

GOD STILL CARES ABOUT THE LORD'S CHURCH

Matthew 16:18

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INTRODUCTION:

1. What a great blessing it is to speak about God and the Lord's church!
2. I consider this a great blessing preaching about this topic because...
 - a. I am privileged to be part of the New Testament church for which God still cares!
 - b. This is a Bible subject, and therefore, I rejoice to preach about the Word of God! (Psalm 119:97).
 - c. This is a vital topic which involves a life and death matter (Acts 2:47; Ephesians 5:23).
3. As we examine this lesson, let me encourage you to do the following:
 - a. Love and appreciate the church for which Jesus died!
 - b. Be a doer of God's Word! (James 1:22).
 - c. If you have not been added to the church of the New Testament, I would like to encourage you to do so today! At the end of my lesson, I will share with you a way on how you can obey the gospel of Jesus Christ!
4. Let us, therefore, examine the topic, "God Still Cares about the Lord's Church!"

Let us first of all, examine some great lessons about the New Testament church

I. SOME GREAT LESSONS ABOUT THE LORD'S CHURCH.

- A. There are several great lessons the Bible teaches regarding the New Testament church/the Lord's church.
- B. As we study the Holy Scriptures, we learn the following great teachings about the Lord's church:
 - a. **The church is a divine institution established on the Day of Pentecost** (Acts 2). This was in accordance with Old Testament prophecies (Isaiah 2:1-4; 2 Samuel 7:12-14).
 1. Jesus himself promised to establish His church (Matthew 16:18).
 - b. **The church and the kingdom are one and the same divine institution.** This kingdom was also prophesized in the Old Testament Scriptures (Daniel 2:44).
 1. Christ also promised to establish the kingdom (Mark 9:1). The church is not an afterthought or a plan B in the scheme of redemption! Notice the following similarities of the church and the kingdom:
 1. Those who obey the gospel are added to the church and kingdom (Acts 2:47; Colossians 1:13).
 2. Christians were called to the one Body/church (Colossians 3:15; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 2:14).

- 3. Through baptism a person enters into Christ/kingdom (Acts 2:47; Galatians 3:27; 1 Corinthians 12:13; John 3:3, 5).
- c. **The church belongs to Christ** (Matthew 16:18; Acts 2:47; Galatians 3:27; Ephesians 1:22-23).
- d. **The church is not a denomination, but the one true church of the New Testament.**
 - 1. It was not founded by man-made religions, but God!
 - e. Salvation is only found in the church of Christ (Acts 2:47; Ephesians 5:23; John 14:6; 1 John 5:11).
- C. These are some of the great lessons we can learn from the Bible regarding the Lord's church.
- D. These are the great lessons that cause us to love the church and to realize how God still cares for the church of His Son, Jesus Christ!

Let us also consider the way God has taken care of the church in times past!

II. GOD HAS TAKEN CARE OF THE CHURCH IN THE PAST.

- A. God has taken care of the church even from the past/eternity!
 - a. The church was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4).
 - b. The blood with which the church was purchased was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:18-20).
 - c. God made sure that His plan was fulfilled in the church/in Christ! We see this from the first Old Testament prophecy of Genesis 3:15 all the way to the New Testament.
- B. We see this in God's scheme of redemption which was planned before the foundation of the world (1 Peter 1:18-20).
- C. God made sure that the church of His Son, Jesus Christ, was established on Pentecost.
 - a. We see this was done through the resurrection of His Son (Acts 2:22-32).
 - b. God chose a perfect day to begin His church: Lots of people in attendance!
 - c. Everything took place according to God's plan!
- D. God took care of the church even after her establishment. He took care of the apostles and those who preached the gospel to every creature under God's Sun (Acts 8:1-5; Mark 16:15).
 - a. The reason why we see a tremendous church growth in the first century is because God was taking care of the church (Acts 2:41; 4:4; 5:12-14; 6:7; 8:4; 11:24; 12:24; 17:6).
- E. God has taken care of the church even throughout the ages, and even into our own generation.
- F. God has taken care of the church even from times past!

Through the Holy Scriptures we can also observe how God is taking care of the church, even in our present age!

III. GOD IS STILL TAKING CARE OF THE CHURCH IN THE PRESENT.

- A. How do we know God is taking care of the church in the present?
 - a. The fact that the church is still in existence today helps us to see how God still cares for His church today!
 - b. The fact that people are still being added to the New Testament church is proof that God still cares for His church!
- B. God has given us all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). Friends, this is proof that God still cares for His church!
 - a. The preservation of His Word is what keeps the church alive!
 - b. We have the Scriptures available to us today. These Scriptures can help the church in many ways!
 - 1. God's Word equips us unto every good work (2 Timothy 3:16-17).
 - 2. God's Word makes us wise unto salvation (2 Timothy 3:15).
 - 3. God's Word can save us (James 1:21).
 - 4. God's Word can give us happiness (Jeremiah 15:16).
 - 5. God's Word can help us to refute error and overcome temptations (Matthew 4:1-12; Ephesians 6:17; Hebrews 4:12; Psalm 119:11).
 - c. The fact that we have a copy of God's Word in our hands is proof that God still cares for His church in the present!
- C. Even though there are thousands of divisions today in the church, the faithful church continues to uphold the doctrine of the apostles (Acts 2:42). Why? Because God still cares for His church and He will be with those who uphold His doctrine (2 John 9).
- D. God still cares for His church in the way He protects His children from the evil one:
 - a. We will suffer in this life (2 Timothy 3:12; Philippians 1:29; Acts 14:22).
 - b. Jesus has promised to be with us (Matthew 28:20; John 16:33).
 - c. God has promised to never leave us nor forsake us (Hebrews 13:5).
 - d. Nothing can separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:31, 36-38).
 - e. We have all the encouragement we need to continue living a faithful life in Christ!
- E. There is no doubt that God still cares for His church even in our present age!

What a great encouragement it is to know that God will take care of the church, even in the future!

IV. GOD WILL TAKE CARE OF THE CHURCH IN THE FUTURE.

- A. How will God take care of His church in the future? We can answer this question with just two words: ETERNAL SALVACION!

- B. Yes, God has promised eternal salvation for His church! This is the way in which God will take care of His church!
- C. God has provided the means whereby we can be saved:
 - a. Jesus is the only way to eternal salvation (John 14:6; 2 Timothy 2:10).
 - b. Eternal salvation is in Christ (John 11:25-26; 1 John 5:11).
 - c. Jesus is our hope of glory (Colossians 1:27; Titus 1:2; 1 John 5:11).
- D. Eternal salvation is found in the one true church of the Bible (Acts 2:47; Ephesians 5:23). Remember, the church is the body of Christ! (Ephesians 1:22-23).
 - a. Those who want to be saved must be members of the one true church of Jesus Christ! (Acts 4:12; 2 Timothy 2:9).
- E. God will take care of the church in the future by providing a beautiful entrance into the eternal kingdom of God!
- F. One day Jesus Christ will turn the kingdom over to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24), and so shall we be with the Lord forever (1 Thessalonians 4:16-18).
- G. What a wonderful encouragement this is!

Having considered four points that deal with the way how God has taking care of the church in the past, present and future, let us now briefly examine the way how a person can become a member of this great church!

V. HOW TO BE A MEMBER OF THE LORD'S CHURCH.

- A. The Bible is clear on who you can become a member of the one true church of the Bible.
- B. A person must...
 - a. Hear the Gospel of Christ (Acts 2:37; 2:22-32).
 - b. Believe in the Gospel message (Mark 16:16).
 - c. Be willing to repent of his/her sins (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30).
 - d. Be willing to confess Christ as the Son of God (Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32-33).
 - e. Be willing to be immerse in water in order to receive forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Mark 16:16).
 - f. Be faithful during your Christian life (1 Corinthians 15:58; Philippians 2:12; Revelation 2:10).
- C. Those who obey the Gospel are added to the church (Acts 2:47).
 - a. The church is the Body of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23; 4:4; 5:23; Colossians 1:18).
 - b. After obedience to the gospel, you become a son of God (John 1:11-13); you are reconciled to God (Ephesians 2:13-16); you become a member of the family of God (Ephesians 2:19); you become a new creature in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:4).
- D. You need to obey the Gospel today, before it is eternally too late! (2 Corinthians 6:1-2; James 4:14; Proverbs 27:1).

CONCLUSION:

1. What a great blessing it is to talk about God and His church!
2. May we always learn to appreciate and love the church for which Jesus gave His life on the cross!
3. Let us live a faithful life in Christ, for this is the only way to show God how much we appreciate his care of the church!

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