



new life fellowship

Sermon Title: **The Foundation of the Church**

Speaker: **Richard Villodas, Lead Pastor**

Scripture: **Matthew 16:13-18**

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

They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”

“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. 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.

*Matthew 16:13-18 (NIV)*

### **Sermon Outline:**

Over the past six weeks we have been exploring various metaphors in scripture about core truths of the Church. When we speak about the identity and mission of the Church, it is important to say what the church is and what it is not. The Church is: the family of God, the body of Christ, the bride of Christ, the flock of God, citizens of heaven and the temple of God.

### **The church is not an event, a location, a product or an experience.**

In our text, Caesarea Philippi is the center of pagan territory. There are a lot of rival gods showcased at Caesarea Philippi. Jesus asks the Disciples “Who do the people say the Son of Man is?” He hears their answers and then asks the Disciples “Who do **you** say I am?” Jesus wanted to know what they were thinking.

Just as Jesus wanted to know what the Disciples were thinking, He also wants to know what you are thinking, and who you say He is. We need to be confronted with this question, as your answer will determine how you will live your life in the world. Ask yourself who Christ is to you: is He just a teacher or just a prophet to you, maybe he is just a good human being or a ticket into heaven for you?

Jesus realizes that Peter understands His mission. Peter is always first at everything. He is impulsive, the first one to fight and the first one to put his foot in his mouth. Despite his flaws, Peter is special and foundational to the Church. Because Peter knew who Jesus is and gets His identity right, He proclaims Peter as His rock. Jesus takes Peter’s proclamation and Jesus give us the promise: **I WILL BUILD MY CHURCH.**

**I Will.** Jesus is making a promise that He will always be at work. A promise that you can be sure is going to happen, in which you can have great hope. His promise is about his future endless involvement in the Church, where his Spirit is active right now. The responsibility of the Church is on His shoulders. Jesus Christ is at work in your life and the Church at this very moment.

**Build.** The Church was founded upon the rock of Peter's confession. The construction of the Church is contingent upon the confession of the Church. The confession that Christ is the Messiah, the Son of the Living God. Jesus is making something out of us. For those of us who are feeling torn down, disoriented and that your life is in shambles, know that God is making something out of you.

**MY Church.** The church belongs to Jesus. The church is not the possession of anyone else but Jesus Christ. This is what baptism is about. Baptism is a sign and reminder that you belong to Jesus Christ.

The powers of death will one day be conquered. Those powers will not withstand the advancement of the church. In the middle of a world that doesn't seem like the church is advancing, it can feel like the powers of death might be prevailing right now. The church all over the world is advancing – whether you see it or not.

The best days of our church and the churches around the world are ahead of us because of Jesus' promise. We are called to advance the Good News of God's love for the world by serving the poor and people who are in despair, so that the gates of hell in their lives will not prevail.

**Sermon Summary:**

This Sunday Lead Pastor Richard Villodas' sermon is on The Foundations of the Church. Today Pastor Rich focuses on the foundational truth that Jesus announces about the Church, helping us to recognize our role in being the Church and reminding us of who we are called to be in the world.

**Sermon Questions:**

1. How does this scripture connect for you the topic that was discussed today? What words resonate with you? Why?
2. In your family of origin, what were you told Jesus was? Upon salvation what did you believe He was? How has your view of Jesus changed today?
3. Is there are part of your life or in this world you yearn to see Jesus at work? Have you brought it to Him? Could He be at work, but it is difficult for you to see?
4. The Church is about belonging, what gets in the way of you fully belonging to the Church or to Christ?
5. Over this series we have had six different metaphors for the Church. Which of the metaphors did you find the easiest and most comforting to accept? Which metaphor did you find the most difficult to live out?