



No Wake Zone
Part 5 – The Other Boats
Pastor Alex Himaya

The last few days, we've been on the lake and I've been thinking about the wake and I've been thinking about the wake zone. There's this passage in Mark 4. We're not going to go there today, but I just want to reference it for a moment when we talk about the wake zone. Do you know that passage where Jesus was asleep in the hull of the ship? The storm came and the waves were overtaking the boat. The disciples went to Jesus and said, "Jesus, don't you care?" Every time I read a phrase like that, I think it's one of the most ridiculous statements in the whole Bible. The One who spoke all of this into existence... They looked at Jesus and said, "Don't you care that we're about to drown?" Jesus stepped up and he spoke to the wind and he spoke to the wake and he stopped the wake.

There's a verse that caught my attention this week as I was thinking about that passage. I have read that passage, in fact, I've preached that passage many times, but there was a phrase that caught my attention. I want you to look at it later this week. It's Mark 4, verses 35 or something. It says, "There were other boats with him." Here's what God spoke to my heart in regard to that. When you allow Jesus to take care of the wake behind you, other people benefit, other boats benefit. When Jesus calmed that water, it didn't just calm the water for the boat that Jesus was in, it calmed the water for all of the other boats that were around.

When we think through this no wake zone stuff and we think through our lives being in the no wake zone at times, you and I have to recognize there are other boats and there are other people and there are others depending upon us figuring out this margin thing and figuring out this space in order to live our lives in.

Today, we are going to continue this series called *No Wake Zone*. I want you to know that the other boats all around today represent those who need Christ. People who need a relationship with Christ, people who need Jesus in their boat are counting on those of us who have Jesus in the hull of the boat. They are counting on us to get it right in figuring out this margin thing, so that we have room left over, we have space left over to be considerate and concerned about all those who don't yet have a relationship with Christ.

Places in the Bible matter. That was at the Sea of Galilee, clearly. Just a few chapters later, Jesus takes his disciples and he goes north into a place. We are going to look at this passage in Matthew 16. If you have your Bible, flip over to Matthew 16.

Some of you know a little bit about the story of our church. In August, we'll be 13 years old as a church. There are a lot of similarities, which is part of the reason I always feels at home at Woodland Hills and Ted always feels at home at our church. They invited me... It was a dying, failing church that owned a mall with 180,000 square feet, 30 acres of property, was millions of dollars in debt, and they had 120 people, including the babies. They had a \$27,000.00 a month mortgage payment.

They called and they said, "Alex, would you like to be our pastor?" To which I said no way. Why would I want to do that? It actually felt a lot like, speaking of boats and wakes, an invitation to get on the Titanic, after it hit the iceberg. "We just hit the iceberg and there's a big hole in the hull of the ship. Would you like to come get on and be our pastor?" I was not interested in that whatsoever.

They were really sneaky people because after months of me saying no, Tom Gamble, who was the head of the search team, said, "Alex, we understand that you said no, but we believe our paths have crossed on purpose. We believe God brought us to you and, if for no other reason, it's for you to help us find a pastor. Would you come over to Tulsa on a Saturday morning, meet with the whole church, and teach us how to find a pastor?" He's very sneaky. He's taking advantage of the giving heart that I have and the mercy that I feel on a regular basis.

I drove over to Tulsa with Meredith and I met with all 120 people for three or four hours. We went through all of these questions. I was trying to determine what the sacred cows were in the congregation. Do you know what I mean when I say sacred cows? Things that you would sacrifice everything for. There was a book I read years ago that said sacred cows make fantastic gourmet burgers. We've got to recognize what it is that we've made an idol and what it is that we've made a God of. They said "Jesus is it. Jesus is the way to heaven. The Bible is the word of God. Everything else is negotiable."

We would leave and we would pull out of that parking lot and I would say, "They're lying. There is a snake in the woodpile somewhere, Meredith. I assure you that a church doesn't end up in that mess without all kinds of sacred cows."

So, we would turn and go back to Arkansas. The last Saturday morning that we were on our way over there to meet with them for the last time, I told Meredith, "Honey, today this journey is over. I'm pushing them off a cliff today."

She said, "What do you mean?"

I said, "They will not want us after today; I'm pushing them off the cliff."

She said, "What do you mean?"

I said, "It's best you don't know."

Meredith and I are different; we're just night and day different. It's in the top four or five priorities for her for everybody to love us. She wants everybody to love us. I'm for it. I really I am for it. At times,

people think I'm against that. I am for everybody loving us. It's just not in my top 100 priorities in life. I care about it, but it's just not near the top. For her, it's near the top, which is problematic, quite honestly, to be a pastor's wife and want everybody to love you because it's just not going to happen.

She didn't know, but I had a legal pad and, on three different pages of this legal pad, I had written out all of the "What if" questions in three columns of on three pages. So, do the math at how many "what ifs" I had created for this church.

I started down the list of "What if we cancel Sunday night church?" "What if we do children's ministry this way?" "What if we do student ministry where it's not about how many; it's about how strong. It's about building disciples that will reach the world for Jesus Christ in the next generation?" I just went through all of these "What ifs."

I got to one where I said "What if we canceled Sunday school and we start small groups in homes like the Book of Acts talks about?" What I may have said or didn't say is this was a Baptist group of people. If you have a Baptist background, you know what I just said to them about killing Sunday school. That's like saying to a group of Catholics, "Let's shoot the Pope in the head." But, they said "Okay."

I got all the way through my whole list of three columns on three pages and they said okay to every single one of them. I can remember standing there in front of that room going, *Oh no, God has tricked me; we are coming here. This is a bad, bad joke.* So, I did what every on the spot preacher at that moment would do. I made one up. I thought, *I've got to push them right off the edge of the cliff.* I had never thought about it before that very second. Never had it entered my mind before that very second. I looked at them and said, "What if we kill the church."

It got completely silent. One man had enough courage to say "I beg your pardon." I said, "What if we kill the church?" They said, "We don't understand what you mean by that."

I said, "What if we have a funeral. We put it in a casket and we bury it and we say goodbye?"

They said, "We don't understand what you mean by that."

I said, "Jesus said, 'Unless a seed dies the death where it is planted in the ground, it dies a pointless death, but if it is buried in the ground and dies that death, life can spring up from it.'" I said, "So what if take this church and we bury it in the ground and we watch and see what springs up out of it and what the Lord wants to do?"

They said, "Okay."

I just thought God had tricked us. We came there with no promise of a salary, no promise of any success whatsoever. In fact, the one the thing that God gave me on a regular basis was *faith is believing I'll do what I said I would do. I haven't said I would do anything here.* I thought, *God, okay, I have faith that you'll do what you said you would do and we went.*

We started on the first Sunday in March and by the very first Sunday in June, I had grown the very first church I was the senior pastor of from 120 people to zero. It's amazing resume material, by the way.

I remember going to the banker the next day after we killed the church and said goodbye to it. We had erased all the rolls, the tax id, the fax number. I wanted everything changed. We walked through all of that and the next morning, I went to meet with the banker and I asked him to take this millions of dollars of debt under Gracemont Baptist Church and move it over to the Church at Battle Creek.

The banker said, "You can't do that."

I said, "What do you mean?"

He said, "You can't do that."

I said, "Can you make it go away?"

He said, "No, I can't make it go away."

I said, "Well, then, you better move it."

He said, "Why?"

I said, "Because we killed that."

He said, "You can't do that."

I said, "We did."

He said, "You needed our permission."

I said, "I didn't know."

He said, "I guess I'll move it over." He then said, "Why would you name your church The Church at Battle Creek. Why would you put the word Battle in the name of a church?"

I said, "We've had a few." He asked me to explain and I said, "It's a geographic location."

There is a golf course in Tulsa called Battle Creek with seven neighborhoods that surround it called Battle Creek Neighborhoods, Battle Creek 1 and 2... There are all of these different Battle Creek Neighborhood. Geographically, we just thought we would give it a name near something that somebody may know. Nobody is going to know this church.

He said, "Let me ask you a question. How long have you been a church?"

I said, "About 12 hours."

He said, "How many members do you have?"

I said, "Zero."

I wasn't even joining yet. I wasn't sure it was going to make it. I didn't want to put my name on it.

He said, "How many pledges do you have?"

I said, "I don't know what a pledge is. What do you mean?"

I remember walking out to the car going, I'm an idiot. These people are following me. I am an idiot. I could hand out Kool-Aid next Sunday and they would drink it. What is going on? This is really freaky weird and these people are following me and I don't know what I'm doing or where I'm going.

We named it The Church at Battle Creek. In a moment, I'll come back to that because we changed our parent name when we went multi-site to just theCHURCH.at Churches. Our website is just thechurch.at. So, we are theCHURCH.at Churches.

I will just confess to you that there was a marketing dilemma in referring to yourself as The Church. A lot of Pharisees in Tulsa called me and said, "What an arrogant idiot you are to name the church THE Church. Do you think you're THE church?"

I said, "No, you're mispronouncing it. It's not THE; it's the. We don't think we are THE church, we're just The Church at Battle Creek and now at Pryor Creek and now at Mid-Town and Downtown and South Tulsa... We just decided we would be The Church at wherever we are and wherever we are, we're The Church. This week, I was the church at K-Kauai Kanakuk Camp and we'll be the church at IHOP later and at the food truck in a minute. Why? It's because the church is not bricks and mortar. The church is people. The church is the body of Christ. I think locations matter in scripture.

I want you to look at this passage in Matthew 16. Let's walk through this passage. I'm really not going to preach today; I'm just going to teach. We're just going to walk through this scripture together and we'll stop wherever the Lord wants us to stop and I'll make points. It's a brand new message; it's just a few weeks old in my heart. Sometimes messages that God gives me are a lot like giving birth. I apologize if this one is breach because we are just going to watch and see what the Lord does with it. Look at Verse 13.

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi... Here's what I want you to know about Caesarea Philippi: Caesarea Philippi is about 25 to 30 miles north of the Sea of Galilee where Jesus calmed the water on the sea. Not only is it 25 to 30 miles north, it is straight up hill. Some of you have been to Israel. I would encourage all of you to go to Israel. In fact, I am begging Ted and Amy to go with me to Israel because I know it would change their lives and it would change the way that they see the Word of God. It changes the way you teach the Word of God because we are visual generation.

You get on a bus and you drive that 30 miles and it will take you over an hour. The reason it will take you over an hour is because you are climbing straight up hill. Here's the point. You don't walk, in the day of Jesus, 25 to 30 miles straight up hill by accident. This is intentional. Jesus was intentionally going to this place called Caesarea Philippi. It was on purpose. You didn't wander 30 miles straight up hill. You did that intentionally. You planned it. It took days and you made your way up there. So, Jesus made his way up there in order to ask his disciples the questions that he's going to ask them there.

Now, what I want you to know about Caesarea Philippi is that it is a bastion of depravity, it is idolatry at it's finest. It's pagan worship. If you go there today, there are still niches in the rock where you can set your idols and come and worship your idols in this place. The primary pagan idol or god that they worshipped in that day was Pan. Pan is half animal and half man. By the way, we get our word *panic* from the name of the idol Pan, which is very telling. When the children of God wander off into idolatry, away from the God who spoke them into existence and made them in a relationship and for a relationship, it leads to worry, it leads to panic, it leads to the strangling of your throat, right? Pan is the God they worshipped there.

Now, geographically and geologically... Is anybody in here a geologist? There are people that study this. I can't imagine it because it seems so boring to me. But they study the surface of the earth and the rocks. Geologically, this area is volcanic driven. It's also earthquake susceptible. Massive earthquakes on the earth have happened right there in that region. So, as you make your way up hill, there is all this basalt rock that has emerged out of the earth. It looks like volcanic rock that has come right up out of the earth. You look at this and you think it is just fascinating geology. As you make your way up there, there is a major fault line that exists right there. It's part of the Syrian African Rift which is a major fault line between the plates of the Earth's surface.

In the first century, there was a massive earthquake that split the earth wide open. You could see as far as the eye could see into this massive crack in the surface of the earth. They dubbed it the Gate of Hades. They called this crack going down under the surface of the earth the Gate of Hades or the Gates of Hell.

When Herod the Great went to build a temple to himself, he sat it right there on that crack. Right there, at the mouth of Hades, was the temple to Herod the Great. So, you go there and you watch this play out and you watch the worship of idolatry that happened there. Jesus went there to ask these questions of his disciples. He was in that place. By the way, the slogan that Las Vega has, what happens in here, stays in here, was stolen from Caesarea Philippi. Originally, that's where that statement was made. What happened in Caesarea Philippi, stayed in Caesarea Philippi. It was a pagan, pagan, pagan place.

Jesus goes into this pagan place with his disciples to give them this quiz or to give them this examination, to talk to them and ask them these questions. I think he's making a statement about himself. I think he's making a statement about the church. I think he's making a statement about his mission. Here's what I want you to write down. Jesus does not run from messy people. In fact, the nature of the gospel is that he runs towards messy people. He moves towards messy people. He approaches messy people.

The only distinguishing factor by the way of the first century church was the location. You had The Church at Ephesus, The Church at Corinth, The Church at Galatia, The Church at Philippi, The Church at Antioch, The Church at Rome. The only distinguishing factor was the location. It was all just the church. It was all just the body of Christ which is why I think the CHURCH at churches is maybe the most biblical church name you could possibly come up with. Wherever these people who have found Jesus and walk with Him are it's the church at that place.

Jesus begins this conversation in this place filled with messy, messy people. ...**he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"** Now, let me just say to you it is a risky thing for the pastor to ask his people what they think about him?" Especially if you're married to my wife. It's a risky, risky thing to ask that question, but that's exactly what Jesus is doing here.

It's interesting, by the way, that he refers to himself as the Son of Man. The parallel passage is Luke 9. In Luke 9, Jesus says "What do people say about the Son of God?" Think about it. Son of Man and Son of God. That is the truth of who Jesus is; he is both. You may think that is problematic. In one he called himself the Son of Man and in another he called himself the Son of God. It's not problematic at all. He is both. He is the God Man. He is all God and he's all man. Surely you've studied this before. Christ is all divine, but he's all human and he's both of those in one. He is the God Man. You and I have no trouble understanding that when we think about him dying on a cross and taking the sins of the world upon his shoulders and dying as the Son of God and dying as the Son of Man.

Think about that when you are a baby. Think about that when you are entering adolescence and going through puberty and you're all God and you're all man. When Jesus was 12 years old, they went to the temple and, at the temple, they forgot him. Do you remember that story? Mary thought he was with Joseph and Joseph thought he was with Mary.

How many of you have left a child somewhere before? You're not admitting it. I know that more people than that have left a child somewhere. As a parent, eventually, you will do that. You're that good. For me, Kathryn was around four or five years old. We were at the beach. We went to this restaurant to eat and, at the cash register, she wandered into the little arcade thing next to the cash register and we thought she got in the car.

Here's what you need to know about Kathryn. She gets in the third row of the Yukon and builds a nest all by herself. She doesn't say a word. At four or five years old, we could drive 18 hours and she has probably said 10 words and that was to read to us a Mad Lib that she had created. She just did her own thing back there. We thought she was back there. I'm building all this up to tell you that I'm not an idiot. We thought she was in the third row.

We drove five miles from that restaurant to the beach house. As we pulled into the driveway of the beach house, Eli opened the door to get out of the car and Ben opened the door to get out of the car and, at that moment, I thought *Where's Kathryn?* I wasn't sure if she had just gotten out of the car or if we left her at the restaurant. I told Meredith to get out there in case she just got out and I went back to the restaurant. I drove 130 miles an hour back to that restaurant over that bridge. I pulled up to the

restaurant which had steps as wide as this stage that went down about 20 feet down to the parking lot. The porch of this restaurant looked like a big stage.

What I didn't know, at that point, was that Kathryn saw us driving off. She chased us through the parking lot, screaming "Daddy, Daddy, Mommy, Mommy, don't leave me." Not only did I not know that, but I didn't know that a whole tour bus of senior adults was camped out on the porch at that place, watching that play out. They saw the whole thing. When I pulled up to the front porch like I'm the police and ran up the steps, they were all standing there on the porch and they see me. They're all like "That's him. That's the idiot who left that baby here." There was just disdain coming down those arthritic fingers at me. I wandered into the restaurant and I got her. But, we left her. Not only did we leave her, but she was so smart at four years old that she knew my cell phone number. She was in the kitchen, sitting on a crate of apples with a waitress and she was giving the waitress my cell phone number as walked in. As they called it, it rings and the waitress thought I not only left her, but I left my cell phone lying on the table.

This is Mary and Joseph leaving Jesus. Can you imagine how she let Joseph have it? Just think through that for a moment. You and I would say "We left our kid." She's like, "Joseph, we left the Son of God." They walked in on him and he was confounding the wisdom of the religious teachers. He was amazing them. We can imagine some of those conversations, but think about the conversations that were not recorded from that story with this 12-year-old boy.

One of those religious leaders had to look at him and go "Boy, what is your name?"

He'd say, "Well, that's complicated. On my mamma's side my name is Jesus, but on my daddy's side, I am Emanuel, God with you."

"How old are you?"

"Well, on my momma's side, I'm 12 years old, but on my daddy's side, before time I Am. I am not subject to time, space, or matter."

"Where are you from?"

"Well, on my momma's side, I'm from Bethlehem which means the house of bread because I am the bread of life, but on my daddy's side, it's not where I'm from; it's what's from me because everything that is came from me. It was spoke to and through and into existence by me. Before time, I Am."

"Where are you going?"

"Well, on my momma's side, I'm going to a cross and I'm going to die and I'm going to be buried in a grave. But, on my daddy's side, I'm going to the throne of all thrones where I will be forever.

He is the God Man and he referred to himself as the Son of God and the Son of Man.

By the way, the disciples had an answer for the question. **14 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."** It's unbelievable that they confused him with those people. By the way, in Luke 9, the same parallel passage, Herod the Great asked his people the same question. "Who is this Jesus?" Before Jesus asked the question "Who do people say that I am?" Herod's people said the exact same thing that Jesus' disciples said. So, this was a running thing that people thought he was one of these prophets or one of these religious figures which is unbelievable when you think about it for a moment.

By the way, you and I would be flattered if we were confused with one of these people. Jesus is trying to indicate here that there is something going on at the surface in the culture right now. And what's going on is that people respected Jesus as good. They respected him as a prophet, they respected him as a figure from God. What Jesus was trying to indicate here is the whole point of the incarnation, the whole point of the crucifixion and the resurrection and the ascension and that is people go from accepting Jesus as good to accepting Jesus as Lord. The Lordship of Jesus Christ is fundamental, primary, and of utmost importance and you and I need to go from accepting Jesus as good to placing ourselves under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Again, you and I would be flattered. If you came up to me afterwards and you said, "Alex, every time you speak here at Woodland Hills, you just remind me of Elijah," I would be flattered. I love that name. I named one of my boys Elijah. Elijah is the one who called fire down from heaven. Elijah is the one who took on the prophet of Ashura and Bale. I would be so flattered.

If when Matt got done leading worship you walked up to him and you said, "Matt, when you lead, you remind me of John the Baptist," he would be so flattered. John the Baptist is the one stuck his finger in the face of the religious teachers and called them a brood of snakes or vipers.

If one of these worship ladies when they got done praying up here you said to her, "Hey, when you pray, you remind me of Jeremiah," she would be flattered. Jeremiah was the prophet who said, "I wish my head was a bucket that would hold all of the tears that I cried for the people of God."

What they are confusing Jesus with is this prophetic, mercy giver, this righteous, kind-hearted one. You and I would be flattered by that if we were confused with one of them, but that's not true when you are THE Messiah. He's THE Messiah. He's THE Son of God.

Let's look at Verse 15. Now, he narrows in. **15 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"** Do you see what Jesus is doing? He is going from the general to the specific. He's going from the culture to the personal, which is the way you talk to people about Jesus, but the way. It just makes sense that when you go talk to somebody about Jesus, you go from what's going on in the culture, what's going on in the world around them to them personally. It just makes sense. It's human psychology and nature to do it that way.

A lot of my friends across the country are debating this whole expositional versus topical preaching. It's just the silliest debate I've ever heard in my life actually. I cannot even fathom that this is the discussion that they want to have.

Some of the guys are saying you're not godly at all unless you just take it verse by verse. It's interesting to me that Jesus never did that, not one time. He wrote and knew the whole Old Testament and never one time did he say, "Open your Torah and let's walk through it verse by verse." He didn't do that one time, so you're not even considering Jesus and the way that Jesus did it.

I'm okay with expositional and I'm okay with topical. If you're going to do topical, you put the scripture right in it, you expose and you exposit some of the scripture. If you're going to do expositional, you better exegete the culture. In fact, this is my word for most of these preachers who want to debate this. To exegete the scripture and not exegete the culture is lazy. The Word of God was meant to change people's lives. You and I were meant to be salt and light, to get up close to people's lives and that's what Jesus is doing in this moment. He's zeroing into their hearts.

16 Simon Peter answered... We are not surprised by that because we've seen him all over the Bible. He always has an answer. He's ADD and he jumps in every conversation. He usually gets it wrong. ***"You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."*** By the way, that word *Messiah*... it's interesting that Peter used that word here because Jesus has avoided that word until this point. Because of the Jewish political connotation to that word, he has stayed away from the word *Messiah*. Messiah is literally Christos. Christos literally means "The anointed one or the oily one." The oily one... It's not because he was in puberty and had a complexion problem. It was because in that day, there were only two groups of people who you anointed with oil and they were priests and kings. In Jesus, we got the Highest of all high priests and the King of all kings. He said, "You are the one, you are the Messiah, you're the one we've been waiting for, you're the one we've been looking for. You are Him. Look at how Jesus replies in Verse 17.

17 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." Simon son of Jonah... Let's talk about that for a second. Some of you who are Bible nerds, was Peter related to Jonah? Peter was not related to Jonah. There is no way that blood line would work. Jesus was making a point. I think he was considering the other boats. I think he was considering the fact that the wake that you and I leave behind our trail, at times, is only considering us and those in our boat or those on the tube. We're not considering the wake that is capsizing all the other boats. Jesus is saying, "I'm considering the other boats."

Remember who Jonah was? Jonah was the prophet in the Old Testament that God called to go to pagan Nineveh. He said, "I want you to go to the pagan place and preach the gospel and ask them to repent."

Jonah didn't want to go. Why did Jonah not want to go? It was because he knew God was compassionate and he knew God was kind and he knew God would forgive them. He didn't want God to forgive them. He said, "I'm not going there" and he went to a port called Joppa. He boarded a boat and went the opposite direction. They threw him overboard, the fish got him and spit him out. Later,

Jesus said, "You're not going to get a sign except for the sign of Jonah in the belly of the fish for three days."

By the way, I think he was dead. I think biblically and theologically, Jonah died and God brought him back to life. Why? That's because Jesus said that's the sign that Jesus would die and three days later he would be risen again. So, in that passage of scripture, you watch this play out. Jonah was the one that was spit out on the shore of Nineveh and he preached a one-sentence sermon. It was one sentence: Repent. And they did. They all repented and God entered that whole land and God went to the pagan city and the whole pagan city was worshipping God Almighty.

Now, Jesus is saying Simon son of Jonah. He's saying, "What I did with Jonah, I'm going to do with you." That played out in Acts 10. Remember he birthed the church and the church is born. In Acts 10, down the road from Caesarea Philippi, on the coast, up the road from a place called Joppa, there is another Caesarea. Caesarea, by the way, means "to Caesar." These are Roman provinces; these are Roman bases. If you go and study the archeology in these places now, you find hippodromes, amphitheatres, bathhouses; it's fully Roman. The Romans ruled the world in that day. They built things to themselves. They built what they knew and what they loved. So, Caesarea by the Sea is one of the prettiest places on the planet.

When you go into Caesarea by the Sea, there was a Roman or Italian Centurion. What does *century* mean. It means one hundred. A centurion is somebody who rules at least one hundred families. A Roman Centurion who had at least one hundred families under him was seeking after God. God spoke to him and told him to send some men down the coast a few miles to the place called Joppa. When you go to Joppa on Straight Street at Simon the Tanner's house, you will find a man named Peter. You get him and bring him to this town and he will tell you about Jesus.

God was working on every end of the equation. He always works on every end of the equation. He was leading Peter at that very moment. Peter was on the roof of Simon the Tanner's house and he was hungry because of what he dreamed. That's why I'm assuming he was hungry. He fell asleep on the roof. It may have been lunch time. And he had this vision. Do you remember the vision? In the vision, he's on the roof and this blanket is lowered out of heaven. All four corners of the blanket lay open and when they lay open, all these creepy, crawly animals, unclean things come out. It had to be shrimp, lobster, and pork, right?

They are coming out of the blanket and as they are coming out of the blanket, the voice of God said, "Rise, kill, and eat." That's a three-point sermon. The application of that is vegetarianism is not biblical. That's the point. You don't kill a turnip or a cabbage. You kill something that has blood in it, and the voice of God said eat it. I'm just kidding, by the way. Do not send me a letter about all that. I said that one time in our church and the next week I had three appointments with cardiologist in our church who wanted to talk to me about it. "I was joking, you idiot. How are you the smartest person on the planet and you can do heart surgery and you didn't realize that was a joke." They were giving me all this plant-based diet stuff, saying, "Pastor, we don't want you to die" and they're just coaching me through it.

But Peter said, "I wouldn't even touch it, much less eat it."

Listen to what the voice of God said to Peter. "Don't call unclean what I call clean."

For you vegetarians, that was not dietary. He wasn't talking about the food. He was referring to people. He was saying, "Don't call those in the other boats unclean if I call them clean. And you respond like I want you to respond and you tell them about Jesus and you be aware of the way you are leaving and what it's doing to all the other boats."

Part of the reason that a no wake zone prescription and a margin prescription for life is such a big deal. It's because of all the other boats around us that are watching us. At that moment, Jesus allowed those people to knock on that door.

Simon said, "What do you want?"

The centurion said, "Take me," and they went and the centurion came to Christ. He gave his life to Jesus. He and his whole family were baptized likely in an amphitheater that seated thousands of people. One hundred people and their families all gathered, watching them be baptized. Do you know what was born? The Church at Caesarea by the Sea.

The fact that a room filled with people that have no Jewish lineage whatsoever in our bloodline have the gospel and are worshipping Jesus Christ on a Sunday morning in June in 2016 is because the gospel went through Caesarea by the Sea. And it's because God said "Don't call unclean what I call clean. I want them to know the gospel. I want them to hear the gospel. I want them to respond to the gospel."

18 "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." I want you to notice the personal pronouns. "**You** are Peter and on this rock **I** will build **my** church." Jesus is making a promise here. I think he's looking forward to Acts 2 when Peter would step up and preach and the New Testament church would be born where people would go from accepting Jesus as good to accepting Jesus as Lord. He said, "**I'm** going to build **my** church." He's giving that promise that he is going to do it.

The question and the debate around this verse of scripture is, "What is the rock?" I don't know if you are aware of that debate in the church and the history of Christendom. The question is "What is it that Jesus is going to build his church on?" If you grew up catholic like I grew up catholic, here's what we were taught. We were taught that Peter is the rock that Jesus would build his church upon. This is the passage where the Catholics get Peter as the first Pope. They believe Peter was the first Pope right out of this declaration of Jesus Christ that "on this rock I will build my church."

I have a few questions about that. If you're Catholic, I don't want to offend you. I grew up Catholic. I just tell you that as a teenager I began to ask some of these questions because in Matthew 18, just a few chapters later, and Matthew 20, just a few chapters later, Peter and the other disciples are arguing with one another about who the greatest is. So what that tells me is neither Peter nor the other disciples understood Jesus to say Peter is the boss. They didn't understand that because I don't think that is what he was saying. In fact, I don't think that's at all what he was saying. In fact, just a few verses after he said "on this rock I will build my church," he looked at Peter and said "Get behind me Satan."

So here's the point. I don't think the foundation of the church is a pope. I think the foundation of the church is a promise that He is going to build His church. It is not on you and it's not on me. He will build His church. So what is the foundation. Well, the apostles. What did the apostles do in Luke 9 and what did the apostles do in Matthew 16? They went from accepting Jesus as good to surrendering to the Lordship of Christ. I think what Jesus is saying is when you surrender to the Lordship of Christ, the church will be built and it will be the foundation of the church.

The word Jesus used there for church is in the Greek. It's not the Hebrew word for Tabernacle. It's not the Hebrew word for the temple. It's none of that. It's a brand new word. This is the first time it appears in scripture out of the mouth of Jesus. That Greek word is *ecclesia*, which means "the word out of," which means "the called out ones." Don't you think it's interesting that Jesus is referring to the church as the "called out ones" in Caesarea Philippi? He is saying, "You are the called out ones. You will be called out of the assembly. The church is not just about the assembly. You are called out of the assembly to the place where people who don't know God are."

You and I are to go there. We are not to build a fence around the church like a monastery and stay within it and not let the world corrupt us. You and I are supposed to go to the world with the gospel. In other words, the church is supposed to be the church at the gates of hell. Wherever the church lands and wherever the church is located, it is supposed to be the church at the gates of hell. In other words, it's followers, it's contributors, it's people are to cross enemy lines and go lead captives home to Christ. That's what the church is supposed to be. Wherever it is geographically, we are to be at the gates of hell, leading the captives home. We don't build a fence around the church.

One of my friends works for a company called Amerifence in Tulsa. Amerifence is the one who builds these multi-million dollar fences with cables and concrete that they put around NFL stadiums and they put around pentagons and embassies all over the world. Hummers can't drive through these fences. A fence is not an offensive weapon. How many of you served in the military? A lot of you served, to which we say thank you to you for defending our country. Did you ever line up in any line, in whatever branch you served in, to be issued weapons and see anybody handed a fence or a gate? Never once, right? They don't hand you a fence and say, "Go beat the tar out of them with a gate." A gate is a defensive weapon.

I love college football. I just confess to you that I am a junkie; I love college football. It ruins my Saturdays because I watch games that I don't even care about the teams. In fact, from NBA finals all the way until September 4th when college football starts again, I think it's a television waste land. For the life of me, I can't figure out what you would watch on television during these months in the summer because there are no sports on television. Gymnastics is not. I'm just kidding; don't send me a letter. I love college football and I love the SEC. I'm a big Arkansas fan because I've spent a lot of time in Arkansas. I know some of you are from Harrison and all those other towns and you drive up here. It's been hard to be a Razorback fan for several years, but I love them.

Part of my Razorback heritage is I'm friends with a guy named Gus Malzahn who was the head coach at Shiloh Christian and the head coach at Springdale High School and then the offensive coordinator at the University of Arkansas and then he became the offensive coordinator at TU. I traveled with him and his

team for three years when he was the coordinator at TU with Todd Graham who was the head coach. We lead 35 of those boys to Jesus in those three years.

Let me tell you what I'm so excited about with Gus Malzahn. He is the inventor of the no huddle offense. He is the one who decided "I will run 20 to 25% more plays than the other team and we will speed this game up. Yes, they may score 77 points on us, but we will score 78 and we're going to go, go, go."

I think through his philosophy and I think it's part of the DNA of the Church of Jesus Christ. You and I were not designed to just hunker down and play defense. We were designed to play offense and to play it at a fast pace to go across enemy lines and score. How do you score in the church of Jesus Christ? You score as the called out ones going across lines and bringing people into a relationship with Jesus Christ. We were meant to do that. And Jesus says, "The gates of hell or hades will come down." In other words, when we accept Jesus as Lord, the gates of hell will not withstand us. In other words, you and I are supposed to be attacking hell. We're not supposed to be running from hell; we are supposed to be attacking hell.

19 ***"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven..."*** Do you know what that means? What are keys for? Keys are for unlocking things and letting people in. What he is saying to the church is that "I'm going to give you the keys to unlock the door and let people in heaven." That you will open the door and let people into the kingdom of heaven. That's what he's saying today. I just want you to receive that from the Lord.

Before you bow your heads and before you close your eyes before we pray... I've got a lot more to say, but we're out of time. But, before you bow your heads and close your eyes, would you just lay your hands in your lap, just like you're ready to receive something from the Lord. As you close your eyes and bow your heads, would you receive the gift that Jesus said he would give you? The keys to heaven.

Some of you are parents. Let me tell you that the greatest thing you can do as a parent is to let your kids into the kingdom of heaven. To unlock the door and let them come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Some of you are grandparents. The greatest thing you could do for your grandchildren is to let them into the kingdom of heaven. Some of you are employers. Can I just say to you that fundamentally, in the kingdom of God, is not just about you making a dollar. The employees that God has given you are people that you are not to call unclean, but you are to lead into a relationship with Jesus. If you employ people as the child of the King, can I just say to you that you ought to treat them like they were made by the King and that you ought to open the door for them. You ought to use the keys to let them in where they could come to know Jesus Christ.

At church today, the message is the other boats matter. The reason it's crucial that you and I figure this wake zone thing out is because with our lives, at times, we are capsizing other boats. When we get the peace of God and when we walk in the peace of God and when we walk in the authority of God and when we walk like the keys are in our hands and we know what to do with them, all the other boats benefit.

And all the other people are curious. And all the other people are interested because we love them right into the church at Woodland Hills. That the people in all these shows would know that at the church at Woodland Hills there is something different. That the church at Woodland Hills has keys and they are letting them in.

Today, I just want to pray for you in addition. Some of you have never been let in yourself. You need to come into a relationship with Jesus, so, right where you're seated, would you just pray with me? Right there under your breath, would you just say "Dear God, I know I'm a sinner. Today I ask you to forgive me for all my sins. Jesus, would you come into my life to be my Lord, my Master, my Savior, my Forgiver. In the best way that I know how, I turn my back on my sin and I trust you alone, Jesus, to save me and I want to thank you for saving me. Thank you that you are not ashamed or embarrassed of me, but you died on that cross in my place." Before anybody looks, if you just prayed that prayer and you meant it with all of your heart, would you just slip your hand up and let me see it all across the room. There are several hands. Today, I pray that you'll find somebody and tell them.

When we conclude the service in a moment, there will be staff members and prayer warriors standing here at the front of the room. About a dozen of you just lifted your hand. Before the service ends, would you just come and take one of them by the hand and say, "I prayed that prayer and I meant it with all of my heart" and they will know what to do and they'll know how to help you. They'll get you some resources.

There are others of you in here that need keys, but it's not just to the kingdom of heaven; you need keys to the heart of a wayward child or you need keys to the heart of a distracted spouse or you need keys to some addictions or some debilitating scenario in your life. I just want to pray for you. If you say "Pastor, that's me; I need God to unlock a door that seems to be locked and I need Him to open that door," would you just slip your hand up and let me see it.

Father, every hand that's lifted, would you meet them right where they are. Whatever is concerning them or whatever is on their heart, would you minister life by your presence with them.

In Jesus name we pray and together we all say... Amen.