

June 1st, 2025

Upon this Rock - Week 1

In the first century, from the very beginning, the CHURCH has been a Movement.

From the very beginning, the church began as a Movement, and it began as a movement around one very simple idea.

The CHURCH launched because of their belief in the Resurrection of Jesus!

I. Church History

1.) The church launched as a Movement

If you were to read the Greek New Testament, when you read the word CHURCH, you would say, Ekklesia, which actually means “an assembly or gathering.”

When Jesus launched the church, he launched it as a gathering with a simple mission and with a very simple focus. Today we call that gathering a Congregation.

Before long, history shows us the CHURCH would be located in a prominent building and...

- Whoever controlled the building, controlled the church...
- Whoever controlled the building, controlled the Scripture...
- Whoever controlled the building and controlled the Scripture...controlled the people.

Over time, what began as a Movement of distributing truth throughout the world became a very insider focused, hierarchical, ritual, in some cases a pagan, immoral, destructive, unethical movement that had absolutely no reflection at all at what happened in the first century when THE CHURCH was launched.

II. The Scriptures

But then something awesome happened in the 16th century. A guy showed up in England, a scholar by the name of William Tyndale. And he decided that it was time for the average person to have access to the Bible in their own language!

III. Upon this Rock - *Matthew 16*

Jesus asked: Who do men say that I am?

Matthew 16:17-18 NIV

Jesus' words in *Matthew 16:18* are the focus of an ongoing debate over WHO or WHAT “the ROCK” is that Jesus mentions!

- A. Is “this ROCK” on which Christ promised to build His church... Peter?
- B. Is it Peter's declaration of faith?
- C. Is it the truth of Peter's statement?
- D. Or is the ROCK Jesus Himself?

IV. The Birth of the CHURCH - Acts 1-2

In Matthew, we call the beginning mission of the Church the Great Commission, BUT in the book of Acts, there's a version where Jesus gives the early church their final instructions, and he prophesied about the beginning of the church.

Acts 1:6-8 NIV

You're going to take the message of me, you're going to take my teaching, you're going to take the fact that you are eyewitnesses of the resurrection, and you're going to take this message to the 4-corners of the Earth!

A. Birthed by Prayer

B. Opening Day - Acts 2:22-23

Acts 2:36, 38-39, 41 NIV

The point is, opening day for the local church was big and it was dynamic and it was powerful, and thousands of people embraced this message. Thousands of people said that we believe Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God.

Question: What about you?