

I. Review and Introduction

A. Matthew 16:18

NKJV “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. Prevail = to gain ascendancy over, through strength or superiority.

2. Notice it is “The Church” that the enemy cannot prevail against.

- a. There is individual victory.
- b. There is corporate victory.

B. Understanding the Local Church

1. The “universal church”: The church as a whole, including every person that is born again.

2. The “local church”: Distinct local bodies that are part of the universal church.

3. While every person who is born again is part of the universal church, God also calls every believer to become part of a local church.

- a. Church (Greek = ekklesia): Called out ones.
- b. “Called out” is an incomplete definition.
- c. We are not just CALLED OUT, we are CALLED TOGETHER.
- d. The real emphasis of the church is not so much being called out, but being called together OR summoned together!
- e. The CHURCH is a body of people called / summoned by God to COME TOGETHER to meet with HIM.
- f. The assembling of the local church is essential. The continuing work of God in the earth is connected to His Church COMING TOGETHER in the Local Church.
 - There are things that will happen while you are at the Local Church.
 - There are things that will be released.
 - There are things that will come through revelation.
 - There are things that God will do as we COME TOGETHER as His people.

4. One of the first characteristics of God's newly formed church is that they met together!

- a. The church was birthed at the *assembling together* of believers.
- b. They were *assembled together* when Jesus told them to go to Jerusalem to receive the Holy Spirit.
- c. They were *assembled together* in **Acts 2** when the Holy Spirit came.
- d. They continued to *assemble together* in the temple and from house to house in **Acts 2:46-47**.
- e. Jesus goes to Church: **Matthew 18:20** "...where two or three are gathered together in my name, I am there in the midst of them."
- f. There are many things the Lord will do in our spiritual life individually.
- g. But there are SOME things reserved for the corporate setting.

II. The Help of the Local Church

A. God uses People!

1. Ephesians 4:11-16

NKJV "And He Himself gave some *to be* apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—**from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.**"

AMPC "For because of Him the whole body (the church, in all its various parts), closely joined and firmly knit together by the joints *and* ligaments with which it is supplied, when each part [with power adapted to its need] is working properly [in all its functions], grows to full maturity, building itself up in love."

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NLT “He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.”

2. Our spiritual growth is connected to others.

- a. While we will grow through our personal devotion, prayer, and other spiritual disciplines, there is a level of growth that we can never achieve unless we are connected to others in the Body.
- b. Every member of the body brings a supply, each to the other.
- c. The only way to receive of the supply of others is through being connected in the local church.

B. Examples of how God has always used other people for the advancement of others.

1. Elijah and Elisha

a. 1 Kings 19:15-16

NKJV “And the Lord said unto him, Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus: and when thou comest, anoint Hazael to be king over Syria: And Jehu the son of Nimshi shalt thou anoint to be king over Israel: and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abelmeholah shalt thou anoint to be prophet in thy room.”

- b. “Room” = Place; in place of; in the place where you stand.
- c. Through the leadership of Elijah, God would offer the room where Elijah stood to Elisha.
- d. Elisha would be able to enter the place/room that Elijah had occupied. This room could only be entered as Elijah led him there.

2. There are places that we are to go that we cannot just walk into!

- a. There are rooms that God has for each of us to enter, but we can only enter as we connect with those who will take us there.
- b. The leadership and members of the local church are called to help you get there!
 - Understanding that you will not get on your own.
 - Callings that will not manifest individually.
 - Places in the Spirit that you are not permitted to enter alone.
 - You need the help of the local church.

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3. Other Examples:

a. Paul

- **Acts 9:5-6**

NKJV “And he said, ‘Who are You, Lord?’ Then the Lord said, ‘I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. It *is* hard for you to kick against the goads.’ So he, trembling and astonished, said, ‘Lord, what do You want me to do?’ Then the Lord *said* to him, ‘Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do.’”

- **Acts 9:10-19**

NKJV “Now there was a certain disciple at Damascus named Ananias; and to him the Lord said in a vision, ‘Ananias.’ And he said, ‘Here I am, Lord.’ So the Lord *said* to him, ‘Arise and go to the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for *one* called Saul of Tarsus, for behold, he is praying. And in a vision he has seen a man named Ananias coming in and putting *his* hand on him, so that he might receive his sight.’ Then Ananias answered, ‘Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much harm he has done to Your saints in Jerusalem. And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on Your name.’ But the Lord said to him, ‘Go, for he is a chosen vessel of Mine to bear My name before Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel. For I will show him how many things he must suffer for My name’s sake.’ **And Ananias went his way and entered the house;** and laying his hands on him he said, ‘Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you came, has sent me that you may receive your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit.’ Immediately there fell from his eyes *something* like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized. So when he had received food, he was strengthened. Then **Saul spent some days with the disciples at Damascus.**”

PASTOR’S NOTE: *At the conversion and calling of the Apostle Paul, God immediately connected him to other people!*

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b. Apollos

- **Acts 18:24-28**

NKJV “Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man *and* mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.”

PASTOR’S NOTE: *These key ministers were always connected to others—never alone!!!*

c. Timothy

- **1 Timothy 4:14**

NKJV “Do not neglect the gift that is in you, which was given to you by prophecy with the laying on of the hands of the eldership.”

NLT “Do not neglect the spiritual gift you received through the prophecy spoken over you when the elders of the church laid their hands on you.”

- **1 Timothy 1:18**

NKJV “This charge I commit to you, son Timothy, according to the prophecies previously made concerning you, that by them you may wage the good warfare...”

HCSB “Timothy, my son, I am giving you this instruction in keeping with the prophecies previously made about you, so that by them you may strongly engage in battle...”

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- **2 Timothy 1:6**

NKJV “Therefore I remind you to stir up the gift of God which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”

PASTOR’S NOTE: *This was not just a formality or ceremony to send Timothy out as a minister. There were spiritual things imparted and spoken that allowed him to enter another room/place.*

d. **Joshua**

- **Numbers 27:18-22**

NKJV “And the Lord said to Moses: ‘Take Joshua the son of Nun with you, **a man in whom is the Spirit, and lay your hand on him**; set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation, and inaugurate him in their sight. And you shall give some of your authority to him, that all the congregation of the children of Israel may be obedient. He shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall inquire before the Lord for him by the judgment of the Urim. At his word they shall go out, and at his word they shall come in, he and all the children of Israel with him—all the congregation.’ **So Moses did as the Lord commanded him. He took Joshua and set him before Eleazar the priest and before all the congregation. And he laid his hands on him** and inaugurated him, just as the Lord commanded by the hand of Moses.”

- **Deuteronomy 34:9**

NKJV “Now Joshua the son of Nun was full of the spirit of wisdom, for Moses had laid his hands on him; so the children of Israel heeded him, and did as the Lord had commanded Moses.”

PASTOR’S NOTE: *Through connection and the laying on of hands, Joshua was offered another **room/place** in the Spirit, in leadership, in promotion.*

III. Closing Notes

A. God offers those who are hungry another opportunity (doors / rooms / places in the Spirit), BUT He doesn't do so without the HELP of others.

1. **Pastor Nancy Dufresne:** *"Your pastor is offering you another room."*
2. **Pastor Dale:** *"This is why I never desire to be alone! When I am doing it alone, I am not advancing. I am not increasing. I am stalled in the place of the moment. But, when I am connected, I am being led into new places—ROOMS of the Spirit—where I have not been before."*

3. The example of Jesus:

Luke 2:51-52

NKJV "Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men"

- This is why ELDERS are to be honored!
- This is why LEADERS are to be desired.
- This is why divine connection is to be sought after.

B. In this setting, we are in the atmosphere where supernatural things occur.

1. **In Acts 4 while they prayed together, the Holy Ghost fell.**
2. **The place where they were assembled together was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke the Word with boldness.**
 - **Acts 4:23-24**
NKJV "And being let go, they went to their own *companions* and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. So when they heard that, they raised their voice to God with one accord and said: 'Lord, You are God, who made heaven and earth and the sea, and all that is in them...'"
 - **Acts 4:31**
NKJV "And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness."

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C. Things happen when the church comes together.

1. The Holy Ghost gives direction and sets things into motion. He specifically speaks, directs, and sets ministries into action.

• Acts 13:1

NKJV “Now in the church that was at Antioch there were certain prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon who was called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch, and Saul. As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit said, ‘Now separate to Me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.’ Then, having fasted and prayed, and laid hands on them, they sent *them* away.”

- **PASTOR’S PERSONAL EXAMPLE:** As a pastor, I do not pastor because I chose this position. I am called and sent to serve in this five-fold office.

2. Peter was delivered from prison while the church was assembled together to pray.

• Acts 12:5

NKJV “Peter was therefore kept in prison, but constant prayer was offered to God for him by the church.”

- Note: An angel delivered Peter that night as the church prayed and was assembled together.

3. In Acts 14, Paul commanded a man to be healed who was lame.

- This event occurred while people were assembling to hear the Word preached by Paul.
- While they were ASSEMBLED, hearing the Word, the SUPERNATURAL SHOWED UP.
- This will happen when you show up to church. As you hear the Word, the supernatural will meet you.

D. We are called TOGETHER:

1. God calls ministers.

2. God calls people.

- Just as God calls a minister to an area or a specific church, God calls people to become part of that local church.
- We are summoned together to do ministry together.

3. People should not shift from church to church; no more than pastors should shift from place to place.

- A **church** that changes **pastors** often is a church that will never stabilize, strengthen, or mature.
- A **person** who changes **churches** often will never grow, stabilize, or mature.

PASTOR'S NOTE: *There is a time that God may call you to another congregation, primarily when you need to move up because something is lacking in that house or there is something specific you are supposed to receive from another place. God had to move me from my first local church to expose me to the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. The first church had taken me absolutely as far as they could/would ever take me. To go further, God had to summon me to another place.*

E. Know where He has called you to attend—and ATTEND!

- **Psalm 92:13**

NKJV “Those who are planted in the house of the Lord Shall flourish in the courts of our God.”

CEV “They will take root in your house, LORD God, and they will do well.”