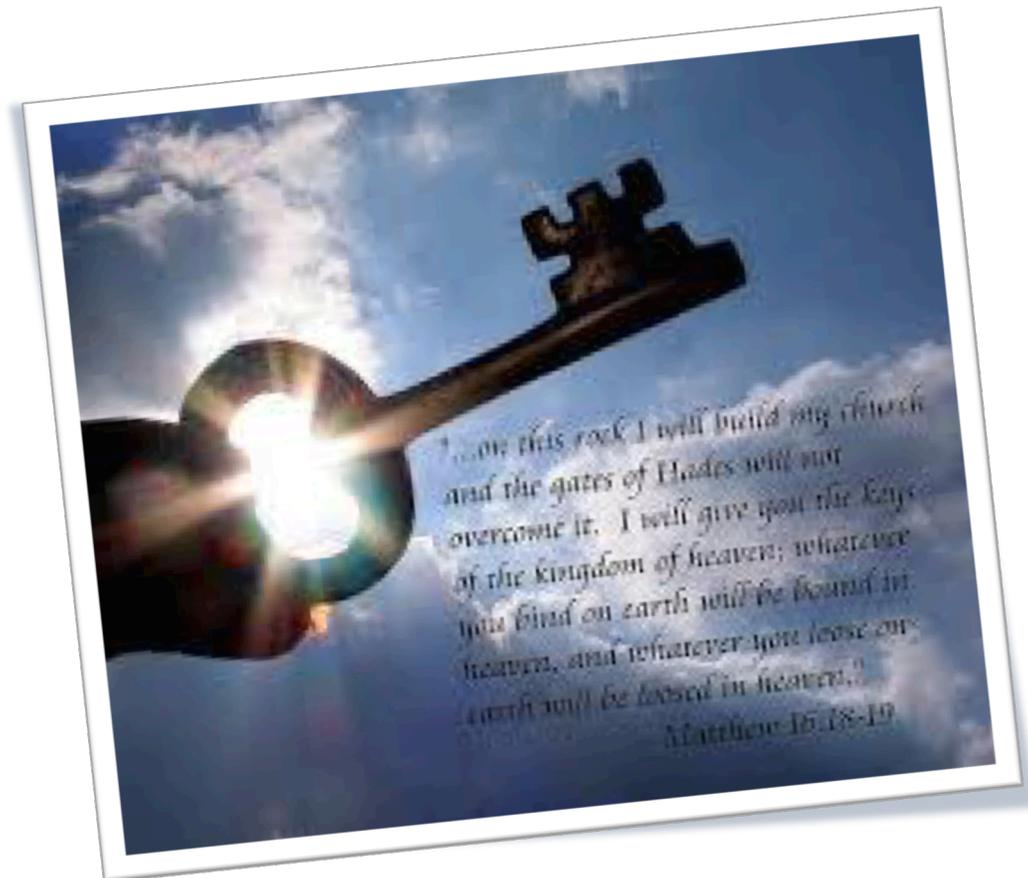

Do You Believe in the Church?

Matthew 16:18–20 (NIV)

¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” ²⁰ Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.



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Thesis:

Men must come to believe in the Church that Jesus built.

Objectives:

- I. The church exists today
- II. It is wrong to ignore the church
- III. You cannot make up your own church

Introduction:

There are many in the world who have developed comfortable excuses for dismissing the Church that Jesus Christ built. We have created eloquent refusals for the grace of God which is found in His Church. One might say that they believe in God but do not believe in organized religion. Well the church is to be organized; God is not the author of confusion.

1 Corinthians 14:33 (NKJV)

³³ For God is not *the author* of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.

1 Corinthians 14:40 (NKJV)

⁴⁰ Let all things be done decently and in order.

Creation was organized; the flood was an organized event; Israel’s salvation from Egypt was organized; the Tabernacle was organized; the Temple was organized; Jesus coming into the world was organized; God is organized; your jobs are organized. Our creator and Lord has a plan and He has purpose. His plan and purpose is that we be saved through the Church.

Acts 2:47 (NKJV)

⁴⁷ praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Revelation 2:17 (NKJV)

¹⁷ “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.” ’

Sermon Outline:

I. The church exists today

- A. God’s word is powerful and will always come true. It will always come into existence.

Isaiah 55:11 (NIV)

¹¹ so is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.

- B. If God said it you had better count on it...

Titus 1:2 (NIV)

² in the hope of eternal life, which God, who does not lie, promised before the beginning of time,

Hebrews 6:18 (NIV)

¹⁸ God did this so that, by two unchangeable things in which it is impossible for God to lie, we who have fled to take hold of the hope set before us may be greatly encouraged.

- C. So when Jesus says He will build His Church, we can count on Him doing exactly that. Matthew 16:18
- D. Peter was given the keys to the Church and he used those keys to open the doors of the Church of Christ on the day of Pentecost which we read about in Acts chapter 2.

So the church exists therefore we must find it because Jesus says the gates of hell will not prevail against it. It is here today. Can we ignore it?

II. It is wrong to ignore the church

- A. In the days of Noah men ignored the ark which was being built in their midst for 120 years.

Luke 17:26–30 (NKJV)

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²⁶ And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: ²⁷ They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. ²⁸ Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot: They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; ²⁹ but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed *them* all. ³⁰ Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed.

B. It would not be wise to ignore God’s great means of salvation.

Hebrews 2:1–3 (NKJV)

Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. ² For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, ³ how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*,

1 Peter 3:18–22 (NKJV)

¹⁸ For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, ¹⁹ by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, ²⁰ who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while *the* ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. ²¹ There is also an antitype which now saves us— baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, ²² who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

How is it that we can ignore the command to be baptized? How is it that we could ignore the Church of Christ, the one who said He would build it?

III. You cannot make up your own church

A. Men need to be careful and not make up a church of their choosing but obey the commands which God has given for His Church.

Matthew 15:8–9 (NIV)

⁸ “ ‘These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me. ⁹ They worship me in vain; their teachings are merely human rules.’ ”

B. Sincerity alone is not a formula for salvation.

Proverbs 16:25 (NKJV)

²⁵ There is a way *that seems* right to a man, But its end *is* the way of death.

Matthew 7:21–23 (NKJV)

²¹ “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. ²² Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ ²³ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

C. Wednesday we learned about the authority of silence in the scriptures

2 Samuel 7:1–7 (NKJV)

Now it came to pass when the king was dwelling in his house, and the LORD had given him rest from all his enemies all around, ² that the king said to Nathan the prophet, “See now, I dwell in a house of cedar, but the ark of God dwells inside tent curtains.”

³ Then Nathan said to the king, “Go, do all that *is* in your heart, for the LORD *is* with you.”

⁴ But it happened that night that the word of the LORD came to Nathan, saying, ⁵ “Go and tell My servant David, ‘Thus says the LORD: “Would you build a house for Me to dwell in? ⁶ For I have not dwelt in a house since the time that I brought the children of Israel up from Egypt, even to this day, but have moved about in a tent and in a tabernacle. ⁷ Wherever I have moved about with all the children of Israel, have I ever spoken a word to anyone from the tribes of Israel, whom I commanded to shepherd My people Israel, saying, ‘Why have you not built Me a house of cedar?’ ” ’

D. Until God gives the order or passes down the command, man has no authority to establish anything religious that binds God to obey and follow.

What shall we do then?

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Conclusion:

We ought to obey God rather than men.

Daniel 3:28 (NKJV)

²⁸ Nebuchadnezzar spoke, saying, “Blessed be the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-Nego, who sent His Angel and delivered His servants who trusted in Him, and they have frustrated the king’s word, and yielded their bodies, that they should not serve nor worship any god except their own God!

Acts 5:29 (NKJV)

²⁹ But Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said: “We ought to obey God rather than men.

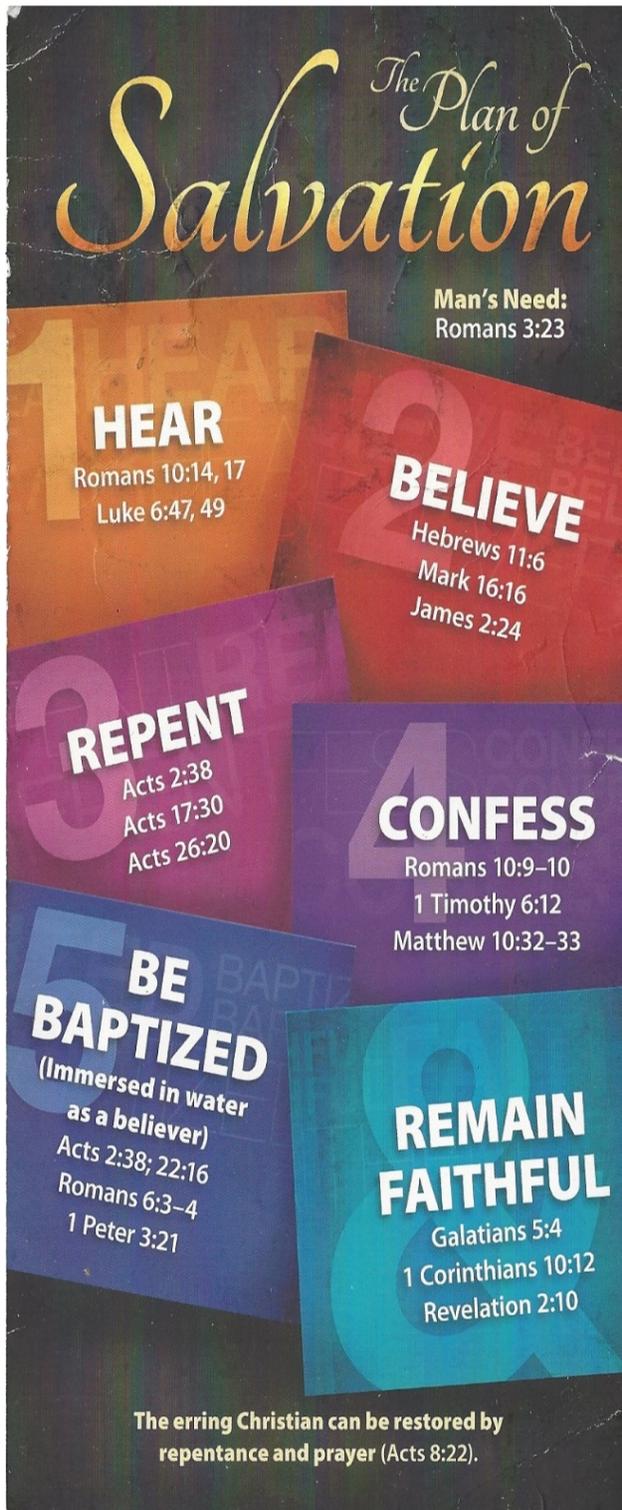
If you are looking for a Church, then look no further, you have found the pearl of great price, you have found the Church that the Lord has built.

Beware that there are many who will have to depart from the Lord due to their iniquity.

- They have built their own churches.
- They have created their own commands.
- They relied on sincerity instead of the Word of God.
- They have followed their traditions.

Do you believe in the Church that Jesus built? If so then obey Him alone and His commands of salvation...

Invitation:



Romans 10:17 (KJV 1900)

¹⁷ So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

Hebrews 11:6 (KJV 1900)

⁶ But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that *cometh* to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

Acts 17:30 (KJV 1900)

³⁰ And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:

1 Timothy 6:12 (KJV 1900)

¹² Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

Acts 2:38 (KJV 1900)

³⁸ Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Revelation 2:10 (KJV 1900)

¹⁰ Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.