

Tabernacle Missionary Baptist Church
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“The Never Alone Church”¹

Lesson 16: “Upon This Rock I Will Build My Church”

Goal: *To become the “The Never Alone Church” by practicing the Great Commandment of Love with our community of believers. This will enable us to fulfill the mandate given in the Great Commission.*

Objective: **To understand God’s plan for becoming The Rock for Him to Build His Church.**

This is the final lesson for the Never Alone Church. At the end, this lesson will employ group discussions for the purposes of developing four principles, which David Ferguson outlined for ‘*Becoming The Rock for God to Build His Church*’.

Introduction:

Jesus declared to Peter, *upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hell will not conquer it.* We find this in Matthew 16: 18 - 20 where Peter confessed Jesus as the Messiah who is the church’s foundation on whom the church is to be built.² “The foundation of the church is the revelation and subsequent glorifying declaration that Christ is the Messiah, the deliverer from sin and the provider of all needs.”³ It is clear that Jesus is giving his followers the assurance that nothing in this world or the next can overthrow the church.⁴

“For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting live.” (John 3:16 KJV) Our salvation and love relationship with God begins as we believe in His Son, Jesus Christ. The depths of our belief is nurtured by our consciousness of His love, which enables us to value the opportunity to serve in ministries, so that *His will is done on earth as it is in heaven.* The relevance for ministries is the ongoing work of the children of God to prepare the church to become the bride fully adorned for her Husband, our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. (Revelation 19: 7-9, Revelation 21:2, Ephesians 5: 25-27) This is God’s ultimate purpose for ministries for His church. Throughout time, God has been at work forming His people to be His bride so that they might reflect His glory throughout eternity.⁵ As we obey the Word of God and allow His light to shine in us we reflect Christ.

¹ Ferguson, David, *The Never Alone Church*, Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1998

² Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (423). Grand Rapids, Mich.; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

³ Ferguson, p. 264

⁴ Morris, L. (1992). *The Gospel according to Matthew* (425). Grand Rapids, Mich.; Leicester, England: W.B. Eerdmans; Inter-Varsity Press.

⁵ Beale, G. K. (1999). *The book of Revelation : A commentary on the Greek text* (1045). Grand Rapids, Mich.; Carlisle, Cumbria: W.B. Eerdmans; Paternoster Press.

Our loving Father chooses to work through His people with various ministries to gather the harvest by saving the lost souls in this dark world. Great Commandment love thrives in a church where the Lord's presence is experienced and people are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Active ministries in the church are fueled by the participants' growth in their love relationship with God and obedience to His Word, which inspires and enables real growth in love relationships with one another.

"And the King will answer and say to them, 'Assuredly, I say to you, inasmuch as you did [it] to one of the least of these My brethren, you did [it] to Me.' (Matthew 25:40 NKJV)

The Word of God teaches us that we are one body united by His love and unified by the Holy Spirit with talents and spiritual gifts God provides to fulfill *His work, His will, His way.*

"Then the King will say to those on His right hand, 'Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: (Matthew 25:34 NKJV)

Discussion Point #1: *Great Commandment Love Thrives When the Church is Motivated by Joyful Gratitude to God.*

"A Never Alone Church is compelled to right living and service to others by hearts overflowing with joy and gratitude. When this heartfelt gratitude is lived out in daily life, it constitutes "the fragrance of life" that the unchurched find so inviting."⁶ We celebrate as a church family with joyful hearts with each victory we experience in bringing each new soul to salvation. God is glorified in our effort to increase His earthly kingdom and blesses us with His provisions to be fruitful in obeying the mandate Christ gave His church. It is Christ's love that motivates us for service and empowers us with joy and strength to preserve the foundation of His church.

"The joy of the Lord is our strength" (Nehemiah 8:10)

Discussion Point #2: *Great Commandment Ministry Thrives When Worship Centers on Intimate Encounters with God.*

"Great Commandment love transformed the disciples' cowering fear into a relevant, vibrant, and attractive message of hope to the world around them."⁷ God is the same Source of our love and purpose today as we strive to share the Good News of the Gospel to draw souls to Him. Our intimate encounter with God strengthens our faith as He blesses us to experience His presence and wisdom as we seek to serve Him. We must be careful not to be distracted from keeping our eyes, mind, heart and soul fixed on Him.

"Let us lay aside every weight, and sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith of our faith" (Hebrews 12:1-2)

⁶ Ibid 265

⁷ Ibid 264

Discussion Point #3: *Great Commandment Ministry Thrives When The Church is Known as a Safe Place for All.*

The security and comfort of our love relationship with God, transforms our character to live up to and represent our commitment to *walk in the newness of life*. People respond to what they truly observe in Christians, rather than what they are told. The security of our salvation is the priceless experience that empowers us to tell the world with conviction about how, *Jesus paid it all. All to Him we owe*. The church can be felt as a safe place for all when we as a body of believers reach out beyond our comfort zone and welcome the hurting people in our community while exemplifying love and compassion.

“Come to me, all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn from Me for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My burden is light.” (Matthew 11:28-30)

Discussion Point #4: *Great Commandment Ministry Thrives When The Church Restores Community One Relationship at a Time.*

Satan causes many to feel judged in a way that they may not feel worthy of God’s mercy and grace. It is critical for us to be aware of their *feelings of guilt and confusion* that could become barriers and resistant to efforts to evangelize. This defense mechanism is often a result of their false assessment of Christians as a *bunch of phonies*. Many unbelievers cannot relate to the spiritual transformation of a Christian’s life, until Christians present themselves as saved sinners. The unsaved need to understand and identify with the fact that Christians too had sinned and fallen short of the glory of God but were redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb. *No one is worthy, no not one!* Our testimonies about our love relationship with God should include our struggles and our freedom from sin *at the moment we first believed*. One of the ultimate goals for the church is to establish divine unity through the bond of peace that will encourage restoration and fellowship to the body of believers and the outlying community.

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest also be tempted.” (Galatians 6:1)

Biblical Exercise:

In living out your love relationship with God, what ministries is the Holy Spirit leading you to participate in that will fulfill God’s purpose in building His church as a rock which prevails against the darkness in this world and the gates of hell that waits for unsaved souls?

The Great Commandment of Love:

“You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.’ This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets.” [Matthew 22:37-40]

The Great Commission:

Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I commanded you; and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the age. [Matthew 28:19-20, NKJV]

Monthly Biblical Exercises

Month	Year	Monthly Biblical Exercise
December	2010	Forgiveness
January	2010	Relevance for ‘The Never Alone Church
February	2010	People Need God and One Another
March	2010	Responding to Vital Relational Needs
April	2010	Meeting Needs of Others with Scripture
May	2010	Ministering to Fallenness and Aloneness
June	2010	Ministering by Knowing God Intimately
		**Summer Break **
October	2010	Ministering by Knowing God Intimately #2
November	2010	Where Great Commandment Love Begins
December	2010	God’s Priority for Ministry
January	2011	Great Commandment Love/Your Jerusalem
February	2011	Great Commandment Love w/Family of Origin
March	2011	Great Commandment Love w/Cherished Children
April	2011	Restoring Great Commandment Ministry/Church
May	2011	Experiencing Biblical Truth in Ministry
June	2011	Upon This Rock I will Build My Church