, but a **\*\***group: “elders” plural; 1 Pet. 5:2) simply see that the church follows Christ’s authority (Heb. 13:17). They make no laws, but submit to the law of Christ.
    - (a) **\*\*** What “flock” are they to “take heed”? “to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers.” (Acts 20:28)
    - (b) **\*\*** What “flock” are they to “shepherd”? “the flock of God which is among you” (1 Pet. 5:2)
    - (c) In other words, the scope of the “elders,” “bishops,” or “pastors” work is the congregation which appointed them!
  - (5) If men are qualified, each church is to have its own eldership (Acts 14:23), that oversees its own work, not the work of other congregations (1 Pet. 5:2).
- C. **35** This congregational form of government is the only kind you can read about in the Bible!
- (1) There is no larger grouping of “churches” (e.g., a diocese, denomination) than individual, autonomous congregations with their own leadership.
  - (2) No church, man, or group of men are over multiple congregations.

- (3) Also, the preacher is simply a public teacher of the gospel, not a “ruler” of the church (i.e., not necessarily a “pastor”).
- (4) The church has no president, pope, potentate, or head except Jesus Christ!

6. **36** The church: its worship:

- A. The church worships only as the Bible authorizes (Matt. 15:9), not as it wants to.
- B. The church is to assemble to worship God with all members being present (Heb. 10:25).  
When assembled the acts of worship to be engaged in include and are limited to:
  - (1) **37** Prayer: Acts 12:5
  - (2) Singing: Heb. 2:12 The singing of spiritual songs is done by the whole congregation, not by just a select group (e.g., choirs, quartets, soloists; Eph. 5:19; no instruments, no bands, no dramatic presentations, etc.).
  - (3) Teaching/preaching: Acts 20:7
  - (4) Communion: i.e., Lord’s Supper; Acts 20:7
    - (a) It is a weekly observance—done every Sunday.
    - (b) The elements are unleavened bread and fruit of the vine (1 Cor. 11:23-25; Matt. 26:26-29).
  - (5) Contribution: 1 Cor. 16:1-2 This individual, freewill giving of the members is the only way the church is authorized to raise money for its work (e.g., no bake sales, car washes, etc.).
- C. The worship service is not entertainment, not a ritual, but something every Christian participates in from the heart to praise God.
- D. **38** Any church that does not follow this pattern of worship:
  - (1) Is not worshipping “*in spirit and truth*” (Jn. 4:24).
  - (2) Is worshipping in “*vain*” (i.e., empty, useless; Matt. 15:9).
  - (3) Is transgressing “*the doctrine of Christ*” and do “*not have God*” (2 Jn. 9).
  - (4) Is following a perverted gospel and are “*accursed*” (i.e., “*eternally condemned*”; Gal. 1:6-9).
- E. If you find yourself at such a church...get out of there!

7. **39** The church: its work:

- A. The work of the church is specifically outlined in the Scriptures. It involves three basic things:
  - (1) **\*\*** Evangelism: preaching the gospel to the lost (1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Thess. 1:8; **402** Cor. 11:8; Phil. 4:15-16).
  - (2) **41** Edification: teaching and strengthening Christians (Eph. 4:11-12, 14).
    - (a) Gospel teaching and preaching should not only convert people to the Lord, but also strengthen them to be faithful to God (express purpose of this series of lessons!).
    - (b) A necessary part of edification is church discipline. When erring Christians will not straighten up, the church must withdraw fellowship from the (2 Thess. 3:6-15; **v. 15**: “*Yet do not regard him as an enemy, but warn him as a brother.*”).
  - (3) **42** Benevolence: helping needy church members (**\*\***Acts 4:34-35; **43**Rom. 15:25-26**\*\***).



- (a) There is a very limited scope concerning the benevolence of the church—to needy saints only (1 Tim. 5:3-11). The church is not to become a “salvation army” to the whole community of the world.
  - (b) However, benevolent responsibility of individual Christians is not limited to “needy saints” (Matt. 25:31-46; Lk. 10:25-37).
- B. **44** In discussing the work of the church, notice that there is no social, political or recreational aspect of the church’s work. The church cannot scripturally provide funds and facilities for the social, political, or recreation edification of its members (Rom. 14:17).
- C. Neither is the church in business to make money. There are many good works in the world, but in order to be pleasing to God the church must limit its work to the work God has authorized it to do in His word!

### III. CONCLUSION: **45**

1. This is the Bible’s description of the church built by Jesus.
2. The church we see in the New Testament is very, very different from what we see in the world today!
3. Let us not be deceived by the false churches of men, for salvation is found only in the one true church (**Psa. 127:1**: “*Unless the Lord builds the house, they labor in vain who build it*”; **Matt. 15:13**: “*Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.*”).
4. Are you a faithful member of the unique and distinctive church of Christ? Where will you be on “rootin” day?

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