

HE HAS GIVEN US HIS PROMISES

I. The Divine Guarantees Behind the Church's Mission

Matthew 16:18

"I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."

Because Christ has guaranteed the ultimate success of His church, we can labor faithfully, courageously, and confidently in His service.

This fits naturally with the previous lessons:

- God has given us His Word — our sufficient message.
- God has given us His Spirit — our sufficient power.
- God has given us Spiritual Gifts — our sufficient enablement.
- God has given us Godly Leaders — our sufficient shepherding.
- God has given us His Promises — our sufficient confidence.

II. Christ Promises to Build His Church

Matthew 16:18

"I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it."

- A. Notice the certainty of Christ's words: ***"I will build."*** –
 1. The church is not ultimately our project. **It is Christ's project.**
 2. Christ is the **Architect** of the church - Christ Himself assumes responsibility for building His church.
- B. We labor—but God produces the result - 1 Corinthians 3:6–7 - ***"I planted, Apollos watered, but God was causing the growth. So then neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but God who causes the growth."***
 1. Christ is the **Owner** of the church
 - a) ***"My church..."*** - It does not belong to pastors, elders, congregations, denominations, or generations.
 - b) Acts 20:28 — He ***"purchased [the church] with His own blood."***
 - c) *Therefore, our task is not to reinvent Christ's church but to faithfully steward what belongs to Him.*
 2. Christ guarantees the **Survival** of the church
 - a) ***"The gates of Hades will not overpower it."***
 - Satan cannot destroy it.
 - Persecution cannot extinguish it.

- False teaching cannot ultimately **defeat** it.
- **Governments** cannot eliminate it.
- Death itself cannot **conquer** it.

b) *Empires have risen and fallen during the past 2,000 years, but Christ continues building His church.*

Motivating implication:

We are working on something that cannot ultimately fail.

III. Christ Promises to **Accompany** His Church

Matthew 28:18–20

- A. The Great Commission begins and ends with divine **guarantees**.
- B. We have His **Authority**
 - 1. *“All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”* — Matthew 28:18
 - 2. Our mission rests upon the universal sovereignty of Christ.
 - 3. We do not evangelize hoping Christ will somehow make our efforts successful. We evangelize under the authority of the reigning King.
- C. We have His **Assignment** - *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations...”* — Matthew 28:19
 - 1. The mission is clear:
 - 2. Make disciples.
 - 3. We accomplish that through:
 - ✦ Going
 - ✦ Baptizing
 - ✦ Teaching
- D. We have His **Abiding Presence**
 - 1. *“and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”* — Matthew 28:20
 - 2. Christ does not send His church into the world alone.
 - 3. The One who possesses all authority promises His continual presence while we fulfill His commission.

Motivating implication:

No believer ever serves Christ alone.

IV. God Promises to **Empower** His Church

Acts 1:8

“but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses...”

- A. Our inadequacy is real - *“Not that we are adequate in ourselves to consider*

anything as coming from ourselves, but our adequacy is from God.” - 2 Corinthians 3:5

✦ The church does not advance because Christians are exceptionally talented.

- B. God's power is sufficient - *“Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, to Him be the glory in the church...” - Ephesians 3:20–21*

✦ Our weakness actually becomes the stage upon which God's sufficiency is displayed.

“But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves.” - 2 Corinthians 4:7

Motivating implication:

God never intended His work to depend upon our strength.

(That frees us from both pride when ministry succeeds and despair when ministry is difficult.)

V. God Promises to Accomplish His Word

Isaiah 55:10–11

“So will My word be which goes forth from My mouth; It will not return to Me empty, Without accomplishing what I desire, And without succeeding in the matter for which I sent it.”

- A. God's Word produces **faith** - “So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.” Romans 10:17
- B. God's Word produces **sanctification** - “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth.” - John 17:17
- C. God's Word produces spiritual **growth** - “long for the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow in respect to salvation.” 1 Peter 2:2
- D. God's Word **equips** God's people - The Scripture makes the man of God: “adequate, equipped for every good work.” - 2 Timothy 3:16–17

Motivating implication:

We can confidently do God's work God's way because God has promised to work through His Word.

(Therefore, the church does not need to manufacture spiritual results through gimmicks, manipulation, entertainment, or worldly methodology.)

VI. Christ Promises to Preserve His People

John 10:27–29

“My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them, and they will never perish...”

- A. Christ **knows** His sheep - *“My sheep... I know them.”*

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- B. Christ **gives** them eternal life - *“I give eternal life to them.”*
- C. Christ guarantees their **security** - *“They will never perish.”*
- D. Christ **holds** them securely - *“no one will snatch them out of My hand.”*

Philippians 1:6:

“For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.”

Motivating implication:

The same God who saves His people is committed to finishing what He started in them. (The success of the church ultimately rests upon God's ability to preserve those whom He saves.)

VII. Christ Promises to **Perfect** His Church

- A. Ephesians 5:25–27
 - 1. This may be the climax of the lesson.
 - 2. Christ's church today is obviously **imperfect**. But what we see today is not the finished product.
 - a) *And He has a definite purpose: “that He might sanctify her...”*
 - b) *And a guaranteed destination: “that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing...”*
 - 3. Christ's work moves inexorably toward a **completed** church. The church will ultimately be:
 - ✦ **Gathered**.
 - ✦ Sanctified.
 - ✦ **Glorified**.
 - ✦ **Presented** to Christ - *“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy...”* - Jude 24

Motivating implication:

We know how the story ends. Christ gets His bride.

VIII. God Promises That Our Labor Is Not **Wasted**

- A. This is perhaps the most important promise for **turning** theology into motivation - *“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord...”* - 1 Corinthians 15:58
 - 1. *“knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.”* - Notice Paul does not say that ministry feels productive.
 - a) *Sometimes ministry appears enormously fruitful.*
 - b) *Sometimes you teach and see little response.*

How God guarantees we succeed

- ✦ You evangelize and see no conversion.
- ✦ You disciple and see slow growth.
- ✦ You serve and receive no recognition.
- ✦ You pray and see no immediate answer.

c) *But God says: It is not in vain.*

2. God sees every act of faithful service done for His glory. - ***“For God is not unjust so as to forget your work and the love which you have shown toward His name...”*** - Hebrews 6:10

Motivating implication:

There is no such thing as wasted faithfulness.

IX. Christ Promises to Reward Faithful Service

- A. 1 Corinthians 3:8 - ***“but each will receive his own reward according to his own labor.”***
- B. 2 Corinthians 5:10 — ***“we will appear before the judgment seat of Christ.”***
- C. Colossians 3:23–24 - ***“Whatever you do, do your work heartily, as for the Lord rather than for men... It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.”***
- D. Matthew 25:21 - And Christ's commendation provides the heart of the servant's aspiration: ***“Well done, good and faithful slave.”***

The greatest motivation for ministry is not applause now but Christ's approval then.

X. Conclusion: Why Can We Press On?

God's Promise	Our Response
Christ will build His church	Serve confidently
Christ will remain with His church	Serve courageously
God will empower His church	Serve dependently
God will accomplish His Word	Serve faithfully
Christ will preserve His people	Serve patiently
Christ will perfect His church	Serve expectantly
Our labor is not in vain	Serve persistently
Christ will reward faithfulness	Serve wholeheartedly

Christ has not promised that serving His church will always be easy. He has promised something far better: it will ultimately succeed.

- We may become tired—but Christ will **build** His church.
- We may become discouraged—but His Word will **accomplish** His purpose.
- We may feel inadequate—but His power **works** through us.
- We may see little immediate fruit—but our **labor** is not in vain.
- We may not live to see the final results—but Christ will **present** His church to Himself in glory.
- Therefore, the proper response to God's promises is not passivity but greater **faithfulness**:
- Press on. Serve. Teach. Disciple. Evangelize. Give. Pray. Shepherd. Encourage. Use your gifts.
- Because the final outcome of Christ's church has already been guaranteed by Christ Himself.



— THE CHURCH WILL — **SUCCEED** — BECAUSE OF — *God's Promises*

NOT BY OUR POWER. NOT BY OUR PLAN. BUT BY **HIS** PROMISE.

					
HE WILL BUILD IT.	HE WILL PROTECT IT.	HE WILL EMPOWER IT.	HIS WORD WILL ACCOMPLISH IT.	HE WILL PRESERVE IT.	HE WILL PERFECT IT.
Matthew 16:18	John 10:28	Acts 1:8	Isaiah 55:11	Philippians 1:6	Ephesians 5:27

OUR CALL IS TO BE **FAITHFUL**. HIS PROMISE IS TO **FINISH THE WORK**.