



WHY WE NEED CHURCH—Matthew 16:18

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THIS IS CHURCH Series

When the world look at the church, the *church for them is irrelevant*. The church has lost credibility by and large with the world. They think we don't have anything to say that's worth listening to. And when they look at us they see division and fighting, and scandals. That's unfortunately one part of what we face today.

But we also have a challenge because *even in the church*, where we have believers, *many believers don't see the need for church anymore*. Because we live in a time where we have access to any kind of teaching on every topic that you could look for, you could find it on the internet today. And many believers will say, I can get better teaching out there than I do in my local church. So I don't need to be in the local church because I can get the best teaching from the best teachers, and I can get it 24/7. I don't need to wait till Sunday. I can every day get as much teaching as I want. And they say sometimes, I don't need to come to church to worship with other people, I can really be inspired putting on my favorite worship playlist, listening to the best music from amazing musicians, with resident anointing in it, and really, I can engage with God and worship much better on my own, listening to my worship playlist than I do in church. Maybe in church the worship team is not Elevation worship, or not as good as Bethel Music. And we don't connect us much.

So unfortunately, even in the church we have believers saying, *We don't really need the CHURCH. I got Jesus. I know how to connect with Him. I've got the Holy Spirit. I've got access to teaching. I've got worship playlists I can listen to. I don't really need to be in CHURCH.*

So I'm asking us today, *Do we still need the CHURCH?*

WHY DO WE NEED THE CHURCH?

➡ The number 1 reason why we need CHURCH is— **CHURCH IS GOD'S IDEA.**

God is the one that wants a CHURCH. Because right in the beginning, *God has always wanted a FAMILY He could live in the midst of*. God the Father has God the Son, but He's always wanted to have a whole FAMILY of sons and daughters. That's the reason why He created the Garden of Eden. He put Adam in the garden and He drew the woman, Adam's wife, out of Adam's side. And they had children. And God said, I want you to be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth. Because...

➡ **GOD WANTED TO HAVE A FAMILY** that He could live in the midst of.

After fall man was separated from God, but God never gave up His idea. Jesus gave His life. God's desire is to have the greatest, most diverse family.

But we know what happened, the enemy got in that situation, and the woman was deceived, and man was disobedient, and sin came in and separated us from God.

God cannot be around sin. So we were separated—after the fall—man was separated from God, but God still longed to have a FAMILY. He wanted to have a HOUSE. He never gave up on that idea.

And He sent His Son JESUS. And Jesus went to the cross and shared His blood as the perfect sacrifice that we, man, might be reconciled to God. That we could, once again, know that He is our FATHER and have a **RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM AS A FATHER**. And that we could **be a FAMILY together**, with our Father, and with Jesus.

And God never changed His mind about that. He still wants a FAMILY. And He wants the biggest Family He can get. In every generation, *His heart is that all would come to know JESUS. All would be forgiven of their sins—All would put their faith in JESUS.*

➡ Because He wants to have the *largest, most diverse, most wonderful FAMILY*.

That is GOD'S DESIRE. And He is not changing it.

➡ **JESUS ALSO WANTS THE CHURCH**. Because it was Jesus, when He came to earth, when He hung on the cross, do you remember how blood and water flowed from His side.

That is a picture for us, just as Adam's wife was taken out of his side in the garden, *the CHURCH came out of the side of JESUS, at the cross*.

The CHURCH was BIRTHED AT THE CROSS—And the **CHURCH IS THE BODY OF CHRIST**. It's **HIS BRIDE**. JESUS gave His life for the CHURCH. *He gave His life for His Bride*. And He loves her. And *He is waiting for her*. —Because when the FATHER says so, He is going to get His BRIDE.

So He hasn't given up on the CHURCH, His BRIDE. He doesn't say, Well, in 2025 there is no more need for me to have a BRIDE—That's not what's happening.

So we need the CHURCH because It's always been **GOD'S IDEA—He wants a FAMILY**. — And **JESUS is waiting for His BRIDE**. He died for her. And He is waiting for her, and he loves her.

This are some of the pictures we have of the CHURCH. We know...

- The Church is the HOUSE OF GOD
- It's the BRIDE OF CHRIST
- It's a FAMILY
- It's an ARMY

There are many different metaphors to describe the church. And each of them bring out different elements of the CHURCH. And we're going exploring some of those in the next few weeks.

Today we want to refresh ourselves, **WHAT IS THE CHURCH?** Because the CHURCH has been around for 2000 years. And it's gone through some changes. It looks a little different. And it keeps looking different. But WHAT TIS THE CHURCH ACTUALLY? What is that thing that JESUS loves and is coming back for? And what is this Church, this FAMILY that the FATHER is looking for?

What actually is the CHURCH and that family the Father is looking for?

Matthew 16:18— 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.

This is the first mention of the word CHURCH in the New Testament. And it's Jesus using that word.

➡ It's the first time JESUS talks about HIS CHURCH

👉 The Greek word used was **Ekklēsia** {ἐκκλησίαν}, a word that Jesus borrowed from the culture of the time. It's a word that was well known in the Greco-Roman Culture. Because an *Ekklesia* was something everybody knew about in those days. Because in those days, in Greek and Roman Culture, a "city"— they had what was called a "city state"— so a city was its own state, and it was *self-governing*. The way they governed was that, in the city, every male over 18 years old, who had completed their military service, from time to time they were called out out to come together in a public place. And as they gathered together they would listen to preachers. And as Pastor Faisal explained last week, preachers were people who accessed the realm of the spirit. They worshipped other gods, and they would stand and speak on behalf of those gods and those people, and they would preach to the crowd. And in the *Ekklesia* they would have preachers that would be called out. When there was a meeting, they would come and listen to the preacher—and then they would together discuss and take decisions about their culture in their city, about how they would govern their city. About whether they would be going to war, what they would be doing. All the issues that pertained to their city, it was in the *Ekklesia* that they discussed them, talked about them and made decisions about them.

That's what it was in the culture when you talked about an *Ekklesia*. That is what came to mind. Because they knew what it is.

If we talk about an *Ekklesia* today, we don't know what that is. We have no idea what an *Ekklesia* is. But when Jesus said, "**I am going to BUILD MY EKKLESIA**", immediately his disciples knew what He was talking about. He was saying that...

➡ He was BUILDING something that was GOVERNMENTAL in nature

➡ that would AFFECT THE CULTURE of the day

➡ and that the would ALL need to be ENGAGED in it—because it would affect their city and the community, and the place where they lived.

They understood that.

When Jesus said, *I will build My **Ekklesia***, the word He used means

👉 CALLED OUT ONES

Because the *Ekklesia* when it gathered, they were CALLED OUT—They lived in the city. Everybody went about their work. They did what they did. *But at certain times, they were CALLED OUT*, they were told, *You must come out from your house, your business, wherever you are, come to this public place*—because we are *GATHERING AS THE EKKLESIA*

➡ to **HEAR the preachers**

➡ and to **MAKE DECISIONS that will AFFECT OUR CULTURE**

and that will **AFFECT us** in THE WAY THAT WE LIVE

That was their understanding of being an ***Ekklesia***, being *CALLED OUT ONES*.

Jesus used the words, *I will **BUILD** My Ekklesia*

👉 that word *Word BUILD* in Greek is *oikodomeō* {οἰκοδομέω} made up of two words
—*oikos* {οἶκος} meaning a *family*, a *community*
—*domeo* {δομέω} meaning *to build*
so the word actually means the **BUILDER OF A HOUSE**

So when Jesus said, *I will BUILD MY EKKLESIA*, He said...

👉 I am going to BUILD A HOUSE—A FAMILY—that is an EKKLESIA

So the EKKLESIA is part of the MISSION

- **What they will do**
- **Who they will be** as a FAMILY and as a HOUSE

They will be a FAMILY—which means, there is a **commitment**—FAMILY is a *unit*. Family is, we know who our *mother* and our *father* is. We got *brothers* and *sisters*. We *live in the house*. There is a way we *live together* in our family.

So when Jesus is saying, *I want to BUILD MY CHURCH*, He is saying...

👉 I AM BUILDING A HOUSE that is going to have this GOVERNING MISSION that's going to AFFECT ITS CITY, state, and its region that it lives in.

👉 And EVERYBODY in the HOUSE is going to be INVOLVED in that MISSION.

So Jesus said, *I am going to build my church*, but what is He building it out of? In the beginning of this verse He said, "*You are Peter and **on this rock I will build my church***" (Mt. 16:18) And what is He talking about? He is talking about the fact that Peter just had a REVELATION that Jesus was the Anointed One. God the Father kind of lifted a veil off of Peter, and allowed Him to have a REVELATION—which means he got an *understanding* that this Jesus, standing in front of him, was

➡ The CHRIST—The **MESSIAH**—The **ANOINTED ONE**

➡ The One that had been prophesied

➡ The **SON OF GOD**.

It is this REVELATION that Peter had, that Jesus is saying,

👉 This is the KEY 🔑 IN BUILDING MY HOUSE.

Because I am only BUILDING My House with people who had this REVELATION !!

Because when you have that REVELATION you become a STONE, a ROCK. —You see, Peter's name was *Simon*, which means "God hears", or "I was heard". And when he had this REVELATION Jesus says, now I call you *Peter*, which means ROCK or STONE. You see, you become different the moment you have a REVELATION of JESUS as the CHRIST, the SON of the LIVING GOD.

You recognize you've been separated—sin had separated you from God—but here is JESUS, the MESSIAH, the One who came and gave His life on the cross, and ➡ you turn from your sins, and

➡ you believe in Him ➡ You change ➡ You become a NEW CREATION.

In our lingo, we call that BEING BORN AGAIN.

You got to understand, The minute you have that REVELATION, you are different **!!**

You are a new species of origin.

*2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, **he is a new creation**; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.*

Something changes in you. You actually become a LIVING STONE. You have to know, that's a reality. You may not have changed on the outside, but on the inside—whoever you were before that REVELATION—**You now have become a LIVING STONE.** And the Spirit of God is on the inside of you.

And Jesus is saying that He is going to take these stones and **He is BUILDING THEM INTO A HOUSE, A FAMILY.** And that *FAMILY* is going to have a *MISSION* to *CHANGE* the world around them That's who you are when you're the CHURCH.

➡ When Jesus is talking about the Church *He is talking about the CHURCH He is going to BUILD.*

➡ The CHURCH IS JESUS'S HOUSE—It is His House

➡ God is the FATHER of that FAMILY, but **JESUS IS THE BUILDER OF THE HOUSE**

➡ JESUS is the one who **HAS THE BLUEPRINTS**—He knows where every stone is meant to go, where every stone fits. Because He himself came to earth and He became the *cornerstone*. He is also the *Foundation*—because everything is BUILT ON CHRIST.

This is THE CHURCH—It is a HOUSE—It has STRUCTURE—And it is made up of PEOPLE who are LIVING STONES.

You become a LIVING STONE, but a LIVING STONE on its own is just a stone. This is why Peter tells us here that LIVING STONES have to recognize that **there is A BUILDER**—whose name is **JESUS**—*who knows where you have to go, and where you fit.*

1 Peter 2:4-5 Coming to Him as to a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God and precious, 5 you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ

The stone has to come to JESUS. Because He is going to BUILD YOU INTO THE HOUSE that HE IS BUILDING. Because He is saying, *I got a MISSION. You're not just meant to stay a stone, sitting on the side forever. The stone is to be built into something. Because I have a MISSION.*

1 Peter 2:9-10 But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; 10 who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy.

When you get BORN AGAIN, and you go through that CHANGE, and you become a LIVING STONE, *that is simply the BEGINNING.*—We've got to come to JESUS and **LET HIM BUILD US INTO HIS HOUSE**, build us into the **HOLY NATION**, build us into the **PRIESTHOOD**. Because **we got to become A PEOPLE—A NATION.**

Before we know Him, we are not a NATION, we're not a PEOPLE. But the minute you had a REVELATION OF HIM as the CHRIST, you became part of a PEOPLE. *You were born again into something.* Your experience of the REVELATION OF JESUS as the Christ was intensely personal. You had it. You felt it, and everything that went with it.—But I want you to know, *it doesn't just stay with you.* **You were BORN INTO SOMETHING.** And that something you became a part of, is a HOUSE, a NATION, a ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, a PEOPLE, the CHURCH OF JESUS.

You are not your own. You were bought with a prize by the BLOOD OF JESUS.

The reason that you can be part of a HOUSE, is, because JESUS paid for it with His blood,

👉 that you could come and 👉 be reconciled with God and 👉 be a PEOPLE 👉 with a CALLING, with a DESTINY to bring LIFE to dead places. To bring His GOODNESS and His LIGHT to those who are in darkness.

**THE CHURCH—IN THE SIMPLEST FORM—ARE THE COVENANT PEOPLE OF GOD
CARRYING OUT THE COVENANT MISSION OF GOD**

You want to know what the Church is?

**WE ARE THE COVENANT PEOPLE OF GOD,
CARRYING OUT THE COVENANT MISSION OF GOD**

You were born again, not just to be BORN AGAIN. But you were born again TO BE PART OF A PEOPLE, to be part of a HOUSE, to be part of the BRIDE that would carry out the MISSION that God has always had for the earth.

We want to understand what the CHURCH is. Do we really need the CHURCH? We're wanting to make sure to understand what the CHURCH is, it's made up of LIVING STONES that come to JESUS and say, **BUILD ME INTO THE HOUSE**. Because I recognize, this is not only about me, this is about YOU. And this is about WHAT YOU'RE DOING. And **YOU HAVE A MISSION**. and you want to **BUILD US INTO YOUR HOUSE**.

CHURCH

➡ Made up of LIVING STONES

➡ With a MISSION

The CHURCH of Jesus is not just a thing that's out there. It's about spiritual realities that we have to ground here on earth. Sometimes we have this idea of the CHURCH that is just this thing. Because how do you explain LIVING STONES that make up the HOUSE? It's a FAMILY that love one another. And it is also a BRIDE. But we are also sheep who follow a shepherd. It can get confusing.

I want us to understand that JESUS is not confused about HOW HE BUILDS THIS HOUSE.

HE BIRTHED THE CHURCH when He was here on earth. *He knew* that He would be going to the cross and that He would birth the CHURCH and *that there would be people coming, who His Father would give a REVELATION of Him as the CHRIST*. That they would then *REPENT OF THEIR SIN*, and they would *have FAITH IN GOD*, and they would be *RECONCILED TO THE FATHER*. He knew that was going to happen.

So in preparation, Jesus already chose His twelve disciples, His apostles. And He had them with Him. Jesus knew what the CHURCH would look like. And He was training them. And He was teaching them. That's why these first apostles—what we call the apostles of the Lamb—they were with Jesus all the way through, and they were eye-witnesses to His death, burial and resurrection. Because He needed them to see everything.

He needed them to be trained. He needed them to sit under His teaching. Because He was and is **THE GREAT SHEPHERD who knew, there are more sheep coming**. In John 10 Jesus says, *I have a whole flock you don't even know anything about that. But there is a whole lot of sheep coming into this flock.*—So Jesus was already beginning to prepare those who would be—what we would call *under-shepherds*. They would be those that Jesus would say,

*Okay, I'm calling you to have oversight over MY SHEEP in MY HOUSE. Because I am going to the Father. **I have done my part. And I am going to the FATHER. And you're going to have to continue.** And this is going to grow. And THIS HOUSE IS GOING TO BE BUILT. And I AM going to be building it. But I am not on earth anymore. So **I need some PEOPLE who are going to be SUBMITTED TO ME, and I AM going to APPOINT THEM AS LEADERS or as OVERSEERS to carry out WHAT I WANT DONE—and HOW I WANT MY HOUSE BUILT.***

This is how CHURCHES WERE BUILT in the New Testament. We know what happened. Even on the first day when Peter preaches, 3000 people get a REVELATION of Jesus being the CHRIST. They got baptized, boom. There is 3000 people in the church.—And people continuously are having this REVELATION, and then they are coming because they want to hear more. They are coming back to where they heard about JESUS.

And those APOSTLES had to figure out what the CHURCH was going to look like. They've been with Jesus. They know everything He said, but now they had to begin to figure it out, teaching them what He said. No wonder they were praying to figure it out. They didn't know how to build this thing.

The first apostles saying, **We're not the builder—JESUS is the BUILDER**

*So we have to have **TIME TO SIT WITH HIM**, and read from His Word, and look back on the scriptures and **LET THE HOLY SPIRIT ILLUMINATE THEM TO US**—because **we have the RESPONSIBILITY to do what HE wants to be done**, so that this thing grows in our generation.*

That is WHY **GOD APPOINTS LEADERS**

You don't just decide, "I want to have a Church... We can do this and that. We know how to... We know what to say, and we can do this whole thing." ⚠️ That is not how the CHURCH IS BUILT !!—You can, you can build an organization that has a lot of Christian stuff attached to it, and it will be very popular probably indeed, probably—because that's how the world systems work. But this is not HOW JESUS BUILDS HIS CHURCH.

👉 **THE WAY JESUS BUILDS HIS CHURCH IS, HE CALLS PEOPLE**

He calls LEADERS. And then He says to them, I want you to be an OVERSEER of the Sheep. I want you to take on this RESPONSIBILITY.

We see a wonderful example of it in Scripture in John 21. This is after the resurrection, Peter—we know He betrayed Jesus at the time of the Crucifixion—Jesus is risen and everyone is wondering what's going on. And the disciples don't know what to do. And Peter says, *I'm going back fishing*. Remember, he was a fisherman. And He's like, *I've messed this thing up so bad. I don't even know where Jesus is. I don't know what's going on. So let's go fishing. Let's go do what we know to do.*

And he is out fishing, and he comes back, and Jesus is at the shore. We know this story, and we call it, *When Jesus restores Peter*. And I want you to see something. Three times Jesus says to Peter, "**Do you love me?**". Jesus was not only restoring Peter, but He was calling Him out of what he was used to, being a fisherman, Jesus saying, I want you to tend the sheep.

*John 21:15-17—So when they had eaten breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me** more than these?" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "**Feed My lambs.**" 16 He said to him again a second time, "**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?**" He said to Him, "Yes, Lord; You know that I love You." He said to him, "**Tend My sheep.**" 17 He said to him the third time, "**Simon, son of Jonah, do you love Me?**" Peter was grieved because He said to him the third time, "Do you love Me?" And he said to Him, "Lord, You know all things; You know that I love You." Jesus said to him, "**Feed My sheep.**"*

God calls people that will tend the flock in that time.
EVERY REAL CHURCH has LEADERS that GOD HAS CALLED.

41:45ff

God called Pastor Faisal to this specific place. GOD is building this House. All the leaders are CALLED to the House temporarily. This is God's House. Every leader knows that they will have to answer to God how they have stewarded this flock.

1 Peter 5:2-4—Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; 3 nor as being [a] lord over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; 4 and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.

GOD SETS OVERSEERS over a House.

The marks of a REAL CHURCH there are some things that need to be present in this House
There is a LEADER SET by God.

The WORD OF GOD is preached faithfully in the CHURCH.

2 Timothy 4:3- (AMPC)—For the time is coming when [people] will not tolerate (endure) sound and wholesome instruction, but, having ears itching [for something pleasing and gratifying], they will gather to themselves one teacher after another to a considerable number, chosen to satisfy their own liking and to foster the errors they hold,

There are two SACRAMENTS to be done in the CHURCH

- ➡ BAPTISM (Baptism into a family)
- ➡ COMMUNION should be done regularly

Authentic CARE and DISCIPLINE of the Body

What does the CHURCH do?

Number 1: IT FORMS CHRIST IN YOU

Romans 8:29—For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren.

You are called to be TRANSFORMED into the IMAGE OF JESUS.

When we are BUILD into the House of God, formation happens. For this to take place, you need to be around people.

God made CHURCH as a corporate entity, none being perfect. God puts us together.

You got to be in the church, or you think you're not the problem

When you're born again, you're on the track to be built up.

The sooner you sign up...

We need to be committed to stay in it, and be part of it.

It is not only you being FORMED, it's us together being FORMED.

Ephesians 4:12-13—And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the [e]difying of the body of Christ, 13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

... **xxx**

- ➡ You and I, we need the CHURCH
- ➡ Jesus needs the CHURCH
- ➡ Without the CHURCH, Jesus's MISSION will never be fulfilled

THE CHURCH—JESUS'S BODY ON EARTH—IS THE ONLY HOPE FOR THE WORLD

WE are the CHURCH **!!**

Church is not an optional extra.

- ➡ The CHURCH is a LIVING BODY.
- ➡ Jesus is building us together, FORMING US—*That we will be a testimony to the world.*

COMMUNION

In the church we should receive COMMUNION regularly together. By doing so we recognize that we are a FAMILY. We are going to walk with one another. We confess our sins to one another. We will care for each other.

When we take COMMUNION we honor the LORD—and we honor the BODY.

We want to honor the LORD and His BODY today together.