

Upon This Rock: Built for Battle, Called to Conquer

Matthew 16:13-18

Introduction – A Holy Moment In A Hard Place

I want to start this sermon in Matthew Chapter 16.

""Matthew 16:13-15

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?""

His disciples have seen him do all types of things now and all types of miracles. He's healed all manner of sickness and disease. Jesus asks his disciples who have seen the miracles, "But whom say ye that I am?"

""Matthew 16:16-18

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. 17 And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. 18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.""

I want to focus in on the second half of verse 18 right there. "And upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Jesus says, "I will build my church." I don't build it. Nathan doesn't build it. Gary doesn't build it. None of us build it. Jesus builds it. And he does that by choosing people he wants here. So, if you got the invite to come here, you're here, Jesus sent it. You might say, "No, I got it from Nathan. I got it from Pam. I got one from Josh."

Jesus Sent Us To You

Yeah, but Jesus sent us to you. It's coming from him. He wants to build his church. He wants you. And why do you want to be here? Look at the last part of verse 18. "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

You've got to make sure you see that. "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Not even hell itself can take a church of Jesus Christ down. The church is the people. The building is not the church. It's you. It's I. It's us gathering together. Together, we are his church.

This isn't just the official Church Charter Day for True Words Baptist Church. There will only ever be one of these days in our church history. We'll celebrate it each year, but this is "THE DAY."

But, this day is about Jesus building his church. He's putting it down right here. He gave us all the gift of his church right here. The line is being drawn in the sand. This isn't just the official launch of this church. This is an invasion because we're taking over this area.

God wants us here. Jesus put us here. Why? Let me show you.

""John 4:33-35

Therefore said the disciples one to another, Hath any man brought him ought to eat? 34 Jesus saith unto them, My meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work. 35 Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest? behold, I say unto you, Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest.""

Take a Look, Go Out There, and You'll Know

The fields are the locations where Jesus has put his churches. The churches of Jesus are the ones that go out there with the Gospel of Jesus Christ, find people, get those people saved, and bring them in here to be baptized and to learn the word of God. Jesus himself designed it this way. It's not my design. Jesus designed it this way.

Jesus says, "Lift up your eyes, and look on the fields; for they are white already to harvest."

This place, this area, West Louisville, is more ready for the Gospel than any place I've ever been preaching the Gospel. People are ready to be saved. They love the Lord Jesus Christ here. They love us here. They want us here. So Jesus put us here. And the gates of hell will not prevail against us here.

The dark forces have already tried stopping us many times. But the gates of hell shall not prevail.

""John 4:36

And he that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal: that both he that soweth and he that reapeth may rejoice together.""

We work together to do the work of Jesus Christ. We go out there. We find the people Jesus wants. If you're here, you're one of them. And we reap the harvest of souls. We gather fruit to everlasting life. That's you if you've been saved by the preaching of the Gospel coming from this church. That's you.

And all of us here rejoice together! That's why we're here right now. To rejoice together.

In a city, like most cities in this country, there is poverty, crime, and pain. There's alcohol, drugs, sexual immorality, gambling, gangs, fighting, killing, hit men, and more. We aren't here by chance. We are here by command. And God is the commander. Jesus Christ is the commander.

""Exodus 15:3

The LORD is a man of war: the LORD is his name.""

We aren't just launching a church here. We're opening a war against the darkness, against Satan, against the gates of hell itself.

Point 1: This Is God's Church

The first point I want to make. This is God's church that he is giving to us. This is not man-made. We didn't dream this up here. This church was born in the heart of God himself, delivered through prayer, lots of prayer, and planted here in power.

Not in my power. Not in the power of Pastor Tim DeVries. Not in the power of Nathan Holmes or Gary Tapp or Goddard Holmes or anyone who is here right now or not here right now. This was planted here by God with power.

We aren't going away unless we stop soul winning. When we stop that, we go away.

When Jesus said, "I will build my church." He isn't talking about bricks. He's talking about people. A church isn't brick. A church equals saved people. If a church down the road has no saved people, which many don't, it's not a church. The gates of hell can prevail and have prevailed over those churches. But this one, the gates of hell will not prevail.

This area can be violent. You all know that. Many of you know that much better than I. In a violent and sinful world, God told Noah to build the ark. Not for a party but for a rescue. True Words Baptist Church is an ark in this storm tossed community.

We are here to save souls before judgment falls. And the same God who shut the door on the ark is the God who opened the doors of this church. Get in here as soon as you can and stay with us as we are tossed around in the storm that has already been here.

God loves you so he put this ark here for you. Not too many got on Noah's ark. It's your choice. Join this church today. Today, you have that opportunity at the end to join us. If you join us today, you will sign the sign that we have ready, and you will be an original founding member of this church.

God opened the doors for you. You're in here. Don't leave without joining us today.

Point 2: We Are Planted Here With Purpose

Point 1 was this is God's church. Point 2 is we are planted here with a purpose. We have strong roots. We have the root of Jesus Christ. He is our foundation. He is our rock.

""Acts 17:26

And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation;""

Billions of years ago, Jesus knew we would be here right now. He determined the times before appointed. We aren't just in West Louisville. We were sent here. We aren't running away. The darkness doesn't cause us to run. Some people are scared of this area.

The darkness can get very dark. But you and I were born to shine in the darkness.

When God called Gideon in the Bible, he was hiding while threshing wheat. He was afraid, unsure, feeling unworthy. But God said, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour." Maybe you feel afraid at times. Unsure at times. Unworthy at times. But remember what God said, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour."

Gideon didn't see a mighty warrior. But God did. Maybe you can't see yourself being a spiritual warrior out preaching the Gospel. But God did. That's why he sent you here. God did. He saw it before you were born. He made you for this. You might say, "Well I don't know." Well, look, I do. God does. I know you can do it because I know why God made you. He made you for this.

Gideon was going to war. He starts out with 32,000 men and he was far outnumbered. God says, "32,000 is too many. I don't need that many, Gideon." 22,000 leave out of fear. 10,000 are left. From 32,000 to 10,000. Too many. 300 men are left. Just 300.

300 versus 135,000. Outnumbered 450 to 1. And guess who won? Gideon. Are we outnumbered? Yeah. Might be similar numbers. Who wins? We do. Might as well join us in the victory and the celebrations.

We are starting small. We're actually starting with way more than I ever thought or Nathan ever thought. Praise the Lord and God bless you all for being here. We might be small, but we serve a very large God. There is none bigger. We work directly for him. Servants of the living God. We are Gideon's 300 in West Louisville.

Point 2 is we have a purpose. We know what to do. We're doing it. And we'll continue doing it.

Point 3: We're Not Here To Survive - We're Here To Fight

Point 3 is we aren't here to survive. I know many of you in this area were taught to just survive. We aren't here to survive. We're here to fight. And I don't mean physical fights. I mean a spiritual fight.

We have weapons and we have armor. We're here to teach you what they are, what they do, and how to use them. We're here to get you to fight back. We aren't here to just survive. We're here to fight back. Don't sit out there just trying to survive any more. You don't have to do that any more.

""Revelation 3:8

I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.""

We've got a little strength here. We've got men and women who love the Lord Jesus Christ here. I've said this before, and I'll say it again. It's not about physical strength. I'd take a little old lady that can barely walk with great faith over the strongest man in the world who has no faith. We've got some strength.

It's time to fight back with the Lord God Almighty on your side. You have the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, gospel of peace (shoes), shield of faith, helmet of salvation, sword of the Spirit (Word of God), prayer, the name of Jesus, the blood of Jesus, praise and worship, fasting, obedience and holiness, testimony, and good friends here.

And I mean good friends. Strong friends. Tough friends. In here. Maybe not out here. But in here we're tough. We're strong.

We don't have political power. We don't have deep pockets. But we've got something better. Faith and fire. We have the Holy Spirit of God burning within us. We have the light. Our lamps are fueled forever. They aren't going out. We're sealed. We're protected by God. So why would I just want to survive? I will not just survive. I will fight the fight. I will run the race.

Nehemiah. He has an entire book of the Bible. He wasn't a soldier. He was a servant. He heard that the walls were broken down. He wept. He fasted. And then he built. He took action. Hey, let's build up around here. Everything is being torn down. Let's build.

The enemy came against Nehemiah. Did he stop building? He didn't stop. He put a weapon in one hand and kept building with the other. That's us. We'll pray. We'll preach. We'll work. We'll fight the spiritual battles. We'll labor. We'll win.

Point 4: This Church Will Shake Generations

This isn't just about Sunday mornings. This isn't just about a church service. This isn't just about a special day and then its gone. Point 4 is this church will shake generations upon generations.

""Isaiah 58:12

And they that shall be of thee shall build the old waste places: thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in.""

This is about the little girls who won't get trafficked any longer. This is about your daughters who will be safe. This is about your sons who won't join gangs. This is about your grandchildren who won't die out there in the streets any longer. I want it stopped. I am sick of seeing it. I am tired of hearing the murders.

Marriages will take place. Fornication will stop. Adultery will stop. Cheating will stop. Stealing will stop. The alcohol stores will go away. The drug dealers will go away. No one wants your drugs any more.

People addicted will be delivered. The neighborhood will be transformed. Generations will be shaken. Things will change. All that will happen IF you make the decision to join us today. I want your signature on that sign. And I want to see you here every week. And you can watch it all change.

You can have a better life for yourself, your family, your friends, your kids, your grandkids, and generations and generations to come.

The woman at the well. She came thirsty. She had five husbands. She was full of shame. But after just one encounter with the Lord Jesus Christ, she became a Gospel preacher. She went out to the entire city and many believed on Jesus because of her words. She took the good news to everyone she could.

Don't underestimate what God will do with the broken. I was broken. Here I am. Many others in here will tell you they were broken. Here they are. You want some examples? They're already here. And we're going to get more examples and more examples and more examples. And we're all going to share our story, our testimony of the Lord Jesus Christ with this world.

That's what I want you to do. I don't want you to be quiet. I went to a church where no one else could share their story. No one else could make a Gospel video. Not here. I want you to share your story. I want you to tell others what Jesus Christ has done for you.

Don't underestimate what God will do with the broken. The next preacher might be high today. The next soul winner might not have a place to live today. The next man who wins thousands of people to Christ might be out there almost dying today. The next woman who comes in here

broken might be the woman who leaves leads thousand upon thousands of children to Jesus Christ one day.

God takes the broken and he fixes it. This church will shake generations. I want you to help us reach generation upon generation.

Conclusion: We're Not Celebrating A Building. We're Claiming A Battlefield.

This is the battlefield God chose for me. This is Nathan's battle field. This is your battle field. This building isn't the church. You are the church. This is not my church. This is our church. This is God's church. He put it here.

""Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:""

God has begun the good work here. He's put it in you and in I. And he will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. We are the body of Christ.

This church is not the end. It's the beginning. It's the launch pad. It's the fortress. It's the front line. It's God's chosen method of getting his work done. A soul winner came to you from where? From a church. Why? Because God made it that way. That's how he works.

Hey, we've got the Gospel. I know you all. Many of you I met you for the first time asking you, "Hey, more important than church, if you died today, are you 100% sure you're going to heaven?" You said, "I'm not sure." You heard. You believed. You came. Thank God.

If you haven't been baptized after you've been saved, it's time to do it. And then we don't say, "More important than church" any more. Because step 1 you're saved. Step 2 you're baptized. And you're on step 3. Going to church. Now the church step is very important.

This is where you learn how to battle and how to fight back. We are going to stop losing the battle in this area. We will fight back. And I'm going to give you everything I've got and everything God gives me in order to help you fight back and save your life, and the life of your family, and the life of your friends. I'm going to give it all I've got.

We've got the Gospel. We've got each other. And we have Jesus Christ as our foundation. Let's be bold. Let's be loud in a quiet way. When the evil powers around here see us coming, they know to get out of the way. We're coming in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. GET OUT OF OUR WAY.

Let's be unshakable together.

Final Moment: Church Charge & Responsive Prayer

If you're ready to stand with me. If you're ready to fight for this community. If you're ready to fight for the children, the teenagers, the women who are out there all alone, the men out there all alone, the little ones. If you believe God planted this church to shake this city. To help West Louisville, please right now, stand to your feet with me.

I want us to pray together. Repeat after me and let's mean this together. Let's commit to do this together.

Let's pray.

We are the church.
We are the light in West Louisville.
We will love the broken.
We will find the lost.
We will fight with faith.
We will stand on God's word.
And we will not back down.
Not now. Not ever.
In Jesus name.
Amen. Amen.

We bless you Lord, the great God, and we thank you.

Nathan is going to lead us in a song. This song is an invitation song for you to join this church today. It is your first chance. I will be standing here waiting for you. Please come as Nathan leads us in the song and Callie plays Amazing Grace.

Sunday Morning

TRUE WORDS
Baptist Church 
Revelation 21:5

23 March 2025