

“Who Builds the Church?”  
**Acts 2:37-47**

**I. God is the One who adds to His church.**

- A. God draws sinners to Himself.
- B. God places His Spirit in sinners who repent and turn to Him.
- C. The Spirit is the One who gives understanding of God’s truth.

(Matthew 16:15-18; John 6:44-45, 65; 16:13; 1 Corinthians 2:13-14; 2 Corinthians 1:21-22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:13-14; James 4:5)

**II. Not every gathering of people claiming to be a church is truly a church.**

- A. Not everyone who professes to be a disciple is truly a disciple (someone who professes to be a follower of Jesus and rejects His truth is not a true follower).
- B. Not every gathering of people that professes to be a church is truly a church (a church that professes to worship Jesus and rejects His truth is not truly worshipping Jesus).

(Matthew 24:10; John 6:60-71; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 4:1-4)

**Scripture References and Notes**

Matthew 16:15-18

<sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” <sup>17</sup> 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. <sup>18</sup> 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.

John 6:44-45, 65

<sup>44</sup> No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. <sup>45</sup> It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God.’ Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

<sup>65</sup> And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.”

Ephesians 1:13-14

<sup>13</sup> In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, <sup>14</sup> who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22

<sup>21</sup> Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and has anointed us *is* God, <sup>22</sup> who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee.

2 Corinthians 5:5

God himself has prepared us for this, and as a guarantee he has given us his Holy Spirit.

James 4:5 (NASB)

Or do you think that the Scripture speaks to no purpose: “He jealously desires the Spirit which He has made to dwell in us”?

1 Corinthians 2:13-14

<sup>13</sup> These things we also speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teaches but which the Holy Spirit teaches, comparing spiritual things with spiritual. <sup>14</sup> But the natural man does not receive the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him; nor can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

John 16:13

However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

John 6:60-71

<sup>60</sup> Therefore many of His disciples, when they heard *this*, said, “This is a hard saying; who can understand it?”

<sup>61</sup> When Jesus knew in Himself that His disciples complained about this, He said to them, “Does this offend you? <sup>62</sup> *What* then if you should see the Son of Man ascend where He was before? <sup>63</sup> It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing. The words that I speak to you are spirit, and *they* are life. <sup>64</sup> But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who would betray Him. <sup>65</sup> And He said, “Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.” <sup>66</sup> From that *time* many of His disciples went back and walked with Him no more. <sup>67</sup> Then Jesus said to the twelve, “Do you also want to go away?” <sup>68</sup> But Simon Peter answered Him, “Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. <sup>69</sup> Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” <sup>70</sup> Jesus answered them, “Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is a devil?” <sup>71</sup> He spoke of Judas Iscariot, *the son* of Simon, for it was he who would betray Him, being one of the twelve.

Matthew 24:10 (NASB)

At that time many will fall away and will betray one another and hate one another.

1 Timothy 4:1-3

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, <sup>2</sup> speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, <sup>3</sup> forbidding to marry, *and commanding* to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth.

2 Thessalonians 2:1-12

<sup>1</sup> Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you, <sup>2</sup> not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. <sup>3</sup> Let no one deceive you by any means; for *that Day will not come* unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition, <sup>4</sup> who opposes and exalts himself above

all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he sits as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. <sup>5</sup> Do you not remember that when I was still with you I told you these things? <sup>6</sup> And now you know what is restraining, that he may be revealed in his own time. <sup>7</sup> For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work; only He who now restrains *will do so* until He is taken out of the way. <sup>8</sup> And then the lawless one will be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the breath of His mouth and destroy with the brightness of His coming. <sup>9</sup> The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders, <sup>10</sup> and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved. <sup>11</sup> And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, <sup>12</sup> that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.

2 Timothy 4:1-4

<sup>1</sup> I charge *you* therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: <sup>2</sup> Preach the word! Be ready in season *and* out of season. Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching. <sup>3</sup> For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, *because* they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; <sup>4</sup> and they will turn *their* ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.

“To call an assembly of non-believers a church is preposterous. A church is an ekklēsia, kaleō, called out, called out of death, called out of sin, called out of slavery to Christ. We are the called-out ones. A church is an assembly of believers. There is this trend today to gather unbelievers in a group and call it a church. How misleading is that? In fact, those who are paraded as the most successful evangelical pastors in our society today are those who are the very best at collecting non-believers. I don’t mind collections of non-believers. I enjoy a football game, baseball game, basketball game, concert. I don’t mind a collection of non-believers. I just don’t like a collection of non-believers called a church. First of all, it’s not a church. And secondly, it sends a message to the world that if it is a church, this is how the church is. How confusing is that? And yet we seem to be committed to an almost inexhaustible effort to find every possible way to collect non-Christians into a building and call them a church.”

– John MacArthur

\*Unless otherwise noted, all Scriptures are from the New King James Version.

\*Bolded Scripture references are not in the bulletin notes, but are available in the full notes on the church website. You may access these at <https://www.firstbaptistcp.com/sermon-archive/>.