

**“The Church Jesus is Building” (part 1)
January 17, 2016**

Matthew 16:13-20

CORE: The Church Jesus is building is not a place, or a program, or an organization. It is a vibrantly growing company of people—filled with His life!

1. Jesus’ CONVERSATION WITH PETER

NOTE: There are varied opinions RE: what Jesus meant by “**this rock.**” Was it **Peter himself?** Or was it **Peter’s confession?** Or was it **all of the above?**

a. In one sense, Peter was a foundation stone.

- **Peter** spoke to several thousand **Jewish people on Pentecost**—and was instrumental in their coming to Jesus. **The Church grew exponentially on its very first day (Acts 2)!**
- **Peter** was instrumental in opening the door of the Church to **Gentiles**, when he shared the Gospel with **Cornelius and his household (Acts 10)**.
- **Conclusion- Jesus doesn’t seem to mind working in and through imperfect, immature people who have limitations. He loves working with us as we are in process—making mistakes while making progress!**
NOTE: Building sites can be messy!

b. Peter’s “confession” is a foundation stone.

- **Jesus is “the Christ (Anointed One), the Son of the Living God.” HE is the very heart of the Church!**
- **A pastor’s son, Samuel John Stone wrote this hymn in 1866: *The church’s one foundation is Jesus Christ, her Lord; she is his new creation by water and the Word. From heaven he came and sought her to be his holy bride; with his own blood he bought her, and for her life he died.***

c. Confessing is also foundational.

- **Our relationship with Jesus was never meant to be silent or secretive.**
- **Hebrews 3:1; 4:14; 20:23 refers to our relationship with Jesus as “our confession”—our unashamed acknowledgement of covenant love.**

d. A revelation from Father is foundational.

- **We live and grow, not by every idea we think up—but “by every word” that “proceeds from” our Father (Matthew 4:4).**
- **Jesus is building His Church with people who know how to “hear God.”**

- e. **Jesus carries the responsibility for building His Church (“I will...”)**
 - **“Unless the LORD builds the house, we labor in vain” (Psalm 127:1)**
 - **Our part? Willing to be “living stones”—built upon Him and joined to one another!**
 - **Our attitude? “Do not forsake...” (Hebrews 10:25). *To withdraw your heart and abandon the process.***

SUMMARY: The Church is God’s only plan to reveal Himself to the world.
(Jesus said: “You (and you alone) are lights to the world” Matt. 5:14 LGT)

NOTE: Throughout the following years, Peter received continued revelation RE: the Church Jesus is building. In his 1st letter to the Church, Peter powerfully shares:

2. Peter’s first LETTER

Theme: How to bring Kingdom of God influence into a “hostile” world

NOTE: The “spirit of the world” hates Jesus (“anti-Christ”). It has no problem with a moderate, non-intrusive form of religion. But it has absolutely **no room for a vibrant company of Jesus-followers with deep convictions & fiery compassion—out to change the culture!**

Peter begins to address this by declaring our identity. SEE 1 Peter 1:1-2

- **“God’s elect” - we have been fully grafted in to what God began with His people, Israel (Romans 11:17,24)**
- **“Strangers/aliens” - those who live in one country—while belonging to another. Your life, identity, destiny, purpose, belonging—come from another realm!**
- **“Scattered” - as living seeds—for the purpose of Harvest. A deliberate planting—with a view to new growth and new life springing up wherever you go! INTENTIONAL. And INTENSE! Invading the culture—not avoiding it! Sovereignly planted by the HS—for MUCH FRUIT!**
- **A strong relationship to each member of the Trinity!**
- **By “the foreknowledge of God” - Purposed. Destined. But not “pre-determined.”** NOTE: Long before a building is built—someone planned it. RE: WDW—“If only Walt could see this!” His brother, Roy: “Oh, he did! Or we wouldn’t be seeing it now!” **You have ETERNAL ROOTS!**
- **By the “sanctifying work of the HS” - Belonging to. Special & specified. He was working in us a long time before we knew it!**
- **For this PURPOSE: “that we may obey Jesus” - to hear within. To relate to face to face. To respond to only one voice!**