

Rejoice in God's Promise

Scripture Reading — Matthew 16:13-20

"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church ..." Matthew 16:18 —

In his book *Revolution*, George Barna, a leading church growth consultant, predicts that by the year 2025 only one-third of our population will rely on a local congregation to experience and express their faith. Whereas today about 70 percent of Americans rely on a local congregation for spiritual nurture, a large part of the coming generations will opt out of a typical church and adopt other models of Christian fellowship.

These predictions have upset some Christians. In an age of megachurches and expanding church facilities it seems hard to imagine that Christians would soon by-pass the typical church for other options.

Of course, no one knows what the church will look like in 2025. Throughout the centuries the church of Jesus Christ has come to expression in many different ways. But one thing we do know: until he comes again, our Lord, the head of the Church, will continue to create a community of those who have faith in him. That's the promise Jesus gives when he talks with Peter in Matthew 16:18: "I will build my church."

The Lord Jesus himself builds the church, and he will continue to build it by his own design. Regardless of changes that may come, we can rejoice that the church is held in his hand. Jesus is building a church that will prevail even against the powers of hell.

Prayer

Lord, thank you for your promise to build your church despite changes that may come. Help us to trust in your strength and guidance for your church. In your name, Amen.

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