

Membership Matters: Class 1 - Redeemer Baptist Church

Statement of Faith



1. The Church in Matthew

A. Matthew 16:13-19 - Jesus' Church

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 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. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Jesus builds His church. Beginning with Peter who confess Jesus as the Christ (Messiah). He is composing His church with confessing believers. This is Jesus' church, yes it is ours and we belong to it and to one another, but it is ultimately His. And the first fundamental aspect of a local church is that the people are believers “His people”, and He will build it until He returns. But notice, He gives the Peter as the first apostle to confess Jesus as the Messiah keys to bind and loose (the “*you's*” are 2nd person singular in v. 19).

B. Matthew 18:15-20 - Binding and Loosing Developed

15 “If your brother [lit. “the brother”] sins against you [σὺ, 2nd person singular], go and tell him his fault, between you [σοῦ, 2nd person singular] and him alone. If he listens to you [σοῦ, 2nd person singular], you [σοῦ, 2nd person singular] have gained your [σοῦ, 2nd person singular] brother. 16 But if he does not listen, take one or two [plural, implied within the larger body mentioned in v. 18] others along with you [σοῦ, 2nd person singular], that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses. 17 If he refuses to listen to them [the “one or two” in the church], tell it to the church [ἐκκλησία, assembly/congregation of believers contra the “Gentile” or “tax collector” reference], let him be to you [σοι, 2nd person singular] as a Gentile and a tax collector. 18 Truly, I say to you, [ὁμῶν, 2nd person plural] whatever you bind [δήσητε, 2nd person plural] on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose [λύσητε, 2nd person plural] on earth shall be loosed in heaven. 19 Again I say to you, [ὁμῶν, 2nd person plural] if two of you [ὁμῶν, 2nd person plural] agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them.”

Here Jesus is telling the disciples (18:1) how they are to think about the local church. The church is a body that actively is composed of believers, and particularly those who are repentant. So, here the “brother” sins against another implied brother who seem to be part of the larger gathering of a church. So, the church is composed of the believers that we heard Jesus is building in Matthew 16. The other brother won't repent of his sin when he is confronted. If he doesn't repent when it is taken to the body of believers in a local church he is no longer to be treated as a “brother”, but someone an unbeliever. Jesus uses the terms “Gentile” and “tax collector” because those would have been familiar “outsider” language to Jews. And Jesus calls this type of decision binding and loosing. So, Jesus is corresponding the binding and loosing that he said Peter would do in Matthew 16 to what the entire assembly of the local church would do in Matthew 18. Those who are part of the church are part of the binding and loosing. We call this church discipline.

C. Matthew 28:16-20

16 Now the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain to which Jesus had directed them. 17 And

when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. **18** And Jesus came and said to ***them***, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. **19** ***Go*** therefore and ***make disciples*** of all nations, ***baptizing*** them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **20** ***teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you*** [*ὅμῃν*, 2nd person plural]. And behold, I am with ***you*** [*ὕμῶν*, 2nd person plural] always, to the end of the age.”

Here we see Jesus open up a little more of the method that the disciples were instructed to bind and loose. ***First***, God makes His disciples and makes other disciples through His disciples. They are sharing and speaking of Jesus with others. So, the disciples obeyed this commission, and they taught their the disciples of Jesus they made to obey these commands, who passed it to the next generation of disciples, to the next, and all the way down to us. ***Second***, we pursue “binding” [adding those to membership in the church] and “loosing” [removing those from the membership in the church], which is one of the ways that we pursue making disciples of Jesus Christ. Those disciples are then added to the local church. And the principle method of adding them to the church is by baptism and teaching. We understand from Scripture that biblical Baptism is for believers only. So, if a person is a brother or sister in Christ, they get baptized and join a church, and we as a church are God’s instrument in that binding and loosing process. So here we are at the first member class. Considering the basic biblical doctrines that we believe Christians must hold. This is the front end of our pursuit to be obedient and faithful as God’s instrument to “bind” well based upon what we believe are essential doctrines of the faith.