

“The Church Building Project”

Grace Fellowship Church / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / September 12, 2021

I. Remember—nothing will stop Jesus from building His church!

- A. Jesus spoke with certainty about the building of His church.

Matthew 16:18 “...I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

I will build My church.

I **will** build My church.

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I will build **My** church.

I will build My **church**.

- B. The New Testament writers spoke with passion about the building of the church.

1 Corinthians 14:3-5 “On the other hand, the one who prophesies speaks to people **for their upbuilding** and encouragement and consolation.⁴ The one who speaks in a tongue builds up himself, but the one who prophesies **builds up the church**.⁵ Now I want you all to speak in tongues, but even more to prophesy. The one who prophesies is greater than the one who speaks in tongues, unless someone interprets, **so that the church may be built up**.”

1 Corinthians 14:17 “For you may be giving thanks well enough, **but the other person is not being built up**.”

1 Corinthians 14:26 “...Let all things be done **for building up**.”

II. Jesus' plan has always been to build His church through people like you & me!

Ephesians 4:11-12 “And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, **for building up the body of Christ...**”

III. God's Word promises the church will “self-build” when all of us are working properly.

- A. You need to see your ministry as it truly is—connected to **Someone other than you!**

Ephesians 4:15 “Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ...”

B. You need to see your ministry as it truly is - connected to **something bigger than you!**

Ephesians 4:16 “from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped...”

C. You need to see your ministry as it truly is—connected to **a purpose God has for you!**

Ephesians 4:16 “...when each part is working properly, **makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.** “

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 “Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸ For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as He wills.”

IV. You need to decide if Jesus will work through you or work around you in order to build His church.

1 Corinthians 14:12 “So with yourselves, since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, **strive to excel in building up the church.**”

“If I were to ‘strive to excel’ in _____, it would build up the church.”

Questions for Personal Reflection and/or Community Group Discussion:

1. How are you a contributor to what the Lord is doing in the life & ministry of our church?
2. Pastor Peter read through a portion of Matthew 16:18 when Jesus said, “I will build my church...”, and he emphasized a different word each time. Try doing that on your own.

I will build my church.

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I will build my **church**.

Which sentence strikes you the most? Why do you think that is?

3. Do you find it hard to believe that God plans to use *you* in the ongoing process of building His church? Why or why not?
4. Pastor Peter said it's important to see our ministry as “connected to Someone other than you,” “connected to something bigger than you,” and “connected to a purpose God has for you.” Which of those is most important for you to remember? Why?
5. Reread 1 Cor. 14:12. How should you fill in the blank in the following sentence?

“If I were to ‘strive to excel’ in _____, it would build up the church.”