

Dedicating a New Church Building

Matthew 16:13-18

INTRODUCTION:

A. **Matthew 16:13-18** - “When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, ‘Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?’

So they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’

He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’

Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’

Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

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.’”

1. Jesus said He would build His church.
2. When men build a structure, the end result is a building.
3. When Christ built, the end result was His church.
4. Three facts:
 - a. The church is composed of God’s people.
 - b. God’s people generally meet in buildings.
 - c. The buildings God’s people meet in are called church buildings.
 - d. The church buildings brethren build belong to God.

B. It is proper that we should build buildings in which to worship.

1. It is proper that that should not only be functional, but beautiful.
2. It is proper that we should celebrate the completion of such a building with a ceremony of thanksgiving for the gifts and sacrifices that made it possible.
3. It is proper that we should celebrate the completion of the building with a dedication of both the building and ourselves.
4. It is proper that we note what belongs to God.
 - a. The building—purchased and furnished with money that has been given to God—belongs to God.
 - b. God’s people belong to God.
 1. **1 Corinthians 3:16** - “Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?”
 2. **1 Corinthians 6:20** - “For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God’s.”

JESUS CHOSE TO COMPARE A CHURCH TO A BUILDING.

A. Each must have an architect.

1. The designer of the universe designed the church. **John 1:1-3** - “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

He was in the beginning with God.

All things were made through Him, and without Him nothing was made that was made.”

2. His designs earn the eternal awards of excellence.

C. Each must have a strong foundation.

1. No building is stronger than its foundation.
2. **I Corinthians 3:11** - “For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.”
3. **Hebrews 13:8** - “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.”
4. Our foundation will never weaken or crumble.

D. Each must incorporate a variety of materials.

- a. Wood, steel, glass, and stone are brought together in harmonious union in a material building.
- b. The church is made up of members with differing strengths, talents, and abilities.

JESUS CHOSE THE PLACE TO MAKE THIS COMPARISON.

A. The places He did not choose to make this comparison:

1. It was not at Bethlehem where He was born.
2. It was not at Nazareth where He grew up.
3. It was not at Capernaum where he lived after His rejection in Nazareth.

B. The place He did choose to make this comparison was at Caesarea Philippi.

1. That place was high ground (literally)—just as His church would be the highest spiritual ground among men.
2. That place was the headwaters of the Jordan River—just as His words would be the fountainhead of His ministry.
3. That had been a place of pagan worship—just as the church would be the place where His people would worship Him.
4. That place was named for two kings: Caesar and Herod Phillip—Christ stood there as the King of Kings.

JESUS CHOSE THE AUDIENCE CAREFULLY.

A. The announcement was not made to the multitudes.

B. It was made to the select few whom He had chosen, who, in turn, would later reveal it to the multitudes.

JESUS CHOSE THE TIME CAREFULLY.

A. The time He chose:

1. Was not at the beginning of His ministry.

2. Was not at the time He was baptized by John in the Jordan River.
 3. Was not the time when He began to teach and heal.
 4. Was not at the time of His first miracle.
 5. Was not at the end of His ministry.
 6. Was not on the cross.
 7. Was not after the glory of the resurrection.
 8. Was not at the ascension.
- B. It was near the midpoint in His ministry.

HE CHOSE HIS WORDS CAREFULLY.

- A. He compared the church to a building.
- B. He said it would be future to that moment in time—and it was.
- C. He said that he would build it—and He did through His apostles.
- D. He said it would belong to Him—and it does.
- E. He said it would endure—and it has and continue to do so.
 1. A new church building may last for fifty years, or a hundred years, but it will not last forever.
 2. The Lord's church will last throughout eternity.

CONCLUSION:

- A. It is because we understand the true and invisible church that we have built this visible expression as a place for worship and study for the church. The building is not the church . . . The building houses the church that will come together to meet therein.
- B. To have the new, we must say good-bye to the old . . . to the former
 1. That is so true in life.
 - a. To have a new house, we must say good-bye to the old one.
 - b. To have a new neighborhood, we must say good-bye to the old one.
 - c. To have a new school, we must say good-bye to the old one.
 - d. To have a new job, we must say good-bye to the old one.
 2. It is true spiritually.
 - a. To have an incorruptible body, we must leave to the corruptible one.
 - b. To have an immortal body, we must leave the mortal one.
 - c. To have an eternal home, we must leave our earthly home.
 3. It is true with church buildings. To possess the new one means to leave the old one.
 - a. The memories will still be there.
 - b. The feelings will still elicit emotions.
 - c. The mind's eye will still view it.
 - d. The good done there will not perish.
 - e. It has been a dear friend. But more than that, it has been a gift from God to use until such time He saw the need to replace it.

4. Marvelous passages come to mind.
 - a. **I Samuel 3:12** - “. . . When I begin, I will also make an end.”
 - b. **Ecclesiastes 3:1-15** - “To everything there is a season, a time for every purpose under heaven:
 - 2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck what is planted;
 - 3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;
 - 4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
 - 5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
 - 6 A time to gain, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
 - 7 A time to tear, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
 - 8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.
 - 9 What profit has the worker from that in which he labors?
 - 10 I have seen the God-given task with which the sons of men are to be occupied.
 - 11 He has made everything beautiful in its time. Also He has put eternity in their hearts, except that no one can find out the work that God does from beginning to end.
 - 12 I know that nothing is better for them than to rejoice, and to do good in their lives,
 - 13 and also that every man should eat and drink and enjoy the good of all his labor-- it is the gift of God.
 - 14 I know that whatever God does, it shall be forever. Nothing can be added to it, and nothing taken from it. God does it, that men should fear before Him.
 - 15 That which is has already been, and what is to be has already been; and God requires an account of what is past.”
5. God has been good to us so that we can be better than we otherwise would have been.
 - a. There have been memories in the former—new memories will be created in the new.
 - b. There are feelings and emotions in the former—there will be feelings and emotions in the new.
 - c. Good has been done in the former—good will be done in the new.
 - d. There have been baptisms in the former—there will be baptisms in the new.

- e. There have been restorations in the former—there will be restorations in the new.
 - f. There have been weddings in the former—there will be weddings in the new.
 - g. We have worshipped in the former—we will worship in the new.
 - h. We have been faithful in the former—we will be faithful in the new.
 - i. The truth has been preached in the former—Truth will be preached in the new.
 - j. The Lord’s invitation has been extended in the former—it will be extended in the new.
6. We are dedicating a new building.
- a. May we dedicate it as a place of worship—in spirit and in truth.
 - b. May we dedicate it as a place of service—both to God and our fellowman.
 - c. May we dedicate it as a place of honoring and glorifying God.
 - d. It is not
 - a. The Tabernacle of the Old Testament
 - b. The Temple of the Old Testament
 - c. It is the meeting place of the House of God . . . The Church.
7. As we dedicate the new structure to God’s service, may we also . . .
- a. Rededicate and further consecrate our lives to Him.
 - b. Resolve that the facility will be used for the scriptural and spiritual intent for which it was constructed.
 - c. Resolve that it will always be a place where truth is proclaimed and error is refuted.
 - d. Resolve that it will always be a place where good will flow forth from to help those in need.
 - e. Resolve that it will be used to advance to cause of Christ around the world.
 - f. Resolve that the new structure will be used to glorify God before the eyes of all mankind.
 - g. Resolve that it be use in whatever way God may so lead and direct for the accomplishing of His divine will.
8. While it is just a building . . . It is a building that belongs to God.

C. God’s Plan for Man’s Salvation