

Becoming the Church God Builds

Participant Guide



The purpose of this module is:

To encourage Christians to become the church God builds.

Objectives:

- **Choose to declare God's truth openly**
- **Learn to differ with society purposefully and gently**
- **Resolve to discern God's voice continually**

Introduction

- A. God grows churches through _____ leadership.
1. God _____ to build His church first on Peter (Matthew 16:18).
 2. God realized Peter had _____.
 - a. Peter had a violent temper. He cut off a man's ear (John 18:10).
 - b. Peter spoke first and thought thirdly. In Matthew 16:21-23, he rebuked Jesus for predicting His own death.
 - c. Peter cowered before a teenage girl as he denied Jesus (Matthew 26:69-75).
 - d. Peter cursed when challenged. Peter denied he knew Jesus with an oath (Matthew 26:72).
 - e. Peter had little education. He was a fisherman (Matthew 4:18-20); he was an unschooled, ordinary man (Acts 4:13).
 - f. Peter possessed good intentions, but little follow through. Peter declared he would never deny Christ (Matthew 26:33).
 - g. Peter is known for his faltering faith. He began to sink while walking on the water toward Jesus (Matthew 14:28-30)
 3. Peter _____ a character change (Matthew 16:16, 18).
 - a. Simon was the fisherman who became a _____ (Matthew 4:18).
 1. Simon was a "_____ in the rough."
 2. The name Simon means "_____ " with shifting allegiances.
 3. Simon knew he _____ a character transformation (John 13:6-9).
 - b. Peter became a church _____.
 1. First, Simon made an _____ confession of Christ (Matthew 16:16).
 2. Then, Jesus blessed Simon with the new name of Peter, which means "ROCK" (Matthew 16:18).
 3. Peter became a church leader _____ he boldly confessed Christ.

4. God sees _____ our limitations.
 - a. God _____ selects people with weaknesses.
 - b. God saw Peter's faults and yet recognized Peter's _____.
 - c. Let's consider Peter's strengths in light of our own _____ as people upon whom God wants to build His church.

B. Peter _____ the truth (Matthew 16:16).

1. Peter spoke _____.
 - a. Though Jesus' question, "Who do you say I am?" was directed to _____ of the disciples, Peter was the first to respond (Matthew 16:15-16).
 - b. Peter did not seek _____ from the other disciples.
2. Peter spoke _____.
3. Peter spoke _____.
 - a. Peter _____ who Jesus was when he said, "You are the Christ".
 - b. Peter _____ who Christ was when he said, "You are the Son of the living God."

C. Peter _____ the culture.

1. Peter _____ three major beliefs about Jesus in his society (Matthew 16:14).
 - a. "Some say John the Baptist."
 - b. "Others say Elijah."
 - c. "And still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."
2. Peter spoke in a _____ context (Matthew 16:13); he understood what and how secular people thought.
 - a. Peter's confession of Christ took place in the especially pagan region of Caesarea Philippi.
 1. The city of Caesarea Philippi was originally called Panias in honor of the Greek god Pan.
 2. Prominent high cliffs near the city featured a cave dedicated to the god Pan, and numerous rock-cut alcoves featured statues of the Nymphs.
 3. Peter contrasted secular beliefs with godly beliefs.
 - a. Peter said, "You are the Christ." In contrast, Pan was the only one of the many Greek gods.
 - b. Peter said, "You are...the Son of the living God." In contrast, Greek gods are dead gods.
 4. Today, Jesus still asks, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"
 - a. We need to know what non-Christians believe.
 - b. We need to develop relationships with people outside of our church family to know what they think.
 - c. Conversations can give insights into people's belief systems.

d. We need to know what our culture believes.

- i. What belief system does the majority of the media endorse?
- ii. What conclusions can we draw from current trends in education, music, etc.?

D. Peter _____ God's voice (Matthew 16:17).

1. Peter sought answers from the right _____—Jesus.
 - a. Peter led the other disciples in _____ asking.
 - b. Peter asked for a parable explanation (Matthew 15:15).
 - c. Peter asked where Jesus was going (John 13:36).
2. Peter _____ for God's voice (Matthew 16:16-17).
 - a. Peter learned to _____ between divine revelation and worldly opinion.
 - b. Peter did not _____ until he had heard from God.
3. God _____ Himself to Peter (Matthew 16:17).
 - a. God's revelation gave Peter a personal _____.
 - b. God's revelation gave Peter a greater _____ (Matthew 16:18).
 - c. Jesus _____ Peter to build His church.

E. God _____ to build His church on us (Matthew 16:18).

1. God does not build _____; He works through human leadership to build His church.
2. God promises Hades will not possess enough _____ to be successful against us, the church.
3. God gives keys to _____ the kingdom.
 - a. Jesus first gave Peter the keys to unlock the kingdom for the Jews and Gentiles alike.
 - b. Jesus then gave the rest of His disciples the authority to unlock the kingdom.
 - c. Jesus grants us the authority to unlock the kingdom for the unsaved.
4. What we do on earth will have _____ impact.

F. Today Jesus asks, _____ will build my church?"

1. Disciples who speak _____ with God to receive divine revelation.
2. Disciples who speak _____ with unbelievers.
 - a. To discover belief systems.
 - b. To win unbelievers to the Lord.
3. Disciples who speak _____ about their culture.
 - a. To compare and contrast secular beliefs with godly beliefs.
 - b. To bring unbelievers to the Lord.



Small Group Exercise

How can we learn what people think about Jesus? By developing relationships with people and then listening carefully to what they have to say, we can draw conclusions about people's beliefs. Then the time will come when we will have an opportunity to share the truth of the Gospel with them.

Answer the following questions in small groups of three to four people.

- Identify some of the values in our society that bring people together.
- What are reasons people come to worship in a local congregation for the first time?
- Recently your coworker told you, "There is no hope for my marriage. We can't possibly forgive each other after all the damage that's been done." As a Christian, how could you compassionately identify with your coworker's personal hurt? Draft a sample conversation that communicates how God helps us forgive each other when we are hurt.
- Now recall an actual conversation with a non-Christian in which you had an opportunity to constructively share the Gospel. In the space below, outline what you would say if you could have another discussion with that same non-Christian.



Action Planning/Reporting

This module has focused on a few of Simon Peter's church building characteristics. When we decide to join in building God's church, we can also decide to cultivate the very characteristics that prompted Jesus to choose Peter as a church builder.

Work individually for the next few minutes. Place a checkmark beside the church-building characteristic(s) that you need to exhibit in your life right now. Then note specifically "how" and "when" you will do so.

Church Building Characteristics	Check	How?	When?
Takes initiative with others			
Readily professes Christ			
Speaks knowledgeably in a societal context			
Listens, then speaks			
Speaks purposefully			