

## The Church Christ Promised To Build

### Introduction:

- I. Open your Bible to Matthew the sixteenth division and the thirteenth verse. We have a very familiar passage of scripture before us, and yet it is a passage that is rich in significance.

#### **Matt 16:13-14**

**When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" And they said, some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.**

People have always had a misconception of who Jesus is. In the first century some thought that he was John the Baptist, while others thought that He was one of the prophets that had returned from the dead, but they did not know Jesus. Today people are still confused about the identity of Jesus. Some think that He is just an ordinary prophet, but they do not know Jesus! Some think that Jesus is simply a good man, no more, no less, but they do not know Jesus. Some think that Jesus is an imaginary figure, conjured up in the minds of a few Bible believers with blind faith, but they do not know Jesus. Some think that Jesus is a man of empty promises and unfulfilled pledges, but they don't know Jesus.

May I say to you that when man is confronted with the question of Jesus' true identity, many wrong answers are given, but Peter, ladies and gentlemen, gave the right answer. Peter does not hesitate for a second, or pause for a moment. With exactness of word and clarity of mind Peter sets forth the great truth upon which the church of Christ would be built.

#### **Matt 16:15-16**

**He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.**

Emphasis is placed by Peter, not only upon Jesus, but upon His Father. Listen: Jesus is not just the son of a god. He is the Son of the God. Furthermore, Jesus is not the son of a dead god, He is the Son of a God that is living; a God that is alive. Caesarea Philippi was located about 25 miles north of Galilee at the foot of Mt. Hermon. It was a Roman city named after Caesar and Philip the tetrarch and had a lot of religious activity, i.e., much idolatry was committed there. As one comes into the region of Caesarea Philippi, one can see in the side of Mt. Hermon many niches where idols of false gods were placed. It was with this background fully in view that Peter makes his good confession. It is as if Peter was saying to

Jesus, "You are not the Son of one of these dumb idols in the side of this mountain, but you are the Son of the living God.

And I must take a moment to tell you that this is the God that we are serving right now.

We are serving a living God. Why do we not fear the trials and the tribulations of life? It is because we serve a living God. Why do we not panic when life's troubles jump in our path and temporarily block our way? It's because we serve a living God. Why is it that we as Christians do not resort to the tactics of the world when we are confronted by our enemies? Why is it when we are pushed, we don't push back? Why is it when we are cursed, we don't curse back? Why is it when we are mistreated, we don't mistreat people back? It is because we serve a living God. Why is it if we are smitten on the right cheek, we turn to our attackers the other also? Why is it when we are compel to go one mile, we are willing to go two? Why is it when someone asks for our coat, we are willing to give them our coat and our cloak? It is because we serve, not a dead god. Not a god that cannot see cannot hear and does not know; but we serve a God who sees all things, hears all things and knows all things. We serve a God that is alive! We serve a living God.

Now, after Jesus tells Peter that this was revealed to him by the Father of heaven, He makes a great promise with implications of salvation (**Matt. 16:18-19**).

II. I want to talk to you for a while about the church that Christ promised.

### **Lesson:**

#### **I. The Time, Place, and Person Involved in the Establishment of the Church.**

That Jesus founded the church is a forgone conclusion. But the church we find in the Bible also began at a specific time and place in history. The establishing of the church was not a random event, but, was prophesized by the prophets and, as we have seen, promised by Jesus. In Isaiah 2:2 we read,

**And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the LORD's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it.**

The Lord's house is the church.

### **1 Tim 3:15**

**But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.**

### **Heb 3:6**

**But Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end.**

### **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.**

Now then, when would this house, that is, the church be established? Isaiah said that it would take place in the last days. The last days began on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus Christ (**Acts 2:1, 14-21**). This is when the church began (**Acts 2:41-47**). This would be some time between 30 and 33 A.D.

This fits the time frame prophesied about in **Dan. 2**. In Dan. 2 Daniel interpreted a dream that Nebuchadnezzar had. In Nebuchadnezzar's dream there appeared a great statue of extraordinary splendor. The head of the statue was made of fine gold, the breast and arms of silver, the belly and thighs of bronze, the legs of iron, and the feet partly of iron and partly of clay. In Dan. 2 we find what each part of the statue represented.

The head of gold represented Nebuchadnezzar and the kingdom of Babylon (**vers. 37-38**).

### **Dan 2:37-38**

**Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold.**

Now, the rest of the body of the statues represented the consecutive world empires that followed the kingdom Babylon.

### **Dan 2:39-40**

**And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as**

**iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise.**

Now then, in regard to this forth kingdom, Daniel said the following:

**Dan 2:44**

**And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.**

What kingdom was the forth kingdom under consideration? All we have to do is refer to history and we know. The kingdom that followed Babylon was the Medo-Persian kingdom. After that came the kingdom of Greece. And the forth kingdom was the kingdom of Rome or the Roman Empire. It was in the days of those kings, i.e., the kings of the kingdom of Rome that the God of heaven would set up the kingdom which would never be destroyed. That kingdom is the church and since we know that the Rome fell 476 A.D, the church had to be established some time before that date.

Now let's use Daniel to narrow it down even further.

**Dan 7:13-14**

**I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations, and languages, should serve him: his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.**

This places the time of the kingdom being established at the time of our Lord's ascension to heaven (**Acts 1:9-11**). Now in the very next chapter of Acts we read of the church being in existense. When was the church established? In the first century while the kings of Rome ruled the world. And oh by the way, where did Isaiah say the house of the Lord would be established? He said it would take place at Jerusalem. Where was the church established in Acts 2. They were at Jerusalem (**Acts 2:1**).

Now pay attention to me: any church established after this specific time in history is not the church you read about in the Bible. And yet I must tell you that every denomination in the world today, started after this period of time.

## **II. The Name of the Church Is Christ Revealing.**

Don't let anyone tell you that there is nothing in a name. Common sense tells you that there is something in a name. Names identify, classify and

categorized things together. God has always placed a high priority upon names. That's way he changed Abram's name to Abraham, Sarai's name to Sarah and Jacob's name to Israel. There is something in a name. I remember Paul referring to the family of God saying, ***“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named.”*** I also recall Peter saying to the Sanhedrin, ***“Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.”*** Ladies and gentlemen, there is something in a name.

- A. Individually (Acts 11:26; Acts 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16).
- B. Collectively (Rom. 16:16; 1 Cor. 12:27; 1 Tim. 3:15).

Let's not forget that Paul taught that the wearing of human names is sinful (1 Cor. 1:10-13). No church can be the church that belongs to Christ while wearing a human name.

TIME	PLACE	FOUNDER	CHURCH
33 A.D.	Jerusalem	Christ	Church of Christ
606 A.D.	Rome	Boniface III	Roman Catholic
1520 A.D.	Germany	Martin Luther	Lutheran
1534 A.D.	England	Henry VIII	Episcopalian
1536 A.D.	Switzerland	John Calvin	Presbyterian
1550 A.D.	England	Robert Browne	Congregational
1607 A.D.	Holland	John Smythe	Baptist
1739 A.D.	England	John Wesley	Methodist
1830 A.D.	America	Joseph Smith	Mormon Church
1830 A.D.	America	William Miller	Adventists
1866 A.D.	America	Mary Baker Eddy	Christian Scientist
1872 A.D.	America	Charles T. Russell	Jehovah's Witnesses

### III. The Creed of the Church Is The New Testament.

Churches that don't belong to Christ are man-made churches and thus they have man-made creeds. But the church you read about in the Bible never had a man-made creed. The New Testament church has a New Testament creed. The creed of the church that Christ built is:

- A. The Apostle's Doctrine (Acts 2:42; Gal. 1:8-9).**
- B. The Apostle's Doctrine is the New Testament (Jn. 17:6-8, 14; 16:13; 1 Cor. 2:10ff; 14:37; Eph. 3:1-5).**

#### **IV. The Pattern of the Church Is Divine.**

God has always required His people to follow His pattern and nothing has changed (**Heb. 8:1-5**).

##### **A. The Universal Church.**

The universal church, or the church in the general sense, is made up of all the saved and has no earthly headquarters; thus, it has no pattern to follow.

##### **B. The Local Church.**

The local church does have a divinely established organizational pattern, and that pattern must be followed (**Phil. 1:1**).

###### **Phil 1:1-2**

**Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**

Here is the organization of the local church. Here is the pattern that must be followed. The local church is composed of elders, deacons and saints. Someone says, "I didn't read anything about elders in that passage." Yes you did. When you read about bishops, you were reading about elders because they are one and the same (**Tit. 1:5, 7**). Now what is the pattern that must be followed with regard to elders in the local church?

- 1. The job of the elder is to feed the flock (Acts 20:28; Heb. 13:17).**
- 2. They must only oversee the flock which is among them (1 Pet. 5:1-2).** Elders only have the right to rule over that flock that appointed them to elders.

**3. There is always a plurality of elders in a local church (Acts 14:23; 20:17; 1 Pet. 1-2).**

**Conclusion:**

This is the church that Jesus promised to build. This is the church that you read about in the New Testament. It is the church that is guided by the New Testament, not the creeds of men. It is a church that wears the name of Christ, not the names of men. And it is the church that follows God's ways, not man's way. Are you a member of a church that falls short of these divinely revealed things? If so, there is a home for you right here. We are a church that follows nothing but the bible, wears nothing but the name of Christ, and follows nothing but the pattern set forth by God in his word. If you have not obeyed the gospel of Christ, you need to do so right now. That will put you in the universal church, and then you can join a faithful church like this one and serve God faithfully. What will you do?