

Just Checking In
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“I will build My church”

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Matthew 16:13-18

13 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?" 14 So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. 18 "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

The First Inquiry: “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”

The “Son of Man” is Jesus’ most common title for Himself, found 85 times in the gospels. It is a title that refers to His incarnate humanity as the Messiah... Word made flesh... God become man... Second Adam. The disciples answer that the crowds think He is a resurrected prophet! ***The crowds are wrong!***

The Second Inquiry: “Who do you say that I am?”

Now the question becomes intensely personal. We are each faced with this unavoidable question: “Who do you say Jesus is?” Your answer reveals your heart understanding. This is the most important question you will ever have to answer. Answer right, eternal life...answer wrong, eternal death.

The Confession: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Right answer! You will get the answer right, but when? In this life, or the next. In the next life, every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, the Son of God, the Savior. But then it is too late!

The Revelation: “flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven”

If you know Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, you have experienced a miracle, since this knowledge is a divine revelation, not the result of human intelligence or insight. Consider these two passages from Paul’s letters to the Corinthians who tended to boast in their intelligence! (1 Cor 2:2-10 “And I, brethren, when I came to you, did not come with excellence of speech or of wisdom declaring to you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know anything among you except Jesus Christ and Him crucified. I was with you in weakness, in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching were not with persuasive words of human wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, that your faith should not be in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. However, we speak wisdom among those who are mature, yet not the wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing. But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew; for had they known, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. But as it is written: Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him." But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit

searches all things, yes, the deep things of God.) (2 Corinthians 4:3-6 But even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing, whose minds the god of this age has blinded, who do not believe, lest the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine on them.

For we do not preach ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your bondservants for Jesus' sake.

For it is the God who commanded light to shine out of darkness, who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.)

No one knows Christ, really knows Him, naturally! If you have come to know Jesus as the Christ, the Savior, the Son of God, the Lord... it's because of a miracle of grace that has opened your eyes, given you a new birth, and brought this understanding to your otherwise naturally darkened, dead and deceived heart! Blessed are you indeed if you know Jesus Christ as He is!!!

The Promise: "I will build my church"

CHURCH – The word refers to people.... "A select group who has been called out to assemble... to hear matters of importance." The word never refers to a building, except in a spiritual illustrative way... a living temple with living stones, etc. It's not about a building, it's about a people. Buildings won't last, His church will! The only things that really matter are the things that will last. That which matters most lasts longest! That which lasts forever matters most of all... the Word of God and the souls of men! Jesus builds His everlasting assembly, His everlasting people, His everlasting family, His church!

MY (CHURCH) – My church... It's His, not yours, not mine, but His and His alone. It's not about what I like, what I'm comfortable with, what meets my needs! We must reject the consumer mindset that views churches as options that fit me. If we're true believers, we belong to Christ and therefore we belong to each other. We must ever remember that the church belongs to Christ, not me. It's His church. His to lead. His to guide. His to discipline. His to correct. His to direct. His to use. His to be glorified in.

Look at His church at the beginning...it was a mix of Jews, Samaritans, Gentiles, Romans, Greeks... they didn't naturally fit together and they experienced conflict and struggle, but they were His church! It's all His!

Therefore let's bless His name for the glorious privilege of being in His assembly and let's glorify Him by loving and serving all of those who are His! Jesus will exultingly declare on that final day... "Behold, it is I and the children God has given me!" Hebrews 2:13 We are His church because the Father gave us to Christ. This is His church.

BUILD – Building is a process – it's been going on for 2,000 years... for 100 generations! It won't be done until He returns. It's not done! As long as we are here, He will continue to build His church. Don't sit back, settle down, and coast! Jesus calls us to go, to give, to serve, to be used of Him as tools in His great building project. The joy is in the process! The glory is in the outcome! Today, we're in process mode! Are you being used?

WILL – Certainty! Absolute certainty! No ifs, ands or buts! He will build His church. This passage got my curiosity going and I began a two-week study of all those times God's promises... "**I will!**" I discovered in the English text of the Old and New Testaments, in 976 verses **God promises 1237 times... "I WILL!"** Those absolute, declared "I will" promises are split between declarations of discipline/judgment and forgiveness/restoration. This is of the second kind... I WILL BUILD! Rejoice in glorious hope! His church will be built, will last, will triumph, will reign with Him. As a kid, I always heard that "the only two certainties are death and taxes!" WRONG!!! Here are 1237 certainties... the "I wills" of God!

I – I will build my church. You won't build it, He will! He is the builder, we are the tools!

We are powerless apart from Him. I am an amateur photographer. I have thousands of pictures. Some adorn the walls of our home and my office. From time to time someone will say to me... "You must have a great camera!" If it's a woman, I will reply... "If my wife and I came to your home for supper and you served us a delicious meal and I said to you... "Wow, you must have some great pots and pans!" What would you think? ☺ You'd be thinking... It's not about the pots and pans! I made it! It's the creator's skill, not the tools." So it is with the church! It's His church. He built it. Yes, He uses us as His tools, but it's not about the tools, it's about the Creator! ***I WILL BUILD!*** So let's give the glory to the Creator, Owner, Builder of the church! As tools, we must stay clean, stay available, stay united, stay loyal, stay loving, stay focused, and stay faithful. We are blessed to be a blessing! And as we are blessed, He will build His church! All glory be to Christ!

Self Check Questions

- 1) Am I grateful to be in His church? Am I an example of loyalty, gratitude, love, humility and servanthood?
- 2) Do I fuss and complain or give and serve and bless God for the privilege of being a tool in His hand?
- 3) Am I trusting Him to build His church or am I overwhelmed trying to do what only God can do?
- 4) Am I confident in Christ who will build His church? Am I content to be His tool for His glory?

For Further Study

Ephesians 2:1-22 Revelation 2-3 1 Tim 3:14-16

***Remember, you are very special to us and we pray for you.
Living with leaving in view.... John 9:4 Ron & Val***

Seeing the Invisible,
Embracing the Unapproachable,
Declaring the Unexplainable,
Changed by the Immutable,
Running after the Irresistible
With inexhaustible joy
In our inexpressible sorrows,
Spending our time on eternity,
Owning nothing yet possessing everything
That matters and lasts.
We are Pilgrims in Paradox.
Welcome to THE JOURNEY