

Matthew 16
Part 2 (13-28)
Peter's confession and the suffering of Christ foretold

- III. Jesus asked His disciples a question about His identity (13-20).
- A. Jesus wanted to know who men said He was (13).
1. They had journeyed to the area of Caesarea Philippi.
 - a. This is as far north as we see Jesus travel.
 - b. We have learned that "coasts" does not mean *by the water*, but rather *in the vicinity of* (cf 2:16).
 2. In this setting Jesus asked the question about who men were saying He was.
 - a. In the context this may have been asked to show the difference to His disciples between the common Jew and the religious leaders.
 - b. This is one of the truly great questions in our world.
 - c. "Son of man" was His usual way of referring to Himself. Referring to His human side (cf 8:20; 9:6).
 - d. "Son of God" refers to His divine side (cf 4:3, 6; 8:29).
- B. The disciples began to answer His question (14).
1. John the Baptist (cf 3:1; 11:11, 12). "Baptist" means baptizer. It is a description not a name. Why capitalized?
 - a. Herod thought Jesus was John back from the dead (cf 14:2).
 - b. There must have been many things that were similar in John and Jesus' lives (They may have even looked similar.).
 - c. We know it wasn't the miracles which caused the people to think Jesus was John risen from the dead (cf Jn 10:41).
 2. Elias (or Elijah) was another answer to Jesus' question (cf Mal 3:1; 4:5).
 - a. We saw this when Herod beheaded John (cf Mk 6:14).
 - b. Elijah was a man who condemned the sins of his day.
 - c. He encouraged the people to follow God not men (cf 1 Kgs 18:21).
 3. Jeremias (or Jeremiah), or one of the prophets.
 - a. Interestingly, not one regarded Him as being less than a prophet (cf 21:11).
 - b. This should give us some indication of the power God's prophets had in the Old Testament.
- C. Jesus then wants to know who they thought He was (15).
1. He was setting up a contrast between the previous question and this one.
 - a. There is no question they all should have known the answer at this point (cf 13:11).
 - b. He had allowed time for them to mature before asking this question.
 2. This personal approach makes it clear each person must prepare to answer this question (cf Jn 6:68, 69; 1 Pet 2:7).
 - a. The first question had to do with opinion.
 - b. The second question was dealing with faith and evidence (See page 87).
Opinion was not an option here.
- D. Peter's response and Jesus' reply (16-20).
1. Peter's answer is actually twofold.

- a. “The Christ” points to His Messiahship, the anointed of God (cf 1:16-18; 2:4; 24:5).
 - (1) The title of “Messiah” has the human side according to scripture, i.e., the son of David (cf 1:1; 12:22, 23).
 - (2) It also identifies Him as the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies (cf 22:41, 42).
- b. “The son of the living God” shows the relationship while here on earth.
 - (1) The living God is the one true God (cf Ps 42:2; Dan 6:26; Acts 14:15; 1 Thess 1:9).
 - (2) Certainly a contrast between the living God and dead idols (cf Isa 40:19, 20; Hab 2:18-20).
- 2. Jesus called him “blessed” for this confession (cf 13:16, 17).
 - a. “Flesh and blood” (mankind) could not reveal this because they differed among themselves as to His identity (cf Gal 1:16).
 - b. God revealed his identity to Peter through miracles and teachings (cf Jn 5:36).
- 3. Jesus then states what His church shall be built upon (future tense), “this rock”.
 - a. This “rock” doesn’t refer to Christ or to Peter.
 - (1) Jesus was to be the builder or architect (“I will build...”).
 - (2) Peter was to be the key holder or door opener (Peter = a stone. Rock = a ledge rock).

Note: The keys were not given to Peter alone. All the apostles received this same promise two chapters later (cf 18:18).
 - b. The church will be built upon the fact that He is the Christ.
 - (1) “Gates of hell” stood for power, i.e. the forces of hell or hades (cf Gen 22:17; Ps 9:13) (Literally, His death).
 - (2) All the power of the devil could not stop it from being started or stop it from continuing.
- 4. Jesus reveals the Apostles’ part in the “opening” of the church (cf 2 Cor 4:7).
 - a. “Keys” are used to open or unlock. Used figuratively (First “unlocked” in Acts 2).
 - b. “Bound” and “loosed” are connected with the keys of unlocking the door.
 - (1) Peter, with the other eleven, would set forth the conditions by which people would be allowed into the church (cf Jn 14:16, 26; 16:7-11; Acts 2:38).
 - (2) This was fulfilled less than a year (cf Acts 2:1-4).
- IV. Jesus reveals His suffering and His death (21-23).
 - A. Jesus sets forth the true nature of the mission of the Messiah (21).
 - 1. “From that time forth” shows a change in the teaching of Christ (cf 4:17).
 - a. They did not expect a “suffering” Messiah and He was preparing them (cf Jn 2:19-21; Acts 2:23, 24).
 - b. “Must go”, shows the necessary link in this connection to God’s plan (cf 26:52-54).
 - 2. The religious leaders were the ones leading the way in His suffering and death (cf 26:47; 27:12).
 - B. Jesus rebukes Peter whom He had just blessed (22, 23).

1. Peter's rebuke was due to his refusal to accept the role the Messiah was to have.
 - a. "Took him", means to take aside for teaching (cf Mk 8:32, 33; Acts 18:26).
 - b. Peter still didn't understand Jesus' role in the salvation of mankind (cf Lk 24:46).
 2. Peter is called "Satan" because he has taken on the role of keeping Him from doing God's will.
- V. Jesus reveals that true discipleship will involve suffering as well (24-28).
- A. As we deny ourselves we stop serving our own will and begin serving His will (24, 25) (cf Col 3:3; 1 Pet 4:1, 2).
 1. To save ones earthly life by refusing to take up the cross leads to the loss of eternal life.
 2. On the other hand, to lose one's earthly life as a result of taking up the cross results in eternal life (cf Rev 2:10; 3:11).
 - B. The great value we have in God's eyes is revealed (26).
 1. Interestingly, the word "soul" here is the same as the word "life" in verse 25.
 - a. The difference is verse 26 has reference to the next life.
 - b. What in this life is worth being shut out of heaven?
 2. If Peter could gain an earthly kingdom in exchange for the soul, what good would it do him (cf Jn 11:26; Rev 20:14)?
 - C. Jesus reveals the coming of the church and His glorious return (27, 28).
 1. This is proof of the great gain to be found in denying self and following Him.
 - a. He shall return with His angels (cf 2 Thess 1:7).
 - b. He will bring the reward with Him (cf Rom 2:6; Eph 6:8; Rev 22:12).
 2. Jesus reveals the close proximity of His kingdom being established.
 - a. Eleven of those who heard this were alive when the kingdom was established (cf 27:3-5).
 - b. The kingdom (church) had over three thousand souls in it less than a year later (cf Acts 2:47).
 3. We know not when He shall return again. Let us be found doing!

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