

Upon This Rock - cont.

taught about his church in Matthew 16:18 concerns the ownership of the church. The church belongs to Jesus, not man. Note the words: “My church...” in this verse.

Christians, the church, belong to Jesus Christ. Jesus died for the church and he purchased the church with his own blood. Therefore, the church belongs to him (Acts 20:28; Ephesians 1:14; 5:25-27; 1 Peter 1:18-19; 2:9).

Since the church belongs to Jesus, it is naturally called by his name. In the New Testament, local churches belong to Christ, thus, they are “churches of Christ” (Romans 16:16). Individually, the saved glorify God by wearing the name “Christian” (1 Peter 4:16).

Note something else in the words: “My church...” (singular). Jesus built just one “church”, not many “churches” (Ephesians 1:22-23). The many different denominational churches that you can see today, came from men, not from Jesus Christ. Knowing this, we do not need to be a member of just any man-made church. We need only to be a member of the church belonging to Christ.

- Chris Reeves -

Word of the Week

- Amen -

“Amen”, meaning “verily”, or “so be it”, is found often in the Bible. God is “the Amen” (Isaiah 65:16) and Jesus is “the Amen” (Revelation 3:14). In Christ, we can live “the Amen” life (2 Corinthians 1:20). We can live a confident life this week because God and Jesus are faithful and true.

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

III. The Building

Now when Jesus came into the parts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Who do men say that the Son of man is? And they said, Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But who say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven. And I also say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 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.
- Matthew 16:13-19 -

In this series of articles, I am discussing the great topic of the Lord's church in the New Testament. In last week's bulletin, I examined two important truths that Jesus taught about his church in Matthew 16:18: the foundation of the church and the architect of the church. Here, I want to look at two more truths from this great passage of scripture.

The third great truth that Jesus taught about his church is the "building" that is the church. What exactly is the church?

Surprisingly, many people believe that the Lord's "church" is a physical building. When they drive down the street, they say, "Look at that beautiful church."

The "church", however, is not a building, but a group of people. The following verses show that the "church" is people:

"And if he refuse to hear them, tell it unto the church: and if he refuse to hear the church also, let him be unto thee as the Gentile and the publican."
- Matthew 18:17 -

"And Saul was consenting unto his death. And there arose on that day a great persecution against the church which was in Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria, except the apostles ... But Saul laid waste the church, entering into every house, and dragging men and women committed them to prison."
- Acts 8:1, 3 -

"And the report concerning them came to the ears of the church which was in Jerusalem..."
- Acts 11:22 -

The "church" is not a physical building, but people. And these people are a called out assembly of people. The Greek word *ekklesia* is translated "church" and it means "called out". Sinners who have been "called" by the gospel "out" of the world of sin and who have obeyed the gospel, make up the church.

God's church, or God's "building", are saved Christians. Paul wrote:

"For we are God's fellow-workers: ye are God's husbandry, God's building."
- 1 Corinthians 3:9 -

"in whom each several building, fitly framed together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord"
- Ephesians 2:21 -

Because true Christians are a "called out" (church) people belonging to Christ, they are a separated people. They live a life separate from the sin that is in the world. They are in the world, but not of the world (2 Corinthians 6:14 – 7:1).

IV. The Owner, the Name, and the Number

The fourth great truth that Jesus