

I Will Build My Church

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Preacher: Mike Salvati

[0 : 00] You may be seated. Kids, you can now go to your King's Kids class, and as they're on their way, would you open up your Bibles to Matthew chapter 16? If you've got a pew Bible, I'm going to be reading a passage on page 977, Matthew chapter 16, verses 13 through 20.

Hear God's Word. Now, when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, Who do people say that the Son of Man is?

And they said, Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. He said to them, But who do you say that I am?

Simon Peter replied, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered him, Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

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. 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.

[1 : 17] Then He strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that He was the Christ. May God bless the hearing of His Word. So what are you doing this summer?

What you got planned? It's a fun question to ask people in early June, because the summer lies in front of us.

It's full, full of possibilities and fun. Maybe you're planning to go to the Harbor Market on every Saturday morning, or maybe you're going to hit Twilight Jazz, or July 4th at Wolf and Butyl, or you're going to grill out as much as possible to perfect your burger.

Sure, maybe that's your plan. Maybe you're going to go north, cabin on a lake, relax in a hammock, for sure, spend some time with friends.

It's not unusual when you ask someone that question, and I've been asking that question all week long. People's faces light up. There's a twinkle in their eye before their answer, because it's fun.

[2 : 29] Summer's fun. Summer in southeast Wisconsin is worth all of the winter cold, right? But let's think outside the box a little bit. What if you were to ask Jesus that question?

Jesus, what are you doing this summer? Jesus, what you got planned this summer? What are you going to be doing?

Well, I think if you know your Bibles at all, Jesus would reply likely, referencing maybe Hebrews 1.3. He'd say, well, you know, as the radiance of the glory of God, and as the exact imprint of His nature, my plan is to continue upholding the universe with the word of my power.

And we would say, yes and amen. That's a great plan. Do you have anything else planned? And He does.

He's told us this much in the passage I just read you. Matthew 16, 13 through 20, we learn about who Jesus is and what He's doing this summer.

[3 : 47] Matthew 16, 13 through 20 is essentially a Q&A; with Jesus. Jesus asks a couple questions. Peter gives a great confession.

And then Jesus responds to that confession with some explanation, framing the confession. It's really interesting. It all points to who Jesus is and what He is doing this summer in Kenosha and in Liberia and in Kenya and in Nepal and in China in addition to upholding the universe by the word of His power.

So let's look at this Q&A; with Jesus. Starting with these two questions. Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, which was an area that was mostly populated by Gentiles, and so there's kind of a lull with Jesus and His disciples.

And so He asked them, the first question is kind of like a straw hole. It's like, what's the popular opinion? Guys, guys, what is the word on the street about me?

Who are people saying I am? And His disciples say, well, some say John the Baptist in chapter 14 of Matthew, he has been beheaded.

[5 : 04] He's dead. So they think he's, some people think he's John the Baptist, come back. Some people think he's Elijah, come back. Some people think he's Jeremiah or one of the other prophets. What they all have in common is people are saying that Jesus is one who speaks for God, a prophet of some type.

Let's fast forward from the first century to the 21st century, and let's say Jesus asks us this same question. Who do people say the Son of Man is?

And now we're kind of thinking about those people around us and who they say Jesus is, and maybe we'd say, well, they think that, Lord Jesus, You are the kind of the authority on love, and You taught on love, and only love.

You taught on love, or you were before your time, or you were a good teacher. You spoke truth to power.

You were a way to salvation. Some people think that you were a historical figure, but you're kind of tough to figure out.

[6 : 14] Even some people think that you're irrelevant. Some people think you're a crutch. Some people will equate you, Jesus, with some kind of like anxiety med for the soul.

So what people are saying about you is that you're probably a good guy, but mostly irrelevant.

Jesus moves on to the next question.

But who do you say that I am? Jesus has a way of making things personal, doesn't He? And with that question, He moves from having His disciples kind of talk about what other people think about Him, which is relatively easy, to now getting personal.

What do you say? Who do you say that I am? What do you believe to be true about me?

So let's get personal. Imagine Jesus asks you that question. Who do you say that I am?

[7 : 35] Maybe you're a Christian and you've been walking with the Lord Jesus for decades. Who do you say that I am? Maybe you're a Christian and you have walked away from the church, even walked away from Jesus.

Who do you say that I am? Maybe you're a non-Christian but you're curious about Jesus. Who do you say that I am?

Maybe you're a middle school or a high school student and you've been raised in a Christian home. And if Jesus were to ask you that question, who do you say that I am? You might respond by saying, well, my parents think.

But what Jesus wants to know is, who do you say that He is? With these two questions, Jesus is very intentionally focusing His disciples and us on who He is.

But we can even be a little bit more to the point. We can ask a question like this. Do you believe that Jesus is presently dead or alive?

[8 : 52] Because depending on how you answer that question will kind of reveal what you think that Jesus is doing this summer. If He's dead, He's not doing anything this summer.

But if He's alive, well, there's all sorts of interesting possibilities. possibilities. This Q&A; with Jesus starts with two questions posed by Jesus, raising the question, who do you say that I am?

And from there, we move to verse 16. Because Peter answers the question. Simon Peter replied, you are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

It's a confession. It's a declaration. Did you notice the word the before Christ? That might seem a little bit unusual to you.

The Christ. And if you didn't know it, that word Christ is actually a title. It means Messiah. The Christ means the same thing as the Messiah.

[10 : 07] So what Peter is saying is, you are the Messiah, the Son of the living God. So, what's Messiah? It means anointed one.

And all throughout the Old Testament, there are these prophecies after prophecies of this one who would come, an anointed one, a promised one.

And all throughout the Old Testament, we are told of who he is and what he will do. He would be a king descended from David.

Last week, we finished off the book of Amos. And Amos ends with hope that God is going to restore the booth of David in which this one who would come in the line of David, he is going to gather for himself a people called by his name from both Jews and Gentiles.

It's the Messiah. We learn from 2 Samuel 7 that God promised to David himself that he would have a descendant who would sit upon his throne forever.

[11:21] I want to point you to one of my favorite prophecies of the coming Messiah. It's in Isaiah chapter 9. If you want to open up your Bibles to Isaiah 9, turn there.

It's on page 680 of your Pew Bible. You're familiar with this passage because we say it a lot during Christmas time. But it's for all year round.

For to us, a child is born. To us, a son is given. And the government shall be upon his shoulder, his being the Messiah. And his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor.

He's going to have a wisdom like no one else. Mighty God. He is divine. And so when Peter confesses him as you are the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God, he's saying, you are God.

Divine. God's divine Messiah. Everlasting Father is talking about the everlasting kingly reign of the Messiah, the Prince of Peace.

[12:27] He's going to bring he's going to bring shalom of the increase of his government and of peace that will be no end on the throne of David and over his kingdom to establish it and uphold it with justice and righteousness from this time forth and forever.

The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this. And so do you know what Peter is saying here? He's saying, you are God's king.

God in the flesh who has come to establish an everlasting kingdom of increasing peace. It's quite a confession.

Jesus asks, who do you say I am? And Peter's like, you're the man. You're the king. The Christ, the Messiah.

It has this confessional quality as we read in Romans 10, 9. If we confess with our mouths that Jesus is Lord and believe in our hearts that God has raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

[13:31] It's this confession that Jesus is the Christ. But here's the deal. After Peter confesses that Jesus is the Christ, and we're back to Matthew 16, Jesus in verse 21 goes on to explain that this Christ must suffer many things and be killed and on the third day be raised from the dead.

And Peter's like, not having it. Far be it from you, Lord, this shall never happen to you. Peter got the confession right that he's the Christ, but he seemingly missed the memo of Isaiah 53, that he would be a suffering Christ.

We have the benefit of looking back on this with the benefit of hindsight. So not only do we know that Jesus is the Christ who fulfilled Isaiah 9, 6, and 7, but he's the Christ who fulfilled Isaiah 53. Would you turn there? It's on page 729 of your pew Bible. Isaiah 53. I'm just going to read you three verses, 4, 5, and 6. Again, this is the suffering servant. This is a prophecy of the coming Messiah. He's going to be a king who's going to establish an everlasting kingdom of increasing peace on the throne of David. Surely he has borne our griefs.

[15:06] He, the Christ, and carried our sorrows. Yet we esteemed him, the Messiah, stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. But he, the anointed one, the Christ, the Messiah, was pierced for our transgressions.

He, this coming king, was crushed for our iniquities. Upon him, this, this Messiah, upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace.

And with his wounds we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray. We have turned everyone to his own way. And the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.

Jesus is the wonderful counselor, mighty God, everlasting father, prince of peace, who established his forever kingdom through his substitutionary death on the cross.

He established his kingdom through suffering and death and resurrection. this is the Messiah. So if Jesus were to ask you, who do you say that I am?

[16:27] We get to say, you are the crucified and risen Christ, the King, the Messiah.

Peter's confession of Jesus as the Christ, it informs our own confession of Jesus as the Christ.

What you believe, who you believe Jesus is will determine what you believe Jesus will be doing this summer.

Which now brings me to verses 17 through 19 where Jesus responds to Peter's confession that he is the Christ. And by the way, he doesn't deny it. he actually works with it with a three-fold explanation. And it's here that we learn what Jesus will be doing this summer.

So, the first explanation, the first aspect is he's talking about Peter's confession confession, and he says it's a revelation.

[17 : 46] Look at verse 17 of chapter 16. And Jesus answered, Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah. That's a reference to his dad, Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

So, what Jesus is saying to Simon Peter is that, hey, your confession of me as the Messiah didn't come from your dad.

It didn't come from flesh and blood. You didn't figure it out on yourself. You didn't come up with it on your own. No, no. That confession is a revelation of God the Father to you.

He gave you eyes to see me for who I am. It's this gracious working of God to give eyes to sinners to see who Jesus truly is, the crucified and risen King.

And here's what that means for us. Most of us in the room would say, hey, I'm a follower of Jesus. I've gone from darkness into the light.

[19 : 07] Jesus has flipped me. He's the great repo man. And he claimed me. But here's the thing.

You didn't of yourself figure Jesus out. You didn't of your own flesh and blood come to realize who Jesus is.

you yourself have received a revelation from God to be able to recognize Jesus as the crucified and risen Messiah. That's a gift of God to you so that you would believe on Him and be saved.

Blessed are you, Christian, for that revelation is from God the Father. So this confession is a revelation, but in verse 18, this confession is foundational to something.

It's in verse 18 where we learn what Jesus is doing this summer. 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.

[20 : 17] I mean, there's a lot here. There have been some serious theological fights fought over this verse. There's a play on words here.

when Jesus says, and I tell you, you are Peter, the Greek word for that is petros.

It's a masculine noun. And the play on word comes next. And I tell you, you are petros and on this petra rock I will build my church.

We're not talking about the Christian band from the 80s. Any petro fans in the room? Amen. What Jesus is doing here is a play on words.

This rock that Jesus is going to build his church upon is not Peter per se.

[21 : 16] It's Peter's confession. You are the Christ. You are the Christ. Jesus says, hey, you are Peter and on this confession I will build my church.

Your confession that you are the Christ. I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. this confession it's foundational to Jesus building his bride his church.

Jesus is the cornerstone of the church. Who he is is the very basis of who we are. When you read the word church he's not building a building per se he's building a people.

A gathering of people from every tribe tongue and nation around the world. The word for church is a Greek word called it's ekklesia and it literally means called out from.

To be called out from. And it came to be used to describe the assembly or congregating of God's people. It's God's people gathered.

[22 : 41] And in the New Testament that word church is used for both local churches like our church. A church a people in a time in a place with a specific leadership structure.

But it's also used to describe the universal church. The church of all time. All who would ever believe in Jesus. And it's the universal church that Jesus is talking about building here in verse 18. I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. You know what my favorite word in this verse is?

It's the word my. My church. He's talking about a possession.

by virtue of his shed blood he has purchased for himself a people from every tribe, tongue, and nation around the world from all time.

[23 : 43] My people. The booth of David being restored. I will build my church. I will grow it.

I will gather. I will add. And I will edify my church for all time. And the gates of hell will not prevail against it. Gates is a reference to the front doors of a city, of a fortified city.

And those gates were a defensive mechanism. And so in order for gates to prevail means they're being assaulted. For gates to prevail means they didn't open when attacked, when prevailed upon. And what Jesus is saying is I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. I will plunder hell and it will not rise victorious over me.

I will gather for myself dead sinners from every tribe, tongue, and nation and give them life unstoppable.

[25 : 02] What Jesus is building cannot be stopped. Not even by the gates of hell. It's a description of Jesus on the advance, Aslan on the move.

It's a wonder. So what is Jesus doing this summer? He's assaulting hell. He's building his church globally.

Now, throughout the summer, in far away places in our neighborhoods, Aslan's on the move. Jesus is at work. On this rock, this confession, this foundational confession that I am the Christ. That's what I'm building on.

That's what he's building on. In verse 19, he goes on to say something about this confession. This confession that you are the Christ, it actually is grounds for admission into the church or not.

[26 : 11] Do you see that in verse 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. Do you know what keys do?

Back in the first century, they didn't have cars. Keys were for doors. And what a key would do, it would lock a door and keep someone out or it would open a door and let someone in.

And so, what Jesus is giving Peter and the apostles and now individual churches is the responsibility for determining who can come into the church and who's to remain out.

And the basis of that determination is on the confession. You are the Christ. The crucified and risen Christ.

When someone moved by the Spirit is able to confess that Jesus is the crucified and risen Christ, their lives will change.

[27 : 13] God's God. So, what we see going on here is this responsibility that Jesus is giving Peter and then to the apostles, to the church. We see it in Matthew chapter 18.

The binding and loosing is of people, whether they are part of the kingdom of Jesus or not, whether they are to be welcomed into the church or not.

When we go through a membership class, it culminates in those people seeking membership to have an interview with two of our elders.

elders. That interview is a keys to the kingdom moment where two elders are listening carefully for a clear profession that Jesus is crucified and risen Christ.

A clear profession that a confession that Jesus is someone's Lord and they believe in their heart that God has raised him from the dead.

[28 : 29] And so what we have here is this description of this responsibility, even authority given to churches to protect the church based upon this confession.

So Jesus responds to Peter's confession by saying, that is a revelation of God. On that confession, I am building my church. church. And here's some keys to protect the church, to make sure those who are added to the church are only those who confess me as the Christ.

Let's come back to this question. Jesus, what are you doing this summer? Well, based upon this passage, which clearly reveals who Jesus is and what he's doing, this summer, Jesus is going to be building his church.

He's going to be saving people and growing people. Just think about who Jesus is. In Matthew 1, he's connected to Abraham.

Jesus is the offspring through whom God is going to bless the nations from Abraham. He's descended of David. He is Emmanuel.

[29 : 58] He, the second Adam, did what the first Adam couldn't do, resisted the devil. He preached a sermon and he said this, I came not to abolish the law but to fulfill that.

Who says that but the Christ? In chapter 12, he says, I'm the Lord of the Sabbath. Who says that kind of stuff?

The Christ. Chapter 16, he makes sure his disciples know that he, the Christ, will suffer and he will be killed and he will be raised on the third day.

That's why in verse 20, he tells them, hey, keep the fact that I'm the Christ on the down low because they didn't understand at that point that the Christ must suffer. Chapter 17, he's transfigured, his face shone like the sun.

Chapter 21, he enters the city of Jerusalem and cleanses the temple because he's the Christ.

Chapter 22, he gives the greatest commandment to love God with everything you've got and love your neighbor as yourself.

[31 : 03] He says all of the Old Testament law, it all depends on those two commandments. commandments. In chapter 24 and 25, he gets into the end times.

In chapter 25 in particular, he started to talk about final judgment and he's referring to himself as the king who will judge all the nations. The Christ.

In chapter 26, he institutes the Lord's Supper. Passover. He reworks Passover and says, now it's about me. Do this in remembrance of me.

Who does that? The Christ does that. In chapter 27, he's handed over to sinful men and he is brutalized and then crucified, dead and buried, just like he said.

Chapter 28, he's raised from the dead on the third day, just like he said. And then he appears to his disciples and he says to them something that is just amazing.

[32 : 05] He says, all authority on heaven and earth has been given to me because he's the Christ. Go make disciples of the nations. Join me in building my church.

Do you know what this Christ is doing this summer? He's building his church. He's gathering people from every tribe, tongue, and nation around the world.

So you know what the call is? Let's join him. Let's join Jesus in what he's doing here in our city and around the world.

It's possible to view the summer as kind of let's bring it down a notch with Jesus. With Jesus?

So here are four ways that we can join Jesus as he builds his church this summer. You've heard him before. First is this. Treasure Jesus above all else.

[33 : 16] Treasure Jesus above all else. What you treasure, you prioritize, and what you prioritize, you treasure. Treasure Jesus above all else. Here's how to do that.

You spend unrushed time looking at Jesus. Open a gospel. Ask God to show you the glory of the Son.

And you bask. You just delight. You stand in awe of who Jesus is. And here's what will happen.

There's this phenomenon. I've used this illustration before.

Imagine two grand pianos up on this stage. They might not fit, but bear with me. If they're both in tune and you hit center C on one, do you know what happens in the other? It starts to hum center C.

They're both in tune. And so when more and more of us are treasuring Jesus above all else, we will be in tune together.

[34 : 23] There's a great book. If you want to read more about it, I've got five up here, gentle and lowly. Read it this summer about Jesus. How about this? You get to the end of August and you're saying, man, I love Jesus more than I've ever loved him.

Treasure Jesus above all else. It all starts there. And then obey Jesus in all. Obey what he's commanded you to do. If you don't know where to start, go to Matthew chapter 5, 6, and 7.

He lays out his expectations for those who follow him and then seek to obey him. Not only do we obey him in moral commands, we obey him in the commission which he's called us to, the great commission, to go make disciples of the nations.

We obey him in that. So here are two ways that we can obey Jesus this summer in fulfilling the great commission. We can move in a direction. First one is this. Would you be praying this?

Jesus, where are you at work in my world? Where are you at work in the lives of people around me? Who are you drawing to yourself?

[35 : 34] Would you cause me to cross paths with people that you are seeking to draw to yourself or grow, become a greater follower of you? That's one.

Be praying. Second is this. Be positioning yourself. This fall, I'm going to preach through the gospel of Mark. And it's just, it's going to be Sunday after Sunday of Jesus.

How can you use this summer in the lives of non-believers to eventually invite them to come to church with you come fall? How do you use the summer?

Treasure Jesus. Obey Jesus. And all that he's commanded, magnify Jesus among all people. Magnify him. Not a microscopic magnification where you take something small and make it big. What we just saw in Matthew is Jesus is not small. He is big. What we're talking about is a telescopic magnification where you are bringing something gigantic and you're making it more visible for people to magnify him, to confess him before men.

[36 : 51] If you find yourself ashamed of Jesus, afraid to confess him before men, afraid to identify yourself with him before other people, you need to confess that to him.

You fear man more than him. That's not magnifying him. That's being ashamed of him. So maybe you should think about it. If you haven't been baptized yet, this August we're going to have a baptism.

That's a great step to magnify Jesus, to go public with your union with Christ. You may also need to put a stake in the ground in a relationship where you're saying, you know what, I just want to let you know that I'm a follower of Jesus.

I can't do that because I treasure him and I will obey him. You may lose friends over that, but you're magnifying him in that. Magnify Jesus among all people.

Treasure, obey, magnify, belong. Belong to Jesus with all who treasure him. Would you make this summer a summer about building the church, about joining Jesus in what he's doing?

[38 : 12] And that can look like this. It means inviting people over to your house. Use your grill. Use your deck. Use your patio. Gather people. And when you bring brothers and sisters from the church over, ask them questions like, so how did you become a follower of Jesus?

How did God reveal Jesus to you? If you're new here, just find someone. Invite them over. If you've been around for a while, invite someone.

Bring them over. Use the summer to get sticky, to knit together. But the greatest way is showing up every Sunday.

Gathering as the church. Sunday after Sunday. Belonging together to Jesus. There's going to be some great preaching here this summer.

I'm a little bummed I'm going to miss it. But I am really excited for you. This is how we join Jesus. T-O-M-B.

[39 : 18] The Christ went to the tomb dead and came out alive so that you can treasure him and obey him, magnify him, and belong to him. The summer of 2023 lies before us.

What is Jesus doing this summer? Well, he's definitely upholding the universe with the word of his power, but because he's such a great multitasker, he's also building his church.

So maybe the question is, Christian, will you join him in what he's doing this summer? Treasure, obey, magnify, belong.

Let's pray. Lord Jesus, we are so grateful that you are not dead, but alive, and that you are not maybe working around the world, but you are certainly at work around the world.

Gathering a people that you've purchased with your blood into local churches, building your universal church. Lord Jesus, would you exalt your name throughout the summer, not just in Christ the King Church.

[40 : 28] but in all the churches of Kenosha. We pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.