

What God Really Thinks about First Baptist Church
Matthew 16:13-19

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Introduction: What are you thinking right now about First Baptist Church? Some of you are thinking positive thoughts; some are thinking negative thoughts. We are all aware, however, that it matters little what we think about our church. What matters is **“What does God think about First Baptist Church?”**

Text: ¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"

¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

¹⁵ "But you," He asked them, "who do you say that I am?"

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God!"

¹⁷ And Jesus responded, "Simon son of Jonah, you are blessed because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the forces of Hades will not overpower it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth is already bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth is already loosed in heaven."

The truth is many people are giving up on so-called, “organized church.” Steve McCranie has captured how many feel in his book titled, *Love Jesus, Hate the Church*. Those of us who love the Church of Jesus Christ have our work cut out for us to change the opinion of many today. So, I want to encourage us today.

5 Timeless Principles for the Church

The Believing Principle

“on this rock I will build my church”

Statement of this Principle: Being a Christian being committed to the Church are inseparable.

Significance of this Principle:

Upon confession of Jesus as LORD...

- 1) You have no choice than to become a member of the Church.

- 2) You should link yourself to a local Church. There are no lone ranger Christians and no lone ranger Churches. If you cannot find a church to your liking, I suggest that it is not the church that is the problem.
- 3) The Church should become a priority in your life.

The Building Principle

*“upon this rock, **I will build** my church”*

Statement of this Principle: God has been building, is building, and will continue to build His church.

Significance of this Principle:

Church growth is a supernatural phenomenon. You and I do not cause churches to grow.

The Belonging Principle

*“upon this rock, I will build **My** church”*

Statement of this Principle: The Church belongs to Christ.

Significance of this Principle:

- 1) Jesus is the Head of the Church.
- 2) We must always consult the Head of the Church.
- 3) Each one of us has a role.

The Prevailing Principle

“and the forces of Hades will not overpower it”

Statement of this Principle: The Church is not going to die.

Significance of this Principle:

- 1) God has not called us to maintain the Church.
- 2) We need only to protect from the inside.

The Following Principle

“I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven”

Statement of this Principle: We must follow the keys of the Kingdom.

Significance of this Principle:

- 1) We must follow the Great Commission.
- 2) We must follow the Great Commandment.