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Message Notes

May 4, 2025



## Honduras Missions Update

Notes:



### Small Group Discussion Guide

Matthew 16:13-20

#### 1. "I will build My church."

**Q's:** What does Jesus mean by "church"? What are some common misunderstandings about what a church is or isn't? What distinguishes a true church from a false one?

**Hint:** The Greek word for "church" (*ekklesia*) refers to a called-out community. It's not a building or event—it's a people centered on Jesus. A false church may retain religious activity but lack faithfulness to Christ and His gospel.

#### 2. "On this rock I will build..."

**Q's:** What is the "rock" Jesus is referring to? Peter? His confession? Both? Why has this been a major division point between Protestants and Catholics? How does understanding this help clarify the foundation our church is built on?

**Observation:** While Catholics see Peter himself as the rock (and thus the first Pope), Protestants generally understand the "rock" to be Peter's confession: "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." This emphasizes *faith in Jesus* as the true foundation.

#### 3. How Jesus is building His church today

**Q's:** What inspired or moved you about what God is doing in the churches in Honduras (or other missions)? In what ways do you see God building His church here at our own church? Give some recent stories and testimonies of people coming to faith, growing in Jesus, being cared for by each other, miracles, acts of generosity, etc.

**Observation:** Jesus is still building. His work is evident in changed lives, growing faith, and global movements. Be encouraged—what you are part of is much bigger than what you see week to week.

#### 4. “The gates of hell shall not prevail...”

**Q’s:** What does this promise mean? Does it imply spiritual warfare? In your experience, what are some ways the enemy tries to undermine a local church? How can we stay spiritually alert and unified?

**Observation:** Gates are defensive, not offensive. This implies the church is on the advance, and even hell cannot stop it. We don’t need to fear opposition. Victory is already declared. But we do need vigilance and unity.

#### 5. “I will give you the keys...”

**Q’s:** What might “binding and loosing” mean in this context? How does this connect to the authority of the church and its mission?

**Hint:** The language of “keys,” “binding,” and “loosing” relates to spiritual authority and responsibility—interpreting God’s will, proclaiming the gospel, and leading the church in faithful obedience.

**Takeaway:** The church has real authority—not to control people, but to release them into God’s kingdom through gospel truth and discipleship.

### 6. Living it Out: The Commission and the Community

**Q’s:** What is Jesus’ commission to His church (see also Matthew 28:18–20)? How can we, as a small group, actively participate in that mission?

#### Application & Prayer Focus

- **Pray for those getting baptized this Sunday.** Pray for boldness, spiritual protection, and community support.
- **Pray for the names placed on the cross.** Ask God to draw them to Jesus and open doors for conversations and witness.
- **Commit to encouraging the newly baptized.** Consider writing notes, extending invitations, or including them in group gatherings.

