



The Church's One Foundation

We are told that statistics do not lie. Church membership is decreasing in the United States; some would say drastically so. The number of people in most surveys and polls who think that churches should have much influence in the world is shrinking, and those who think that churches actually do influence the world is smaller still. A growing number of “church-hoppers” cannot seem to be satisfied with the church they attend, quickly leaving to try another. It can appear that the church is headed on an unstoppable slide towards irrelevance.

Yet Jesus says that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His church. Why? We see toil and tribulation all around us. We do not have to look outside our walls to find oppression—indeed, from within our churches come unrest and distrust and outright schisms. It is not metaphorical to say that those who love the church are weeping for her today.

Yet Jesus says the gates of hell shall not prevail. And He knows. Jesus tells Peter that the church is built upon the rock of Peter’s confession that Jesus is the Christ—He Himself is the foundation. He created the church. He came to seek the church and He will protect her. Indeed, He died for the church.

The church universal has a testimony that individual Christians cannot adequately express. Even when it seems we are losing the war, the faithful know that peace awaits. While it may cause disagreement as to how the church became God’s elect, it should cause no confusion to say that the church is chosen by our leader to survive and to thrive. Paul tells us in First Corinthians that the church is given every grace necessary to carry out God’s will.

Most importantly, we in the church understand what it means to experience Emmanuel. When the church is gathered, God is with us. Surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, we press on toward our high calling as the church, the bride of Christ. Our eyes may be downcast for a moment as yet another heresy, another dispute, and another poll of disinterest broadcast the lie of the church’s doomed fate, but the church knows that she is the church victorious. We know that the gates of hell shall not prevail.

We know that tumult gives way to the dawning morn of song. We know because we are built on one single foundation. Jesus Christ, the author of hope, the Lord.

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