

# “I Will Build My Church”

## Matthew 16:18

*GFC Fort Thomas / Pastor Peter LaRuffa / January 17, 2021 - Grand Opening Sunday*

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<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” <sup>14</sup> And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock **I will build my church**, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

~ Matthew 16:13-18 ~

### I. **I will build My church.**”

One thing is clear. Throughout the Scriptures, God gets the glory for all growth, all the time.

**Psalms 127:1** “Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labor in vain.”

**Romans 15:17-19** “In Christ Jesus, then, I have reason to be proud of my work for God. For I will not venture to speak of anything except **what Christ has accomplished** through me to bring the Gentiles to obedience—by word and deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God—so that from Jerusalem and all the way around to Illyricum I have fulfilled the ministry of the gospel of Christ...”

**1 Corinthians 3:5-9** “What then is Apollos? What is Paul? Servants through whom you believed, as the Lord assigned to each. I planted, Apollos watered, **but God gave the growth**. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, **but only God who gives the growth**. He who plants and he who waters are one, and each will receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God’s fellow workers. You are God’s field, God’s building.”

### II. **I will build My church.**”

The Word of God speaks to us with a certainty like nothing else!

**Psalms 19:1-4** “The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork. Day to day pours out speech, and night to night reveals knowledge. There is no speech, nor are there words, whose voice is not heard. Their voice goes out through all the earth, and their words to the end of the world.”

**1 John 5:18-20** “**We know** that everyone who has been born of God does not keep on sinning, but he who was born of God protects him, and the evil one does not touch him.

**We know** that we are from God, and the whole world lies in the power of the evil one. And **we know** that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true; and we are in him who is true, in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life. Little children, keep yourselves from idols.”

### III. “I will **build** My church.”

Like so many things in life, God is most glorified in us over time. That’s why He doesn’t cause His church to become instantly grown and mature, but uses a slow, steady, and sometimes painful process to build us into the people He wants us to be.

A. Christ builds the church through leaders who equip people for ministry.

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

B. Christ builds through people like you serving in ministry together.

**Ephesians 4:15-16** “Rather, speaking the truth in love, **we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ**, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, **when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.**”

### IV. “I will build **My** church.”

Jesus paid dearly for the church. That’s why it only belongs to Him!

**Acts 20:28 (NKJV)** “Therefore take heed to yourselves and to all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God **which He purchased with His own blood.**”

**1 Corinthians 6:19-20** “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, **for you were bought with a price.** So glorify God in your body.”

**2 Peter 2:1** “But false prophets also arose among the people, just as there will be false teachers among you, who will secretly bring in destructive heresies, even denying **the Master who bought them**, bringing upon themselves swift destruction.”

### V. “I will build My **church.**”

The word “church” is a translation of the Greek word *ekklesia* which means “assembly” or “called out ones.”

**Romans 16:5, 16** “Greet also **the church** in their house...Greet one another with a holy kiss. **All the churches** of Christ greet you.”

**Ephesians 1:22-23** “And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.”

**1 Corinthians 12:12, 27** “For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ...Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.”

**Questions for Personal Reflection and/or Community Group Discussion:**

1. When did you start coming to Grace Fellowship Church? Were you part of the Fort Thomas campus back when it was the Newport campus? What do you recall from days gone by?
2. Recall a time in your life when God gave you a “pioneering spirit” to try something, get something off the ground, or try something new. What were those times like for you? How did God answer prayers & provide grace in those times of need?
3. Is the certainty with which God speaks to us in the Bible significant to you? Why or why not?
4. Pastor Peter said “Jesus didn’t just pave the way, but *paid* the way for salvation for all who believe.” When you look back upon the fact that Jesus bought us with His own blood, why is that significant to you?
5. How do you want Him to use you to be a sure & steady light during dark & uncertain days? How do you want Him to use you to reach others with the life-changing message of the Gospel? What step(s) can you take to hopefully make that a reality, ensuring you’ll look back on this day as the starting line instead of the finish line?