

Sunday 19th June 2022
Matthew 16:13-18
Rev.Scott Burton
Brightons Parish Church

Sermon keypoints:

- Jesus will build His church
- We partner with Jesus by the filling and power of the Holy Spirit

So, we've been hearing a little bit of what you've been doing over the last year. Thank-you so much. And I thought we would share a little bit of what the adults have been learning in the sanctuary because, actually, it weaves together so well that only God could do this. So, I just thought we should incur we should share some of this.

So, about a month ago I was on holiday taking a wee break and Brent was speaking with you and to the adults and he had up here a big sheet. Can you remember what was underneath the sheet? Can anybody remember? What was it? What's the little building blocks that you use? Lego. Right. That's right and he was building, getting you to build a temple because he was helping us learn about the story of a particular individual in the Old Testament. Can you remember who the name of that person is it begins with a 'N'? Tricky name you think. Not, Noah, no. Can any adults remember? Nehemiah. That's right Nehemiah. And the story of Nehemiah is about a man who God uses to help his, God's people, rebuild the temple and restore His people's purposes and what they're about. But here's the thing - it actually failed, it actually in the end failed because, although they got the temple rebuilt, and they started putting some things right, they didn't see God's kingdom come, and great power and glory and all their hopes and aspirations, it wasn't fulfilled at that time and but that's because they kept messing things up and they kept getting distracted and they needed someone to come and save them, to change them, to help them from the inside out, live for God's purposes. And so, they waited and they waited. Do you like waiting? No. You're probably waiting for me to finish right? Yeah. Yeah. Well, be glad you're not having to wait about five, six, seven hundred years. The sermon's not that long today. You didn't have to wait that long but they did. God's people waited that long from the days of Nehemiah until someone came. Who do you think came? Who was it? Who do you think it was? Jesus, exactly Otis. That's it exactly. It was Jesus and He came doing some incredible amazing things. Things like what the juniors were telling us about. What other Bible stories can you remember? Incredible things that Jesus did? Can remember any other Bible stories that Jesus did incredible things? What incredible things did He do?

He had healed loads of folks or poor people. This woman today, the young girl he raised to life. He did some incredible healing. Did He do anything else? Can you remember any other Bible stories that were really amazing? Anybody want to chip in? Say again. Fed the five thousand, yep. Anybody on this side want to share a story? Say again. Calmed the sea. Exactly. The storm that was raging and He calmed the sea. He did all these things and because of these amazing things that were helping to mend this broken world, as the juniors were telling us in their story, people began to wonder began to think 'Who is this guy? Who is this guy.? And Jesus knew that they were having these conversations and so He's walking along with these disciples, they're going to the next bit and as Isla read from read for us in the story, He turned to them and said 'Well, who are people saying I am?'' But, you know, then he had another question, a very kind

of pointed question and do you remember the question? Do you remember what it was that Isla read for us? He had one more question and it was 'Who do you say I am? Who do you say I am?' And Peter, it's always Peter isn't. He steps up and he's like 'I know. I've got the answer.' Kind of like us with our Bibles it's like 'Oh, I know where Joshua is. I know where Esther is.' But Peter steps up 'You're the messiah, the promised one. You're the son of the living God.' And I could imagine Jesus having a bit of a smile at that point 'No Peter, you've got it, you've got it Peter but you don't know the whole story yet, but you've got it but you only know that because my Father's helped you.' And we all need God's help to understand who Jesus is and so Peter, Jesus then says this to the disciples 'This is the rock (the knowledge of Jesus of who he is) this is the rock on which I will put together my church. A church so expansive with energy that not even a gate of hell will be able to keep it out.' Or in the Bibles we have in our pews 'On this I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.'

Jesus is building something, boys and girls. He's not building a temple, like in Nehemiah's day, and he's not even building a building or an institution. He's building a people. A people who know Him, who follow Him, who trust Him. That's His people and that's you and me, and all the people across this world and across all time who've trusted in Him as the promised Messiah, as the Son of the living God. And with the adults we've been thinking about 'Oh, how can we partner with Jesus? How can we be more obedient to Jesus? How can we collaborate with Jesus and what He is doing in the world?'

But here's the really important thing, really important thing. There's only one person ultimately who can build the church. Who is it? Who is it that can build the church? That's Jesus. It's only Jesus that can build the church because ultimately to build the church you need to change hearts and I've been preaching for three years and who knows what degree of change is in your hearts but only Jesus can change our hearts. I can't do it. You can't do it. I can tell you about Jesus but I can't make you have a relationship with Jesus. Only Jesus can do that.

And so, we've been emphasizing the place of prayer and of asking Jesus to build His church because only Jesus can build the church, and it's a great thing, it's actually really good news that it's Jesus who builds the church because who is this Jesus? He's the Jesus of the miracles. He's the Jesus who calms the storms. He's a Jesus who raises the dead. He's a Jesus who died on that cross to overcome sin and death and hell and He proved victorious when He was risen from the dead to show He accomplished His goals. This is our Jesus, church. This is our Lord and Savior and so when He says He will build His church, He will fulfill that promise to build a people who trust in Him the rock of our salvation. Who know Him as the Son of the living God

And so, will we be that people? A people who trust? A people who follow? A people who walk with our Lord all the days of our lives, from the youngest, across all the days? I pray that we will be, brothers and sisters. May it be so. Amen.