



THERE IS HOPE - BECAUSE OF JESUS' CHURCH

Matthew 16:13-19

- We're living in a time when many people are struggling to find hope - because of the financial, physical, relational and vocational issues they've been dealing with.
- Job - *"My days fly faster than a weaver's shuttle. They end without hope."* (Job 7:6)
- **Even in troublesome times, the Lord offers hope to the world through His Church.**
- Jesus - *"I will build My church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it. And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven."* (Matthew 16:18-19)
- ***What is a Church, and why is it important to be a part of a Church family?***
- **A Church is a group of Jesus followers, a spiritual family led by Spirit-led leaders and empowered by God's Spirit, who have banded together to give their very best in carrying out the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ in our world.**
 - **Celebration's Mission** - To lead people to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ and difference-makers in the world
 - **Celebration's Vision** - **We pray God will use Celebration to:** 1) **Exalt Jesus** (Ephesians 3:21), 2) **Transform Lives** (Titus 3:3-7), 3) **Strengthen Families** (Acts 16:19-34), 4) **Improve Communities** (Acts 8:5-8) and 5) **Impact our World** (Matthew 28:19-20).
 - **Email *What I Love About My Church* to info@celebrationchurch.org**
- **If a Church is following God's Spirit and fulfilling its purposes, the Lord will bless the Church and bless many people through the ministry of His Church (Acts 9:31).**
- **In the past 2000+ years many have tried to discredit and/or destroy Jesus' Church, but like Jesus promised it has survived and even thrived in difficult times, and has been the foremost entity in the world for helping people.**
- ***Why has Jesus' Church survived and thrived even during difficult times, and how has it brought hope to our world?***

There Is Hope For The Church And Our World Because:

JESUS IS THE LEADER OF HIS CHURCH

- “Jesus . . . asked His disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ ‘Well,’ they replied, ‘some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.’” (Matthew 16:13-14)
- **Lots of people in our day have different ideas about who Jesus was and is.**
- **What do some people in our day and time say about Jesus?**
- “Then He asked them, ‘But who do you say I am?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’ Jesus replied, ‘You are blessed, Simon son of John, because My Father in heaven has revealed this to you.’” (Matthew 16:15-17)
- **By His own testimony, Jesus is God’s Son and Humankind’s Savior.**
 - “Christ is the visible image of the invisible God. He existed before anything was created and is supreme over all creation . . .” (Colossians 1:15)
 - **As Humankind’s Savior, Jesus is the only one who makes it possible for us to experience God’s forgiveness (John 3:16-17), great freedom (John 8:36), godly fulfillment (John 10:10), and a great future in Heaven (John 14:1-3).**
 - Jesus - “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one can come to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6)
- Jesus - “Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means ‘rock’), and upon this rock I will build My church . . .” (Matthew 16:18)
- **By His own testimony, Jesus is His Church’s Master.**
 - “Christ is also the head of the church, which is His body.” (Colossians 1:18)
 - **As the Church’s leader, Jesus gets to determine what a Church prioritizes and pursues in its function and ministry.**
- **Jesus is supposed to be every Christian’s “master” as well - He is to be the “president” of our life and not just a “resident” in our life.**
 - Paul - ‘My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.’ (Galatians 2:20)

There Is Hope For The Church And Our World Because:

JESUS IS THE BUILDER OF HIS CHURCH

- Jesus - “I will build My church . . .” (Matthew 16:18)
- **Jesus builds His Church as His people get involved in *Ministering to people*.**
 - “When Jesus saw the crowds, He had compassion on them because they were confused and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. He said to His disciples, ‘The harvest is great, but the workers are few. So pray to the Lord . . . ; ask Him to send more workers into His fields.’” (Matthew 9:36-38)
 - **Every week we’re to be looking for people to minister to who are confused or hurting, who are like “sheep without a shepherd.”**
- **Jesus builds His Church as His people get involved in *Sharing their faith*.**
 - Jesus - “You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be My witnesses, telling people about Me everywhere.” (Acts 1:8)
 - **Every week we should be telling others about who Jesus is to us and what He’s done for us, leading them to progressively believe in the Lord and come to the place of receiving Jesus as their Savior (John 1:12).**

- **Jesus builds His Church as His people get involved in *Bringing People into the Church*.**
 - *“Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church that day. All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord’s Supper), and to prayer. . . . They worshiped together at the Temple . . . met in homes . . . and shared their meals with great joy and generosity - all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.”* (Acts 2:41-42, 46-47)
 - **Every week we should be inviting people to join us in our Life Groups and Worship Services, helping them to take the steps they need to take to begin growing in the Lord and getting them connected to a Church family.**
- **Jesus builds His Church as His people pursue *Growing in their Faith*.**
 - Peter - *“You must grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”* (2 Peter 3:18)
 - **We should continually be looking for ways to grow in our knowledge of God’s Word and will for our lives so that we become strengthened in our relationship with Jesus and better able to express our faith.**
- **Jesus builds His Church as His people pursue *Becoming Difference-makers In The World*.**
 - Jesus - *“Go and make disciples of all the nations . . .”* (Matthew 28:19)
- Jesus - *“I will build My church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.”* (Matthew 16:18)
- **When we’re partnering with Jesus to build His Church, the Devil and his forces and his plans for people in our world are defeated time after time.**

There Is Hope For The Church And Our World Because:

JESUS IS THE INITIATOR OF OUR MINISTRY

- Jesus - *“And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.”* (Matthew 16:19)
- **The “keys of the Kingdom” represent the authority and power of Jesus that He has given to His people.**
- Jesus - *“Go and announce to them that the Kingdom of Heaven is near. Heal the sick, raise the dead, cure those with leprosy, and cast out demons. Give as freely as you have received!”* (Matthew 10:7-8)
- **Jesus has called His Church, His People, to be involved in serving people, healing people, saving people, restoring broken relationships, breaking demonic strongholds and much more.**
- *“The church . . . became stronger as the believers lived in the fear of the Lord. And with the encouragement of the Holy Spirit, it also grew in numbers.”* (Acts 9:31)
- **When Jesus’ people are surrendered to Him and working with Him to build His Church and carrying out His ministry, we will be making a powerful difference for good and for God in people’s lives and in the culture around us.**

- **What steps do I need to take to get more involved in building Jesus' Church so that it can make a greater difference for good and for God in our world?**
 - **___ Join a *Life Group* to become connected with other Christians**
 - **___ Attend *First Steps* to become a member and ministry partner**
 - **___ Join a *Ministry Team* to use my abilities to serve the Lord and people**
 - **___ Inquire about *Discipleship opportunities* to help strengthen my faith**
 - **___ Begin *sharing my faith* and faith stories with people around me.**
 - **___ Encourage *friends and family members* to come to Church services and/or Life Groups with me**