



"My Life and the Church  
How Do They Fit?"

Setting the Stage for 2009

## Matthew 16:13-18

<sup>13</sup>When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, **“Who do people say the Son of Man is?”**

<sup>14</sup>They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” <sup>15</sup>**“But what about you?”** he asked. **“Who do you say I am?”** <sup>16</sup>Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” <sup>17</sup>Jesus replied, **“Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup>And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.**

# **1. The continuation of the Mission after Christ's departure**

## **Acts 1:1**

**1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach.**

## **Acts 1:8**

**8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

## **2. The forming of the Early Church**

- **The Holy Spirit comes**
- **The method never changes, the disciples are strategic, they GO to the temple where they believe they will find God fearing people.**
- **The witness continues not only to the common folk but to the religious leaders.**

### **3. Persecution Heightens, the Message continues in Jerusalem**

- **In the midst of persecution from the religious leaders, believers continue to meet, miracles are happening in Jesus' name and more and more people believed.**
- **While people were rejoicing and being saved from their sins, the Gates of Hell continue to push against the expansion of the church.**

#### **4. Stephen preaches and is stoned to death, intense persecution ensues (7:49-8:4)**

- **God uses persecution to take the message beyond Jerusalem to Judea and into Samaria. (8:1)**
- **We don't like persecution, or suffering. But often God uses it to glorify Himself. As His people endure with faith, the gospel becomes attractive and its power is released into the lives of others.**

**5. An Enemy is converted and goes on mission to spread the message, through planting churches in the Gentile/Non Jewish world.**

- In Acts 9 Saul who was persecuting the church in Acts 8 is converted.
- He is called by God to take the message of the Gospel to the Gentiles, to the uttermost parts of the world.

- Now we come to Acts 13:1-3; Here we see the church together.

<sup>1</sup>In the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. <sup>2</sup>While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, “Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them.” <sup>3</sup>So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off.

- **Over the next 11-14 years Paul would preach the gospel, gather the converts into communities (local churches), he would strengthen and establish them in the faith, and then go with some disciples from previous churches and plant more churches.**
  - **Christians reproduce Christians by sharing their faith and life in the context of a local community called the church.**
  - **Not everyone in the church will be sent away to plant churches, some remained in their local community to continue to reach out, strengthen and develop others (and themselves).**

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- **THE MISSION** is the making of disciples by sharing the Gospel.
  - **THE METHOD** is the church being a relational center, where we learn and grow in our faith together. Then we can be used by God to take the message of salvation through Jesus Christ to others.
  - **THE MESSAGE** is the **GOSPEL**.

**Luke 24:46-47**

**46** He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, **47** and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

**Acts 5:31**

**31** God exalted him to his own right hand as Prince and Savior that he might give repentance and forgiveness of sins to Israel.

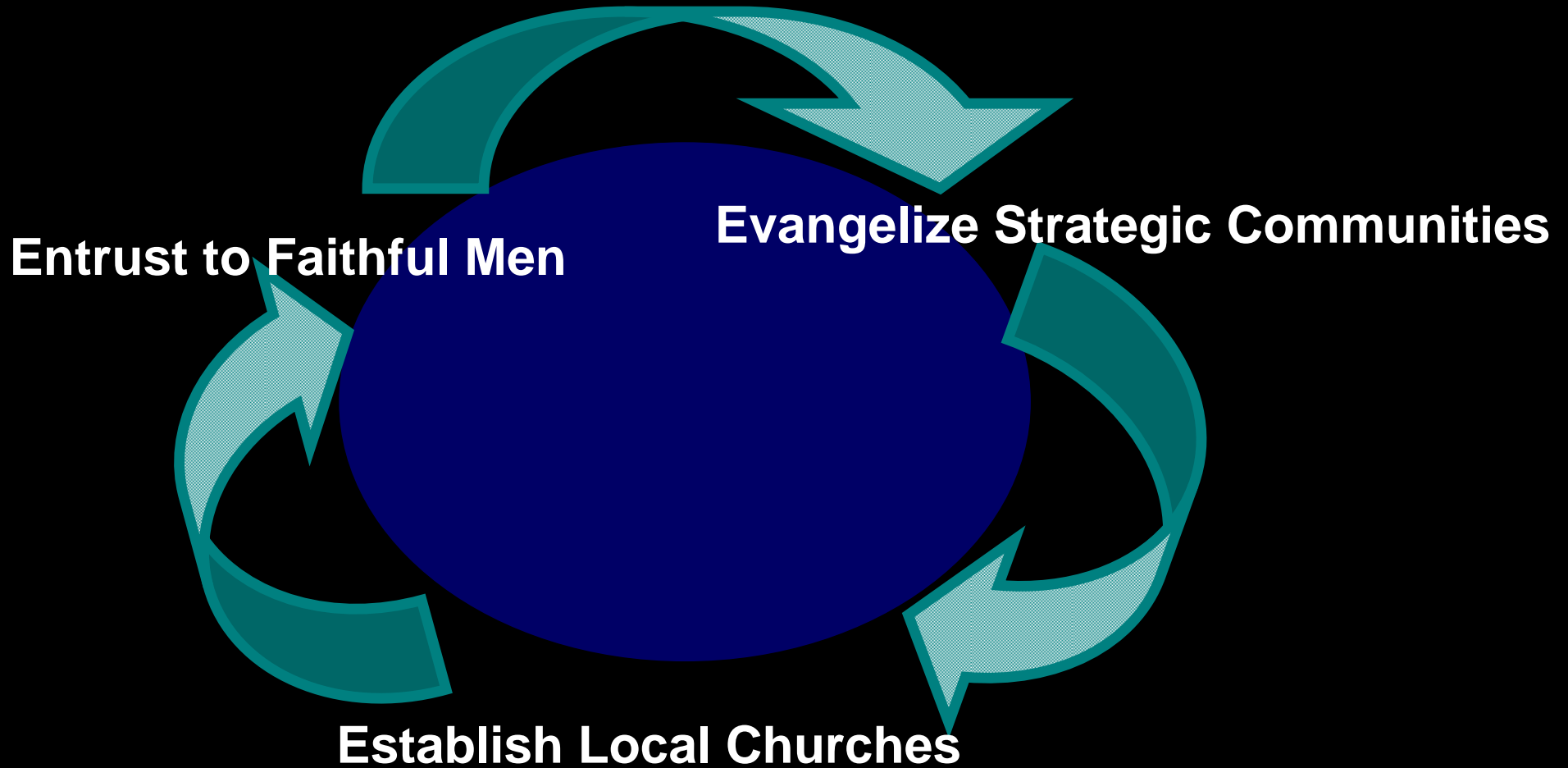
**Acts 10:43**

**43 All the prophets testify about Him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”**

**Acts 20:21**

**21 I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.**

# The Strategy and Call of Paul



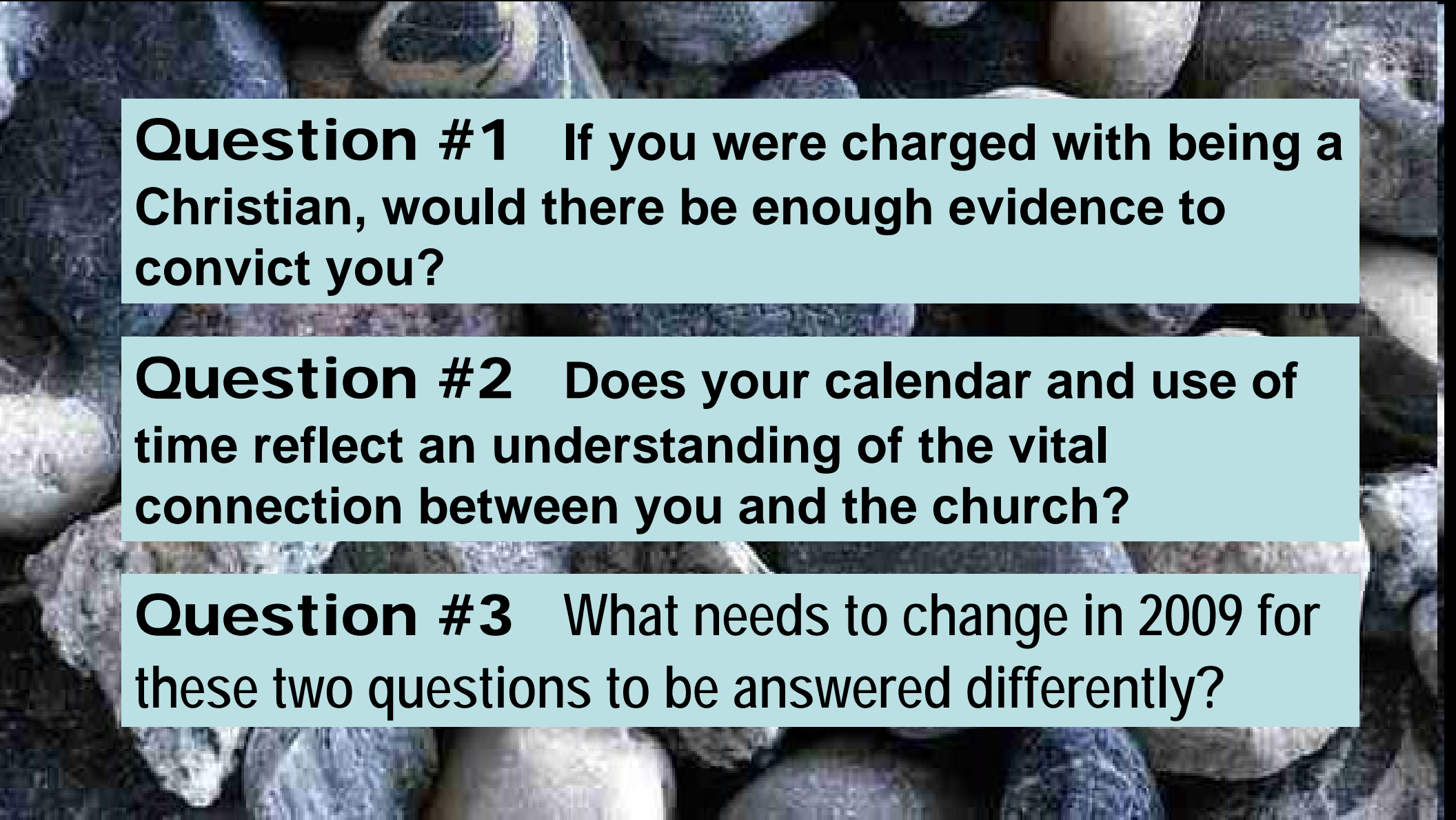
# The Strategy and Call of Paul



“What Will it Take to Get  
YOU to Follow?”



**Through the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will establish a reproducing campus beginning in the Bux-mont community that is part of Penn Valley's movement of churches spreading the good news of Jesus Christ. We will accomplish this through the Biblical teaching of the gospel that is authenticated by loving, growing relationships with God and one another.**



**Question #1 If you were charged with being a Christian, would there be enough evidence to convict you?**

**Question #2 Does your calendar and use of time reflect an understanding of the vital connection between you and the church?**

**Question #3 What needs to change in 2009 for these two questions to be answered differently?**