

Our Church's Foundation- The church Jesus built

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Text: Matthew 16:18

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I want to thank Bodine Baptist Church for the invitation to share this mission colloquium with you, to be asked to present some profound thoughts from the Word of God, and to fellowship with you as Brethren. It is wonderful seeing folks that I haven't seen for many years.

The church's foundation

Our theme this year is about our church—your church, my church, Br. Travis' church, and all churches throughout the world. I will begin our lessons for this missions colloquium with a message titled, "Our church's foundation, the church Jesus built". I will show that from one came many and how all true New Testament churches rest on the same foundation, the foundation of the Church of Christ, the foundation of the church of God, the foundation of the church built by Jesus Christ.

Only one church

Some call themselves the Church of Christ or the church of God, but most are not. People can call themselves whatever they want and make any claim they want, but there is only one true New Testament church. That one church is founded on the one and only true Christ, the Messiah, God manifested in the flesh.

Just as all of humanity descends from one called Adam, likewise, all true, New Testament churches descend from one church, the church Jesus Christ built first in Jerusalem, which went to Judea, then Samaria, and then multiplied itself to the uttermost parts of the world from generation to generation. From one founder and one foundation came the church at Antioch, the church at Ephesus, the church at Thyatira, the church at Smyrna, the church at Philadelphia, the church at Macedonia, at Rome, and so on.

One Adam

Though we are many humans, we are all one in Adam. We are Adam multiplied across the world through time from generation to generation. As Adam was, so are we. And as we are, so was Adam. Though we vary in many ways, we are all of one. We are one. We are Adam, copies of Adam, multiplied billions of times. What we see one Adam do, we are guilty of the same. We are Adam, male and female versions of one, perpetuating new copies of the original Adam from generation to generation.

1Co 15:21 refers to this oneness and sameness, saying, “For since by man [came] death, by man [came] also the resurrection of the dead.”

Romans 5:17-19 clarifies and names the man responsible for the hope of our resurrection, saying, “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) Therefore as by the offence of one [judgment came] upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one [the free gift came] upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.” All of humanity is one in Adam born of the flesh. All believers are one in Christ, the second Adam born again of the Spirit.

We do not die because Adam sinned. We die because as individuals we choose to sin. Just like Adam chose to sin. Each one of us repeat what Adam did. Romans 5:12 say, “Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” We repeat sin because we are Adam. We sin because Adam is a sinner. That is us.

1Co 15:45-49 explains being like the one from whom we descend, saying, “And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam [was made] a quickening spirit. Howbeit that [was] not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man [is] of the earth, earthy: the second man [is] the Lord from heaven. As [is] the earthy, such [are] they also that are earthy: and as [is] the heavenly, such [are] they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” We are of whom we descend from.

We are over seven billion Adams on earth today doing what Adam does, which includes sin. Speaking of the role of the law with regard to our accountability for choosing to sin, Romans 5:13-14 says, “(For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.” We do not have to eat of the forbidden fruit in the garden to sin and die. We do not need the law of Moses to condemn us. Paul made this point clear saying death reigned from Adam to Moses. We die because we are aware of God’s law written in our hearts. This makes us accountable. This knowledge comes to us when we reach the age of accountability. Our consciences bear witness of our knowing good and evil and of being accountable for sin—any sin that is contrary to the will of God.

One church

As all of humanity descend from one and are all one in Adam and all are copies of Adam, so too the church built by Jesus is one. All true New Testament churches descend from one church, are born from one church, are perpetuated from generation to generation, and are one church, though there are many.

Bodine Baptist Church, Mission Blvd. Baptist Church, Highland Baptist Church, Liberty Baptist Temple, Rodgers Baptist Church, Dearborn Baptist Church, etc. descend from one founder and one foundation. Together they descend from one Lord, one faith, and one baptism. We are all copies of one original model.

Just as we are born with our own bodies and yet are Adam because we are copies of Adam, every church is its own body because every church is born as a copy of the original church.

In Eph 4:4-6, Paul wrote, “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who [is] above all, and through all,

and in you all.” Though we be many and different in many ways, we are one because we are descendants of one. We are one because we are of one. We are copies of one, multiplied as churches founded on one—our Lord Jesus Christ and Savior, who said in Matthew 16:18, “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Finding Value in the Foundation

Whatever Jesus builds has value, eternal value, a value of infinite magnitude. John 1:1–3 says, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.”

Jesus is our Lord God and Savior. He is God manifested in the flesh. He is the Creator of all things. Speaking of Jesus Christ, Col 1:16–17 says, “For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether [they be] thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.”

Jesus is the creator, founder, and builder of all things, including His church. Jesus created His church. He is the founder of His church. He is both the founder and the foundation of His church.

For our souls, Jesus laid a foundation that is matchless, beyond compare, and everlasting. First Corinthians 3:11 says, “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” Verse 15 declares the permanency of this foundation built by Christ, saying, “If any man’s work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” You may mess up in your walk with Christ. You may stumble along the way as you follow Him. You may become unfaithful to Him. but there is nothing you can do to undo His work. There is no one capable in all of creation who can destroy the foundations built by Christ. Whatever Christ builds is forever. Every foundation Christ lays down is eternal. Let no man despise what Christ has built or dismiss that which Christ has built as unimportant.

The value of what Christ builds is of infinite value. The foundation laid by Christ for our souls and for our churches is of infinite value.

How Christ built His church

How did Jesus build His church?

- With A plan.
- With Lively stones.
- With A Cornerstone.
- With A promise
- With A covenant
- With a purpose

Everything Jesus does is with love. Revelation 4:11, “Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created.” All things were created for His pleasure, including His church. This was God’s plan for building His church. What is the pleasure of God? First John 4:8 tells us “God is love.” God built His church with love, for love. He wants only the best for us. Consider these two important truths about the church. First, if the church

was not good for us, He would not have built it. Second, if we did not need the church, He would not have built it. God's plan for building His church and for its purpose is to bless us. Failure to be an active participant in His church is a lost blessing both for you and for the church God wants you in. Failure to be an active participant in His church is to reject God's love for you and His will for your life.

With what did Jesus build His church? What materials did His design call for? First Peter 2:5 says, "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." The church built by Jesus Christ is built with lively stones. He built a living church. His church is not made of bricks and mortar, and wood and nails. It is made of living stones. It is made of born-again souls. It is portable. It is mobile. It is dynamic. It is alive like a vine in the garden. It is designed to live, to grow, to reproduce itself, and to spread all over the world. God did not plan for His church to become a historic relic, a museum of old collectibles, and a mausoleum for the dead. His church is designed with living stones with a living message and a living Savior who has a message that gives life.

God builds His churches personally even to this day. In 1Co 12:18, Paul explained, "But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him." It may surprise you, but God's plan for His church is not only for the saved. It is also for the lost, and in fact begins with the lost. I say this because God's plan for every person is to be saved. John 3:16 says, "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Just as God's plan is for every soul to be saved, God's plan is for every saved soul, every Christian is to be in His church. 1Co 12:18 says God sets every member into His church. He is the builder. He has the plan. He knows which stones are needed for each church. We need to let Him build His church His way, rather than do things our way.

The most important stone in every church building is the cornerstone. First Peter 2:6 says, "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." God's plan to build His church uses lively stones because His plan calls for a foundation with a living cornerstone. That cornerstone is Jesus Christ.

In Matthew 16:18, when Jesus said, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." Jesus referred to Peter's name in this conversation because Peter, also known as Simon and Cephas, means stone or rock. Stones come in many shapes and sizes. Peter was a small stone. Jesus is a great stone. He is an eternal stone that will never fail. He is a large stone that cannot be measured. It is this matchless, unmeasurable, and eternal stone Jesus referred to in contrast to Peter. Upon Himself, Jesus would build His church. Why would He choose any other? There is no other foundation or cornerstone worthy for God's church. Jesus is the cornerstone. What is a cornerstone? The cornerstone was the first stone set in the construction of a masonry foundation. All other stones were set in reference to the cornerstone. The position, the orientation, and the alignment of the entire structure was based on the corner stone. As a church, our position, our orientation, and our alignment should be based on Christ, and no other. Christ is our reference point on which to build. Which brings us back to our responsibility as Christians. God built His church with lively stones. He places every stone in its place as it pleases Him. His great commission to His church is to baptize every believer. And every believer, as a lively stone is expected by command of God to participate in His church as an active member.

Acts 2:47 says, "And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." The early church from which our churches descend is our example. As soon as a soul is saved, he or she should be baptized and engaged in fulfilling God's will for their life as a church member. As Jesus said in Matthew 28:19-20, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the

Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, [even] unto the end of the world. Amen.”

The mission from Christ given to His church is to go and teach the lost how to be saved, then to baptize them and teach them how to fulfill God’s will.

The cornerstone or stumbling stone?

The foundation of God’s church is His Son Jesus Christ, God manifested in the flesh, the living, resurrected Savior of the world. He is our orientation to which we must align. His goals must be embraced as our own. To do His will, not our own, must be our desire. If we fail to align with His will and his goals, we will stumble. First Peter 2:8 refers to Jesus as, “a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, [even to them] which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.” But to those who believe and align with Christ, [he is] precious.

Are you aligned with God’s cornerstone? Do you desire God’s will more than your own? Do you want to do God's work God’s way? If so, be saved, be baptized, and serve Christ in His church.

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