

**THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST**  
**Her Founder and Foundation**  
**Message One**

**Matthew 16:18** And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

**Isaiah 28:16** Therefore saith the Lord GOD, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

**I Corinthians 3:11** For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

When we think and speak of the Lord's Church or Churches we are often envisioning in our minds the plant structures in which we meet to worship and study together. We even have assigned addresses such as 11 Old Kiln Road, Picayune, Ms. 39466 for Mill Creek Baptist Church. But the churches are comprised of the people that make up her membership, not the physical structure or address. We also tend to think of the church only as she presently exists and functions. But the churches are ancient as far as existence and origin and at least to some degree have not functioned exactly as we function today. There was even a time in ancient history that churches did not enjoy the use of such beautiful edifices as we do today. Many ancient churches no longer exist and today new churches are being organized on a regular basis. Let us humbly try to come to grips with an extended study of several lessons on the church.

**FIRST** *The term "church" as used in the New Testament* **Matt. 16:18** And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

**One** The very basic greek word in New Testament usage is "ekklesia" (ek-klay-see-ah, 1577 Strong's) and means "a calling out" like the calling out in a town a group of people to assemble to consider business. As used concerning the church it means those called out from among the world system unto the Lord himself to function as an ongoing assembly to carry out the Lord's work in the midst of this world system. The word ekklesia is made up of two greek words. "ek" (1537 Strong's) and denotes origin (the point whence motion or action proceeds) from, out (of place, time or cause) and "kaleo" (kal-eh-o 2564 Strong's) and means to "call" or "bid" or "call forth" Therefore the word was and is used to denote the call by the Lord an assembly of people out from among the world system unto faith in himself so they could function for him and by him. **Ro. 1:6-7** Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Ro. 8:28** And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. **I Cor. 1:2** Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's:

**Two** God uses an observable method to call forth an assembly (church) from among the world system. **Ro. 10:17** So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. *First*, we note that a person must come to the Lord by coming to faith in the Lord Jesus. **Heb. 11:6** But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. *Second* we see that this faith in the Lord is cultivated by a sinner hearing God's word. **II Thess. 2:13-14** But we are bound to give thanks always to God for

**you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: Whereunto he called you by our gospel, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.** Notice here that these Thessalonian people heard the gospel message and believed the truth of the gospel. The gospel message includes the truth that all people are lost in sin and need to be saved from sin. **Ro. 3:21-26 But the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.** The gospel includes the truth that Jesus is the sacrifice that paid for our sins. That is what the term “**Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (sacrifice) through faith in his blood**” means. The gospel message includes the truth that a sinner must exercise faith in the sacrifice that Jesus made on his or her behalf. Note again **Ro. 10:17** quoted above. The gospel message includes the truth that a sinner must ask for God to save them from their sins through faith in the sacrificial blood and resurrection of Jesus Christ. **Ro. 10:8-13 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is the word of faith, which we preach; That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.** When a person in faith asks God to save him, God forgives him of his sins and gives him his own righteousness. **Ro. 3:22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:** The gospel message includes not only the fact that Jesus died for the sins of the sinner, but that he also was buried and arose from the dead the third day. **II Cor. 5:14-15 For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.** When a sinner has come to God for salvation, placing his or her faith in Jesus Christ who died and arose again for him, he has a desire to become a part of the Lord's assembly (church). They become a part of a church of the Lord by publicly stating their faith in Jesus Christ and submitting to believer's water baptism administered by the church. Baptism in water by a believer is his symbolic way of stating his personal identification with Jesus Christ in his death, burial, and resurrection. That is why a church's pastor takes a professing person into a baptistry filled with water and submerges the professor into the water and lifts him out again. When a person takes these steps he is accepted into the assembly (church) and is considered to be a part of the assembly and is referred to as a member of that assembly. Thus, he has been called by God from out of the world system into God's system to help carry out the reaching out to others in the world system so that others also may become saved from their sins. **Col. 1:12-14 Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light: Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:**

**SECOND** *The Founder of the church is the entire triune Godhead* **John 6:37-40 All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the**

Father's will which hath sent me, that all of which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day. **JOHN 17:4-5** I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was. **John 17:18-23** As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world, And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou has sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and has loved them, as thou hast loved me. Father I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world. O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them. **Matt. 16:18** And I say also unto thee, thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. **I Cor. 1:2** Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both their's and our's: **Ro. 8:1** There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. A study of the above scriptures along with many others not set out here show that the entire triune Godhead is the founder of the church. **John 3:6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

**THIRD** *The Foundation of the church is Jesus Christ* **I Cor. 3:11** For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ This scripture is so clear that it really needs no further elaboration. When a new structure is being built, careful attention is given to the foundation upon which the structure is to be erected. This is certainly true concerning the church. A great Old Testament passage clearly points to Jesus Christ as the foundation of the church. **Isa. 28:16** Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste.

**One** Jesus Christ is said to be placed by God “Behold I lay in Zion” He is not the work of frail human hands but the work of Almighty God and he himself is indeed God the Son. **Luke 1:35** And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall over-shadow thee: therefore that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God. He is Emmanuel, God with us. **Matt. 1:23** Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

**Two** He is placed “for a foundation” Jesus Christ is the foundation upon which a spiritual race of people is being generated. The first man Adam fell into sin but Jesus is the new man and he will never fail. The first man fell into spiritual death but the new Adam, Jesus Christ, is life eternal and gives life eternal to all who believe in him. **I Cor. 15:20-23** But now is Christ risen from the dead, and became the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But

every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward, they that are Christ's at his coming. **Ro. 5:15** But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. **Ro. 5:21** That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. **Eph. 2:1** And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: **John 5:24** Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation: but is passed from death unto life. This "foundation" has as its purpose to support a new spiritual house which has as its purpose to be a habitation for God. **Eph. 2:19-22** Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into a holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. I say this very humbly but firmly, I am indwelt by God and so are all the saved of God. Oh how humble this should make us and how this should encourage us to walk carefully in the Spirit. **Gal. 5:16** This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. **Eph. 3:14-21** For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. **I Cor. 6:19-20** What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

*Three* Jesus Christ is here also called "a stone". The church of Jesus Christ is not built upon the shifting sands of this world system, but upon the Solid Rock, Almighty God the Son. **Rev. 1:8** I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty. The Son has always existed and he will live forever and we will live forever with him. Amen! This is the "Rock" that Jesus is building upon. **Matt. 16:18** Proof that Jesus is this "Rock" is stated by Peter. **I Pet. 2:4-8** To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore it is also contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed. **Matt. 7:24-27** Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

*Four* Jesus Christ is here also called "a tried stone" The word "tried" comes from the Hebrew word

**“bochan”** (976 Strong's). The word “bochan” is from the Hebrew root word **“bachan”** (974 Strong's) which means “to test”, **John 14:30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you; for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me.** Or “to investigate”. **John 8:46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?** Jesus Christ was tested in every way but did not sin. **Heb. 2:16-18 For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted. Heb. 4:14-16 Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.** He lived a perfect life, therefore, he became the perfect sacrifice for our sins. John the Baptist pointed him out by the river Jordan. **John 1:29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.** When put on trial, even Pilate had to absolve him. **John 18:38 Pilate saith unto him, What is truth? And when he had said this, he went out again unto the Jews, and saith unto them, I find in him no fault at all.** Being found with no fault, and knowing within himself that he was without blemish, he offered himself for a sacrifice for our sins. **Eph. 5:1-2 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. John 10:14-18 I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father.** Thank you Lord Jesus!

*Five* Jesus Christ is here also called **“a precious corner stone”** The term “precious” is from the Hebrew word “yaqar” (3368 Strong's) and means valuable, or costly. Jesus Christ is valuable because he is God the Son, the only Son of God. How can our limited human minds ever be able to state his value? But to us he is precious. He is our only hope of being right with God in time or eternity. **I Pet. 2:7 “unto you therefore which believe he is precious”** Greek “entimos” (1784 Strong's) valued, dear. Amen! Amen! Kings often paid a great price for a special massive corner stone to be placed in an edifice. Jesus is the special corner stone of the church and all other stones in the church relate to him. **I Pet. 2:5 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.** We are living stones because we receive eternal life from him and we will never be separated from him. Amen and praise the Lord! *Six* Jesus Christ is here also called **“a sure foundation”** Hebrew “yacad” (3245 Strong's) to set, i.e. to set firmly so as to not be movable. Jesus Christ is so placed as to never be moved out of his permanently fixed position.

So, now we find from the many passages cited that the church originated from God. Jesus called the church **“my church”** **Matt. 16:18** God laid claim to placing the “foundation” in Zion. We clearly see that the church is not of human origin. The church was not purchased by any one other than Jesus Christ himself. We may very well affectionately speak of the church in which we are a member as being “my church” and that is alright as long as we keep in mind that we don't actually ourselves own the church but are related to her as family. Let us be faithful to serve God through his church. **Eph.**

**3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end.  
Amen.**