

## “I Will Build My Church” – Part 2

Matthew 16:13-23

Last week...

1. **The Church was formed by Jesus, not men. v.18: I will build my church.**
2. **The Church is intended to grow. v.18: I will build my church.**
3. **The Church has a “cosmic-conflict” aspect to it. v.18: ...and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**
4. **Central to the church’s existence is the person and work of Jesus Christ. v.13-16, 21**

Today...

5. **God’s plan for the church is to work through messed up, mistaken, and sinful people. v.22-23**
6. **God’s plan for the church is suffering, hardship, and persecution. v.24-25**

### THE UNLIKELY BEGINNINGS OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

1. **God’s covenant included a promise of blessing and community. Gen. 12:1-3; 26:1-5; 28:14; 35:9-12; 48:4**
  - Gen 12:2,3 (to Abe): I will make of you a great nation....In you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
  - Gen 26:1-5 (to Isaac): And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed.
  - Gen 28:14 (to Jacob): and in you and your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.  
-Literally: “a community” “an assembly” (Gk. Septuagint – *ekklysia* or “church”) – ‘called out ones’
2. **This promise was originally given to the most unlikely recipients. Abraham! Isaac! Jacob!**
  - Abraham: from pagan family, unbelief, relied on his own wits and used deception to survive
  - Isaac: also used deception, showed favoritism to his son Esau (& Rebekah to Jacob)
  - Jacob: also used deception, swindling, had four wives (!), showed favoritism to Joseph
3. **The Bible repeatedly shows the kinds of people that God gathers into His family.**
  - 1 Samuel 22:1-2: Everyone who was in distress, and everyone who was in debt, and everyone who was discontented gathered to him [King David]; and he became captain over them.
  - Micah 4:6-7: “In that day,” declares the Lord, “I will assemble the lame and gather the outcasts, Even those whom I have afflicted. 7 “I will make the lame a remnant and the outcasts a strong nation, and the Lord will reign over them in Mount Zion from now on and forever. (See also Is. 11:12; 43:5; 56:8; 66:18)
  - Descriptions of the early church: especially 1 Corinthians 1:25-29: For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. <sup>26</sup>For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. <sup>27</sup>But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; <sup>28</sup>God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, <sup>29</sup>so that no human being might boast in the presence of God.
  - Descriptions of those who gathered to Jesus: Matthew 4:24; Also 9:36; 11:25; 11:28f

Application: Expectations of the church family—Relational health? Maturity? Competence? Efficiency?

- *e pluribus unum*. ‘Out of many, one’ or ‘One from many’

**God’s plan for the church is suffering, hardship, and persecution. v.24-25**

### THE HIGH CALLING OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD

1. **Our unlikely beginnings do not excuse our sin and dysfunction.**
  - *WE* are called to be a family, to purity, to peace, to be a witness to the world.
2. **The Bible teaches that our basis for loving each other is the Gospel – that God has loved us in Christ.**
  - 1 John 4:10-11: *In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.*
3. **The Bible gives descriptions of both ‘shepherding’ and ‘one-anothering.’**
  - To Elders and Deacons: *shepherd the flock of God among you, exercising oversight...* 1 Peter 5:2
  - Acts 20:28: Pay careful attention to yourselves and to all the flock, in which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to care for the church of God, which he obtained with his own blood.
  - To the body as a whole: *love one another...* John 13:34; 15:12. Nearly 100 ‘one another’ verses in NT.
4. **The Bible’s commands to love are given with the assumption that it will not be easy.**
  - 1 Peter 4:9: *Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.*
  - Eph. 4:2-3: *Be patient, bearing with one another in love, being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit.*
  - Eph. 4:32: *be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ forgave you.*