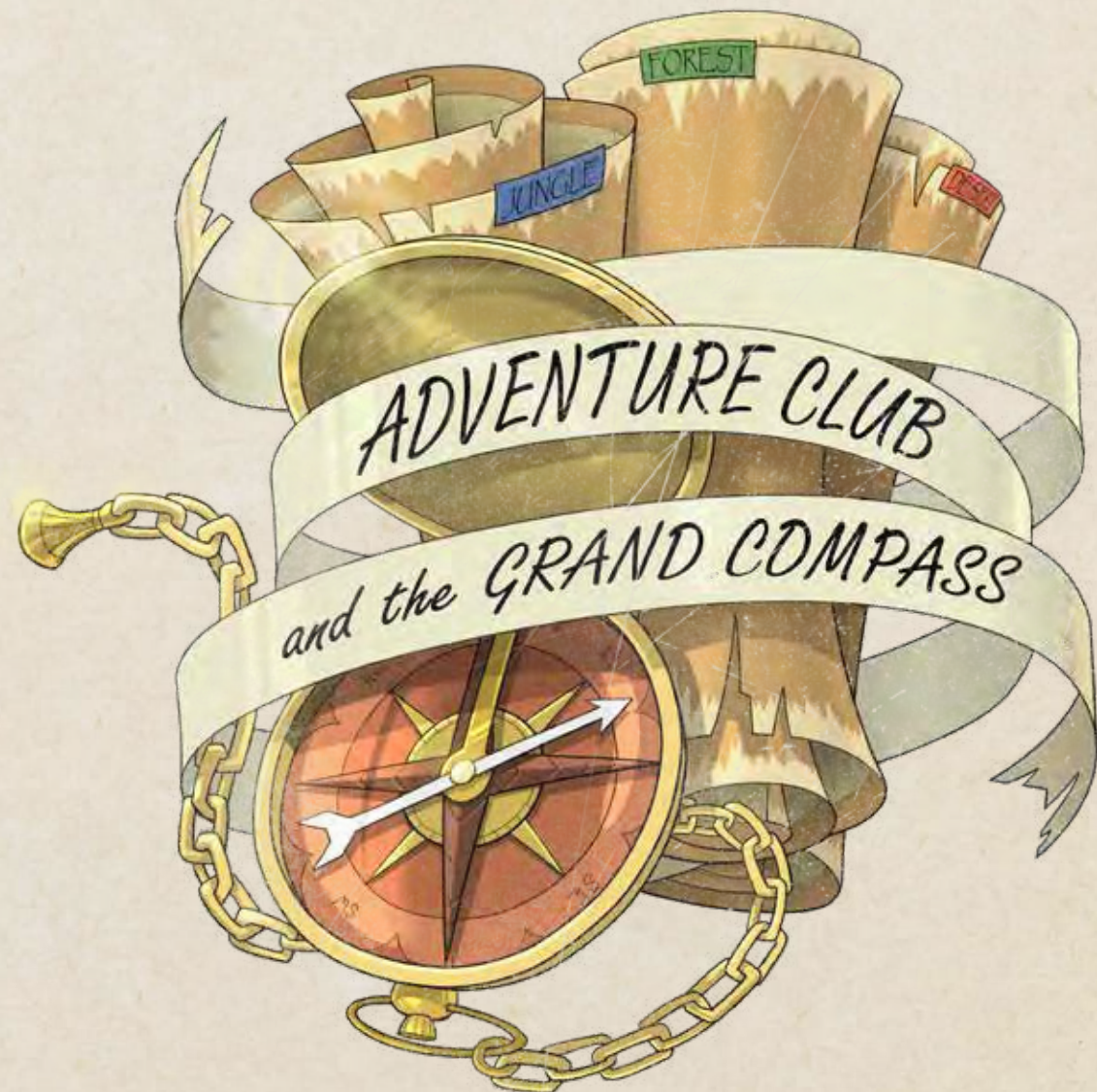


LESSON 1:

THE CHURCH IS MADE UP
OF CHRISTIANS

TEXT: MATTHEW 16:13–18, ACTS 2



CENTRAL TRUTH:

THE CHURCH BEGAN AT PENTECOST
AND IS MADE UP OF CHRISTIANS ALONE

MEMORY VERSE:

Matthew 16:18 – And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock *I will build my church*, and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it.



BONUS VERSES:

John 10:16 – And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.

Acts 2:47b – And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.

LESSON 1 SUMMARY

The church is perhaps one of the most misunderstood concepts in the history of mankind. Many people mistakenly think the church is a building or traditional establishment led by a mere man. However, God's Word makes it clear that the church is actually made up of every man, woman, and child who has trusted in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. The church has always been made up of Christians only. It had a definite beginning shortly after Christ returned to Heaven, and it will continue on forever.



THIS WEEK

THE CHURCH IS MADE UP OF CHRISTIANS

NEXT WEEK

**THE CHURCH IS THE
BODY OF CHRIST**

LESSON 1 OBJECTIVE & APPLICATION

OBJECTIVE

Communicate
this point clearly

**HOW THE CHURCH STARTED AND
WHAT IT LOOKED LIKE**

APPLICATION

Conclude
by explaining how
to apply this point

**BELIEVE THAT JESUS CHRIST
IS THE DIVINE SAVIOR**

The church had a distinct beginning, a beginning that was prophesied by Jesus and marked by the power of the Holy Spirit. When the Bible talks about the church, it always refers to people. The church is best defined as a community (Acts 4:32) of professing believers in Jesus Christ (Acts 2:41) gathering together (Acts 2:44, 46) to edify the saints (Acts 2:42), evangelize the lost (Acts 2:38–41), and exalt the Lord (Acts 2:47). Pentecost marks the birthday of the church. It is the day God started using the church to change the world.

1. The FOUNDATION of the Church (Matt 16:13–18)

Matthew 16 provides the first New Testament mention of the church when it records Christ's very own words prophesying about its beginning. Jesus started teaching His disciples about the future of the church by getting them to recognize how important He was. **Jesus is the only suitable foundation for the church.**

a. An Exalted Person

Christ asked a pointed question about His person in Matthew 16:13. He asked for the popular opinion about His reputation and status. The disciples, apparently in tune with the debate of their day, offered four alternatives. Some thought Jesus was John the Baptist raised from the dead, some thought He was Elijah, others Jeremiah, and some thought He could be any one of the prophets. Jesus then turned from considering the popular opinion and asked His disciples directly who they said He was (Matt 16:15). The question was addressed to all the disciples, yet it was Peter who immediately offered a reply: Jesus was not just a forerunner to the Messiah, but rather the Messiah Himself (Matt 16:16).

Peter's confession stood in stark contrast to the prevailing opinion of his day. Jesus was no mere man, and He was not simply a notable prophet. Jesus truly was the Messiah, and He was God in human flesh. Peter realized it was not sufficient to see Jesus as a forerunner to the Messiah or as just a special man. Jesus was Himself the long-awaited one. Peter's confession marked Jesus as **unique** and highlighted the importance of His person. Jesus Christ is the foundation of the church. **Without Christ's death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, the church could not exist.** Jesus is often referred to in Scripture as the church's head, meaning that before He came to earth there was no church body to be a part of. The church is a distinctly Christian organization, so Christ had to come and be the church's foundation before it could exist.

b. An Encouraging Prophecy

Christ responded to Peter's words with an equally amazing statement of His own (Matt 16:17). He announced that Peter was richly and divinely blessed because Peter rightly understood the person

UNIQUE:

Since the church is made up of Christians, it is an entirely unique entity. Emphasize the uniqueness of the church to your students by showing a bag filled with a variety of marbles, yet with only one white marble (the unique marble of the bunch) to represent the church.

and importance of Christ. Peter was blessed not because he arrived at this conclusion with his own logic or wisdom, but because God the Father Himself revealed it to him. Jesus chose to begin His church once people truly grasped who He was. Jesus made an amazing promise that He would personally build the church (Matt 16:18). The disciples had never heard of the church before this, but Jesus was pointing them to the future. He promised that He would one day build the church.

Jesus used apostles like Peter to give direction and guidance to the church. The apostles' confession that Jesus was Lord was so important to the church that Jesus called Peter a rock to build on. The other apostles are also called a foundation for the church (Eph 2:20). The church could not have existed before the apostles if the apostles were the foundation, nor could it exist without them and their teaching. Jesus used people to give out His Word, which built the church. He promised to bless His Word and help His messengers, and because of His power no force including Satan can overcome the church (Matt 16:18). **Nothing could stop the beginning and growth of the church.**

2. The FORMATION of the Church (Acts 2:1–4)

The fulfillment of Jesus' prophecy came on the day of Pentecost. For 40 days after Jesus' resurrection, Jesus met with and taught His disciples (Acts 1:3). He gathered with them at Jerusalem and clearly commanded them not to leave the city. The reason Jesus ordered the disciples to stay in Jerusalem was so they could wait for the promise from God the Father (Acts 1:4). The "promise" Jesus referred to was the Holy Spirit. **The Holy Spirit was the helper who would minister to the disciples once Jesus left.**

a. The Holy Spirit's Arrival

The disciples obeyed Jesus and stayed in Jerusalem. While they waited, they prayed constantly (Acts 1:14) and appointed a new apostle to take Judas Iscariot's place (Acts 1:26). On the day of Pentecost all the disciples were **gathered together** in one place (Acts 2:1). In one moment, the Holy Spirit came to them and changed their lives and church history forever.

The disciples were gathered together when suddenly there was a noise from the sky (Acts 2:2). The sound filled the entire house where the disciples were. There was also something to see.

BEGINNING:

Ask the students if they always lived, or if they had a definite beginning. Ask them when their definite beginning—their birthday—was, and ask them what birthday traditions they celebrate. Explain to the class that the church also had a definite beginning: the day of Pentecost.

GATHERED TOGETHER:

Use a magnet with paper clips to show your class how the magnet gathers the paper clips together into small groups. Explain that this is similar to how Christ gathers the church into small local churches around the world.

Divided tongues, which Luke compared to small flames, came and rested on top of each disciple. While it was not actual flames, the closest thing Luke could think of to describe this unusual sight was fire. God graciously sent these sights and sounds to help the disciples understand the significance of the Holy Spirit's arrival. The physical signs symbolized the Spirit's presence and power. Because the disciples could not see the Holy Spirit, they needed help understanding the uniqueness of this important moment in history.

Along with the sights and sounds, the Holy Spirit also brought some special gifts. Every disciple was filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4). "Filling" is a term used to describe the way the Spirit controls, directs, and gives power to Christians, and it always coincides with the sound doctrine found in God's Word. The disciples showed they were filled with the Spirit by speaking in other languages. Luke explained very clearly that the disciples could speak various languages only because the Holy Spirit gave them that ability. The Holy Spirit helped the disciples speak other languages because it was an obvious, visible way to show the inner, invisible reality of His presence and power. The disciples could never have spoken in foreign languages they did not know without the help of the Holy Spirit.



CHURCH:

Show the class pictures of where churches have met throughout history to help them understand that the church is not about a building. Include an artist's rendition of a first century AD house church, or a photo of huts in Sudan which serve as meeting places for the local church.

b. The Holy Spirit's Significance

This dramatic event clearly indicated that the **church** had begun. Jesus had promised that

He would baptize His disciples with the Spirit, and Pentecost was the fulfillment of that promise (Acts 1:16). Later in Acts, Peter clearly calls Pentecost the beginning of the church and connects it with the coming of the Holy Spirit (Acts 11:15). The apostle Paul would also explain later that the Spirit baptizes true believers into the church, making them Christians (1 Cor 12:13). Without the Spirit's baptism, there could be no church body. The remarkable physical sights and language abilities at Pentecost definitively proved that the baptism of the Spirit had happened and that the church had begun.

3. The FUNCTION of the Church (Acts 2:5-47)

Once the Spirit had come to minister to the disciples in the place of the ascended Jesus, the church could start. Like a newborn baby, the church instantly showed signs of life. The church was a gathering of Christians, a people **set apart** from the world to share the Gospel. They would evangelize the lost,



SET APART:

Explain how Israel was set apart in the Old Testament to be God's witness to the Gentiles. Specify that Old Testament Israel and the New Testament church are two different groups of people, yet they are similar in how both have been set apart by the Lord for His purposes.

edified each other, and exalted the Lord, just like true local churches do today.



a. Evangelize Unbelievers

From the moment the church started, evangelism happened. Many Jewish people who had come from every nation in the world were in Jerusalem to celebrate the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:5). When they heard the commotion at the disciples' house they rushed over to see what was happening. They were astonished to hear their own languages being spoken (Acts 2:6-12). The apostle Peter stood up in front of the crowd and began preaching a powerful message (Acts 2:14). He explained that these events had all been prophesied by Joel in the Old Testament (Acts 2:16). He went on to preach the good news about Jesus' death and resurrection and to demand repentance from sin. He used many other words to exhort his hearers to "be saved from this perverse generation" (Acts 2:40). On the church's birthday, around 3,000 people were saved!

b. Edify Christians

Salvation was directly followed by baptism and membership in the fledgling church (Acts 2:41). This new group began ministering to each other immediately, learning more doctrine, celebrating the Lord's Supper, praying, and meeting each other's financial needs (Acts 2:42-45). "Edification" is the name for the actions Christians do to help each other progress spiritually. Like a bricklayer adding bricks to build a house, the early church built one another up spiritually so its members would become more and more established in their faith.

c. Exalt God

To evangelism and edification the early church added the exaltation of God (Acts 2:46-47). Their unity and love for each other glorified the God who can change hearts. They praised God directly through worship and presented a good witness to their community. God was glorified by all the new Christians and continued to save more and more. Jesus' promise to build His church was just beginning, and countless more Christians would be added to accomplish Jesus' purposes for the world.

For many new Christians, to follow Christ meant rejecting the world, and to be rejected by the world. These early Christians learned that they could not belong to both the world and to Christ. Like **oil and water**, the two cannot mix. The Christian's willingness to give up everything this world had to offer and to seek to know Him, and enjoy Him forever, exalted God. This is what God designed man for, to exalt Him and to bring Him glory.



OIL AND WATER:

The church is a group of people who have been saved through faith in Jesus Christ. The church cannot mix with the world. Attempt to mix cooking oil with water in a clear plastic container. Show your class how, no matter what, the oil and water will separate from each other.

1. The FOUNDATION of the Church
(Matt 16:13-18)

2. The FORMATION of the Church
(Acts 2:1-4)

3. The FUNCTION of the Church
(Acts 2:5-47)



SPOTLIGHT ON THE GOSPEL

Jesus promised to build His church, drawing people to Himself. Attending church or saying a prayer does not mean a person truly belongs to the church. Instead, they must turn from their sin and trust in Jesus Christ, for the church is made up of Christians.

LESSON HIGHLIGHTS:

- The FOUNDATION of the Church (Matt 16:13-18)**
 - Jesus is the only suitable foundation for the church.
 - Without Christ's death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, the church could not exist.
 - Nothing could stop the beginning and growth of the church.
- The FORMATION of the Church (Acts 2:1-4)**
 - The Holy Spirit was the helper who would minister to the disciples once Jesus left.
- The FUNCTION of the Church (Acts 2:5-47)**
 - From the moment the church started, evangelism happened.

LESSON QUESTIONS:

- What happened at Pentecost?**
 - God flipped a penny at the store
 - The Holy Spirit came to start the church
- Who makes up the church?**
 - Snowmen
 - Christians
- What is the foundation of the church?**
 - Silly string
 - Truth from the Bible
- Who is the Holy Spirit?**
 - A ghost
 - God
- What is the foundation of the church?**
 - The Holy Bible because it is God's perfect Word.

1. The FOUNDATION of the Church (Matt 16:13-18)

- a. An Exalted Person
- b. An Encouraging Prophecy

2. The FORMATION of the Church (Acts 2:1-4)

- a. The Holy Spirit's Arrival
- b. The Holy Spirit's Significance

3. The FUNCTION of the Church (Acts 2:5-47)

- a. Evangelize Unbelievers
- b. Edify Christians
- c. Exalt God



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1. The FOUNDATION of the Church (Matt 16:13-18)

- **Jesus is the only suitable foundation for the church.**
- a. An Exalted Person
 - **Without Christ's death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, the church could not exist.**
- b. An Encouraging Prophecy
 - **Nothing could stop the beginning and growth of the church.**

2. The FORMATION of the Church (Acts 2:1-4)

- **The Holy Spirit was the helper who would minister to the disciples once Jesus left.**
- a. The Holy Spirit's Arrival
- b. The Holy Spirit's Significance

3. The FUNCTION of the Church (Acts 2:5-47)

- a. Evangelize Unbelievers
 - **From the moment the church started, evangelism happened.**
- b. Edify Christians
- c. Exalt God

LESSON QUESTIONS:

1. What happened at Pentecost?

- a. God flipped a penny at the store
- b. **The Holy Spirit came to start the church**
- c. Jesus was born
- d. Noah built the ark

2. Who makes up the church?

- a. Snowmen
- b. Bears
- c. **Christians**
- d. Mountains

3. What is the foundation of the church?

- a. Silly string
- b. **Truth from the Bible**
- c. Really long books
- d. Truth from the dictionary

4. Who is the Holy Spirit?

- a. A ghost
- b. A football player
- c. **God**
- d. A dog

5. What is the foundation of the church?

- a. The Holy Bible because it is God's perfect Word.

6. What are ways that you can help the church?

- a. AC kids can list various ways they see others help (music, cleaning, helping people, etc.)

1. The FOUNDATION of the Church (Matt 16:13-18)

- a. An Exalted Person
- b. An Encouraging Prophecy

2. The FORMATION of the Church (Acts 2:1-4)

- a. The Holy Spirit's Arrival
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- b. A football player
- c. God
- d. A dog

3. How do you become a part of the church?

- a. When you become a Christian, you join the church by the Holy Spirit entering your heart.

4. What happened at Pentecost?

- a. The Holy Spirit came to live in the hearts of those who believed in Christ.

5. What is the foundation of the church?

- a. The Holy Bible because it is God's perfect Word.

6. What are ways that you can help the church?

- a. AC kids can list various ways they see others help (music, cleaning, helping people, etc.)

LESSON 1 PROGRAM STRUCTURE

MATERIALS NEEDED: Painter's tape.

PROGRAM:	TRACKERS SCHEDULE:	SCOUTS SCHEDULE:
Volunteer Meeting <i>5 minutes</i>	Prayer and Structure Review	Prayer and Structure Review
Check In <i>15 minutes</i>		
Games (page 516) <i>15 minutes</i>	Numbers and Letters	Long Jump
Transition <i>5 minutes</i>		
Music (page 518, 519) <i>15 minutes</i>	"All Creatures of Our God and King" <i>(Hymn of the Month)</i> "Tune Up Our Hearts" "God Is the Hero" "Absolutely Nothin' "	"All Creatures of Our God and King" <i>(Hymn of the Month)</i> "Do Not Be Anxious" "Out of the Mud" "Young"
Lesson <i>20 minutes</i>	The Church is Made Up of Christians	The Church is Made Up of Christians
Transition <i>5 minutes</i>		
Small Group <i>5 minutes</i>	Pray and review the lesson	Pray and review the lesson
<i>15 minutes</i>	Ask questions from the lesson and discuss	Ask questions from the lesson and discuss
<i>10 minutes</i>	Review the memory verse and the pin reward system	Review the memory verse and the pin reward system
Pick Up <i>15 minutes</i>		

MATERIALS NEEDED: Painter's tape.

PROGRAM:	TRAILBLAZERS SCHEDULE:	COMBO SCHEDULE:
Volunteer Meeting <i>5 minutes</i>	Prayer and Structure Review	Prayer and Structure Review
Check In <i>15 minutes</i>		
Games (page 516) <i>15 minutes</i>	Tape Maze	Long Jump
Transition <i>5 minutes</i>		
Music (page 520) <i>15 minutes</i>	"All Creatures of Our God and King" <i>(Hymn of the Month)</i> "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" "Amazing Grace"	"All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name" <i>(Hymn of the Month)</i> "Tune Up Our Hearts" "Do Not Be Anxious" "Amazing Grace"
Lesson <i>20 minutes</i>	The Church is Made Up of Christians	The Church is Made Up of Christians
Transition <i>5 minutes</i>		
Small Group <i>5 minutes</i>	Pray and review the lesson	Pray and review the lesson
<i>15 minutes</i>	Ask questions from the lesson and discuss	Ask questions from the lesson and discuss
<i>10 minutes</i>	Review the memory verse and the pin reward system	Review the memory verse and the pin reward system
Pick Up <i>15 minutes</i>		