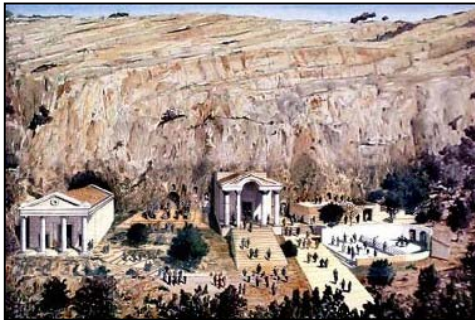


Building on the Rock

[Matthew 16:13-20](#)



According to the surveys of George Gallup, the number one need people have is *"the need to believe that life is meaningful and has a purpose."* People want their lives to count. Someone said, *"The great purpose of life is to spend it on something that will outlast it."* In attempting to recruit John Sculley, the 38-year-old President of Pepsi-Cola, Steve Jobs, founder of Apple Computer, issued a tremendous challenge to Sculley. He asked: *"Do you want to spend the rest of your life selling sugared water or do you want a chance to change the world?"*



Many people today are afraid that their lives will be lived without any real sense of fulfilling the real purpose God has for them. People everywhere feel this dissatisfaction, this uneasiness about the way in which their lives are unfolding.

Today many young people feel it. Somehow they know that there is more to life than merely going to school, getting an education, finding a job, marrying the right person, raising a family, gathering the usual security symbols and settling into the ruts of routine. Deep down within us we all know this is true.

The thought of working all your life only to retire with nothing to do but sit in the rocking chair all alone on the back porch just somehow doesn't seem like enough. Shouldn't there be some overriding purpose and significance to our pilgrimage on this earth? Surely God has more for us than this.

One Christian thinker said, *"The problem is that faith has been domesticated to suit our culturally conditioned lives, rather than dramatized as the ultimate purpose which gives meaning and direction to all other secondary loyalties."*

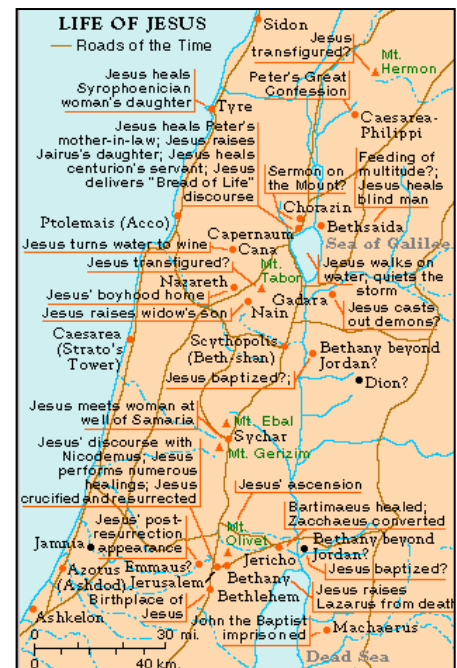
He's right! Our faith should be fleshed out in every area of our lives. Our faith should be alive and reaching out to all who do not know the Lord Jesus Christ and are willing to listen.

In our text this morning we see Jesus taking His disciples on a field trip to Caesarea Philippi. The purpose of this [field trip](#) is to show them a great need of humanity that they have the power to change:

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He began asking His disciples, saying, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" (Matthew 16:13 NASB)

Jesus and the disciples leave [Bethsaida](#) and head toward [Caesarea Philippi](#). Caesarea Philippi is about 25 miles due north from Bethsaida (and seventeen hundred feet uphill), and they probably followed closely the course of the Jordan river, one of whose origins began at a cave here. The town stood 1150 feet above sea level near the foot of the towering, snow-capped [Mount Hermon](#).

A little history on Caesarea Philippi: In First Testament times, the Northeastern area of Israel became a center for Baal worship. In the nearby city of Dan, the Israelite king Jeroboam built the high place that angered God and eventually led the Israelites to worship false gods. Eventually, worship of the baals was replaced with worship of Greek fertility gods.



A little east of the city of [Dan](#) there is a cave at the foot of Mt. Hermon. In the religion of the Ancient world, they served fertility gods. The view was that the fertility gods, male and female, had sex, rain was the sperm. The crops and lambs and the babies were the fruit. Then the gods went away to the underworld and it stopped raining, and there was the dry season. The underworld in Greek is called Hades; in Hebrew it is called Shoel. This was a dark watery place under the earth. So wherever there was a body of water or water coming out of the earth, they viewed it as a gate to the underworld. And every year in the spring the gods go into the cave and down to the underworld, and if the people worship them right, they will come back from the underworld copulate, and they will have fertility.

The [Canaanite gods](#) were [Baal](#) and [Asherah](#). They were worshipped here and in Dan, because the river Jordan comes out of the ground at this mountain. Alexander the Great came through this area in about 330B.C. and established a Greek city right in front of this cave, and turned it into the center of the [Greek fertility god Pan](#). Pan copulates with his mistresses called nymphs, they have babies, then he goes down to the underworld and disappears for the dry season, and then he comes back. This was done here because the river Jordan ran out of that cave. They called the town [Paneas](#).

Years later, when Romans conquered the territory, [Herod Philip](#) rebuilt the city and renamed it Caesarea in honor of the emperor. The name Philippi was added to distinguish it from the main Caesarea on the Mediterranean coast from where Pilate governed Judea. It was built at what was said to be the main source of the Jordan on the slopes of Mount Hermon. Caesarea Philippi continued to focus on worship of Greek gods. In the cliff that stood above the city, local people built shrines and temples to Pan.

Caesarea Philippi was a town of about 20,000. Nearby was a Temple of Augustus, built by Herod the Great, and an ancient shrine dedicated earlier to Baal and then to Pan. Next to the Temple of Augustus was the open air shrine to Pan. Pan is the shepherd's fertility god so they worshiped him outdoors. Augustus' temple was right in front of the cave and next to the cave was the shrine of Pan cut into the rock. In front of it was the open air platform where Pan was worshiped. This was the world center of Pan Worship. In a cleft cut out of the rock was the statue of Pan. Pan was depicted as a man with the horns, ears, and legs of a goat. During the religious ceremony the priest and priestess of the Pan cult would copulate in front of the crowd of worshipers. Then came pandemonium where all the worshipers would have sex. So there would be thousands of people having sex; male to female, male to male, female to female, and with goats. This was an evil area, and the Jews who loved God wouldn't go anywhere near this place. They called this place the "*gates of hades*" and the "rock of the gods," because all these pagan gods were on the face of the cliff.

How do you think Jesus' disciples reacted when Jesus took them to this place? These disciples were probably about 15 years old. How close did Jesus get to this shrine of Pan?

I certainly can't prove that Jesus and the disciples were at the shrine of Pan when these words were uttered, but I think there are strong indications that they were. It adds a fitting backdrop to the scene if we place Jesus and the disciples standing by the fresh waters of the spring and gazing at the numerous idols that were placed in the niches in the rock, considering the "gods" of the nations being worshiped there, and so paralleling Jesus' request to know what men made of Him:

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He began asking His disciples, saying, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" (Matthew 16:13 NASB)

Jesus' first question was, "***Who do people say that the Son of Man is?***" That is a very important question. If you ask people this question today, you will get a great variety of answers. Try it some time. C.S. Lewis answered this question as he taught his students at Cambridge University. He said: "*I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people so often say about Jesus: that is I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I do not accept his claim to be God. That is one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. Either Jesus was the Son of God or else a madman or something worse.*"

Jesus proclaimed the truth about Himself. He did not claim to be anything that ancient or modern man attempts to thrust upon Him. His claim was that He was God:

"I and the Father are one." ³¹ ***The Jews took up stones again to stone Him. John 10:30-31 (NASB)***

The Jews certainly understood what He meant; He was making Himself equal with God.

Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was born, I am." John 8:58 (NASB)

A literal translation would read: ***"Before Abraham was brought into being, I existed."*** The statement, therefore, is not that Christ came into existence before Abraham did, but that He already existed before Abraham was brought into being. In other words, Christ existed before creation, or eternally. In that sense, the Jews plainly understood Him, for they wanted to stone Him for blasphemy.

Jesus, in claiming to be ***"I Am,"*** was asserting equality with God Himself, who was revealed as the ***"I Am That I Am"***—the self-existent, eternal God.

Let me show you another place where Jesus claims to be God in using a [remez](#). In Jesus' day the great teachers used a technique which is today called *remez* or hint, in which they used part of a Scripture passage in discussion, assuming their audience's knowledge of the Bible would allow them to deduce for themselves fuller meaning. Apparently, Jesus used this method often. If you don't know Jesus' text you won't get His point. An example of this is scene in Jesus' comments to [Zacchaeus](#) ([Luke 19:1-10](#)). This is what David Flusser calls the best *remez* in the history of Jewish rabbis.



Jericho was the city of priests in Jesus day. Many [Sadducees](#) lived here. They needed to stay clean for the Temple. So one thing they couldn't do was touch money. Money had images on it of pagan gods and rulers. So what they did was to hire people to collect the taxes for them. This meant that these men were unclean. So in Jericho there was Zacchaeus who was a tax collector and because of that he was unclean. He hears that the famous Rabbi Jesus is in town so he goes to see Him. Why is he in the tree? Why not go to the front of the crowd? He was unclean. Jesus comes along and says to Zacchaeus:

And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, because he, too, is a son of Abraham" ¹⁰ ***"For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost."*** (Luke 19:9-10 NASB)

The background to this statement is probably Ezekiel 34. God, angry with the leaders of Israel for scattering and harming his flock (the people of Israel) states the He Himself will become the Shepherd and will seek the lost ones and deliver (save) them.

"I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest," declares the Lord GOD. ¹⁶ ***"I will seek the lost, bring back the scattered, bind up the broken, and strengthen the sick; but the fat and the strong I will destroy. I will feed them with judgment."*** (Ezekiel 34:15-16 NASB)

What did Zacchaeus hear Jesus say? Zacchaeus is lost but he is not a goat he is one of God's sheep. This was profound to this unclean tax collector. Zacchaeus was a sheep. What did the Sadducees here Jesus say? How dare you hurt God's sheep, you corrupt shepherds. God will destroy you. What did everyone here Jesus say? ***"I will feed My flock and I will lead them to rest," declares the Lord GOD "I will seek the lost..."*** Who is Jesus? He's God! David Flusser said, ***"You poor Christians you wonder why the Bible doesn't say Jesus is God more often. It says it all the time you just don't understand Jewish thought."***

The choice is very clear, Jesus is either Lord, or He is a liar, or lunatic.

They disciples answered Jesus:

And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." (Matthew 16:14 NASB)

The Gospel writers do not identify who said what thing, but evidently they were in agreement that there was great disagreement about the identity of Christ!

"Some say John the Baptist" – that had been Herod's take on Christ:

But when Herod heard of it, he kept saying, "John, whom I beheaded, has risen!" (Mark 6:16 NASB)

Many shared Herod's view since John was held in high honor with the people.

That Jesus' origins were hazy in the minds of the inhabitants of the land seems fairly certain if Herod's view was widely accepted. If so His initial miracles must have been performed when John was either arrested or when he was presumed to have been killed. It's easy to see how men and women who had not followed the events closely could have associated Jesus with a resurrected John the Baptist, for they would have heard of the execution of the Baptist while, at the same time, have come to recognize that Jesus was beginning where the other had left off.

"And others, Elijah"; people were affected by the teaching of Christ, as well as by the profound way that He demonstrated true holiness. His words, like Elijah's, cut to the quick and exposed the idolatries of the heart.

Elijah would have been the belief of many, because He was one of two people who never tasted death in ([2 Kings 2:11-12](#)), the other being Enoch ([Gen 5:24](#)). It would have seemed natural for the crowds to assume that Elijah should return to continue his ministry to Israel, and, besides, Malachi 4:5-6 seems to expect his return shortly before the end of the age. This appears to be the reason for Jesus' declaration that John is none other than the fulfillment of the promise that Elijah would come ([Matthew 11:13-15](#), [17:10-13](#)).

Elijah also moved in miraculous power including the multiplication of food ([I Kings 17:8-16](#)) and the raising of the dead ([I Kings 17:17-24](#)), both of which Jesus had performed ([Matthew 9:23-26](#), [14:13-21](#)). Perhaps Elijah's confrontation with the secular and religious leaders of the nation ([I Kings 18:1,17-19,40](#), [21:17-24](#)) could be seen to be paralleled in His attacks on the Pharisees ([Matthew 12:24-32](#), [15:1-20](#), [16:1-4](#)).

I think it is interesting that they viewed Christ like Elijah. When I think of Elijah, I think of a fire and brimstone prophet:

And Elijah answered and said to the captain of fifty, "If I am a man of God, let fire come down from heaven and consume you and your fifty." Then fire came down from heaven and consumed him and his fifty. (2 Kings 1:10 NASB)

But even though these similarities were what might have caused some of the people to associate Jesus with Elijah, it necessarily meant that they either didn't know or chose to ignore the natural birth, which could have been confirmed by Mary and all His brothers.

And they said, "Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets." (Matthew 16:14 NASB)

The identification with Jeremiah implied both the seriousness of Christ's warnings of judgment and the tenderness that He demonstrated toward the masses. Jeremiah was truly a prophet of steel and velvet; he could deliver the

oracles of God but weep out of concern for the waywardness of Judah and their certain doom. Christ seemed to reflect that kind of ministry and personality in the eyes of many. Some could not decide who Jesus was, so they just said that He was like "*one of the prophets.*"

All that we can say is that there appears to have been no one single and consistent opinion amongst the general people as to who Jesus was, even though they associate Him with God and as His messenger by their identification of Him consistently as being **one of the dead prophets**. This indicates that they held Him in very high regard, for these were the great names of Israel. But never once is it recorded that the populace had even the slightest inkling that this is the Messiah.

Being compared to John the Baptist or Elijah or Jeremiah would be a compliment for anyone—that is, anyone except Jesus Christ. While our Lord certainly identified with these men, He also towered above them! The focus of their prophetic ministries pointed to Jesus Christ!

Some have claimed that a passage such as this supports the doctrine of reincarnation. It doesn't! There is absolutely nothing at all in Scripture that ever supports the notion of reincarnation. In this case, it was not a matter of the people's thinking the old prophets had appeared in a new form. They thought it was the same old prophets back again—not a reincarnation, but the reappearance they were expecting of the same individuals who had lived hundreds of years before. This account, therefore, lends no support to the idea of reincarnation.

Several years ago the BBC, the British Broadcasting Corporation, did a documentary on Jesus. The presenter in that documentary, Jeremy Bowen, said this: "*The important thing is not what He was or what He wasn't. The important thing is what people believe Him to have been.*" I could not disagree more! Who Jesus is, is of utmost importance. Our eternal destiny rides on the importance of Jesus.

I think we would agree; if we had a problem with our car, and we took it to our mechanic, it wouldn't be enough to say to the mechanic, "You know, whether or not you are really an experienced mechanic doesn't matter. Just as long as I think you are a mechanic, it will be okay." Or if we were to get sick, and the doctor is standing before us, we wouldn't say, "Hey, whether or not you've got medical training really doesn't matter, as long as I think you are a doctor." If we are that concerned about the care of our car or the care of our physical health, how much more should we be concerned about the care of our soul? We need to know the Man who is standing in the gap—the Man who is dying for our sins—qualifies. It is not enough to *think* He is.

He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" (Matthew 16:15 NASB)

Jesus now asks his disciples a second question. The striking question asked by Christ goes to the heart of what each of us must consider this day, "*But who do you say that I am?*" How you answer that question determines where you will spend eternity.

The question has enormous stress placed on the word "you," which is difficult to bring out in English, though; it should probably be rendered with italics for emphasis. Something like, "What about *you*, who do *you* say I am?" The "you" is a plural pronoun. He asks this to the entire group of twelve disciples, "Who do you say that I am?"

And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16 NASB)

Many commentators at this point think Peter speaks for the disciples. Peter was married and probably the oldest of the group being around 20-25.

"**Christ**" is the Greek equivalent to the Hebrew, Messiah, meaning: "anointed one." In the First Testament those who were set apart for God as either king, priest, or prophet were anointed with oil as an indication of their setting apart ([Exodus 29:7](#), 21; [1 Samuel 10:1](#); 16:13; [1 Kings 19:16](#)). They were looked on as 'the anointed of God' and,

therefore, not to be harmed ([1 Samuel 24:6](#), 10; [2 Samuel 23:1](#); [Psalm 105:15](#) compare [Acts 23:5](#)). Thus, the coming great prophet would be anointed by God:

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives, And freedom to prisoners; (Isaiah 61:1 NASB)

The term came to be applied par excellence to the “Coming One” who was expected to deliver Israel, as king or ruling priest, or both, who would thus be “the Anointed One,” the Messiah. In popular thought, He would come and rouse the people by force of arms to bring political freedom to Israel. The essence of the idea was that He would come as the Deliverer.

Think for a moment about what Peter confessed. Even though his understanding would certainly increase in the days after the resurrection, Peter had come to terms with the whole of biblical revelation. Jesus Christ is the Promised One of God. He is the One that God promised Adam and Eve, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, David and Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and the other prophets. All of the Scripture pointed to this one Person that stood before Simon Peter. All of the sacrificial system; the metaphors found in the holy days, and even the pictures represented by the temple, pointed to Christ. The focal point of human history centers on Him. All of the worship and adoration of God belongs to Him since He is God.

Please notice here when the disciples confer upon Jesus the title of the “Christ, the Messiah,” He does not try and correct them saying, “No, no, no, you’ve got it all wrong.” He accepts their designation as God’s Anointed and God’s Chosen.

And Simon Peter answered and said, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16 NASB)

“The Son of the living God.” If we follow the phrase “Living God” through Scripture, we get the idea that this is a title that is in opposition to idols, or dead Gods.

But the LORD is the true God; He is the living God and the everlasting King. At His wrath the earth quakes, and the nations cannot endure His indignation. (Jeremiah 10:10 NASB)

And the priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, and wanted to offer sacrifice with the crowds.¹⁴ But when the apostles, Barnabas and Paul, heard of it, they tore their robes and rushed out into the crowd, crying out¹⁵ and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men of the same nature as you, and preach the gospel to you in order that you should turn from these vain things to a living God, WHO MADE THE HEAVEN AND THE EARTH AND THE SEA, AND ALL THAT IS IN THEM. (Acts 14:13-15 NASB)

Peter believed and confessed Christ to be the Son of the living God. As we see so many times in the Gospels, the Jews understood that to call Jesus “God’s Son” was to call Jesus Christ “God.”

Now notice Jesus’ response to Peter’s confession:

And Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 16:17 NASB)

How did Peter come to such a clear, concise understanding of Jesus Christ? Our Lord declared that it came by revelation, a term that implies an unveiling or disclosing something that was before hidden.

What is being denied in verse 17 when Jesus says, ***"Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you—flesh and blood has***

not revealed to you that I am the Messiah and the Son of God"?

The phrase "flesh and blood" is used four other times in the New Testament:

Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (1 Corinthians 15:50 NASB)

The meaning seems to be that ordinary human nature will not be raised. There will be a change. Flesh and blood is man in his present limited, ordinary state.

So when Jesus denies that "*flesh and blood*" has revealed His true identity to Peter, He is saying that mere human powers by themselves cannot recognize the true glory of Christ. Neither your humanity nor anyone else's has opened the eyes of your heart to recognize the truth and beauty of Christ.

This was the teaching of Jesus that Paul unfolded in:

But a natural man does not accept the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually appraised. (1 Corinthians 2:14 NASB)

The "*natural man*" is basically the same as "*flesh and blood*" in Matthew 16:17. "*Flesh and blood*" cannot reveal the true spiritual reality of Christ, and the "natural man" cannot know the things of the Spirit of God.

Paul put it like this:

For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ. (2 Corinthians 4:6 NASB)

Just as darkness brooded upon the face of the deep, and God said, "*Let there be light,*" and there was light; even so in the darkness of our minds and hearts He has spoken with revealing light the truth and glory and beauty and excellency of Jesus Christ in the gospel.

And so Peter did not own up to the truth of Jesus by means of his own powers. Flesh and blood could never reveal such a wonderful thing as the true Messiahship and Sonship of Jesus. Something more than flesh and blood would be required in order to recognize Christ for what He really is:

And Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. (Matthew 16:17 NASB)

Peter is "blessed" because he's received a revelation given to Him directly from the Father who has disclosed to him a hidden spiritual truth that had subsequently radically transformed his life.

"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it. (Matthew 16:18 NASB)

What is the rock upon which Christ will build His Church? Scholars have debated precisely what Jesus means by *rock*. Protestants, following Augustine and Luther, have sometimes contended that the rock in this passage is only Jesus himself. The Church is certainly built on Jesus, He is the cornerstone.

The Catholics believe that Jesus was actually referring to Peter and saying that, upon him, He was going to build His Church. The Church is built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets according to [Ephesians 2:20](#).

"Peter," in the Greek, is the word "[Petros](#)," [Pelltrov] which is masculine and would be roughly the English

equivalent of *"Rocky."* But "Rock" is "[Petra](#)," [petra] which is feminine and has the meaning of *"large outcrop of rock."*

As was brought out earlier in this message, I believe that Jesus and the disciples are standing near the shrine of Pan. They are close enough to see the debauchery that is going on. I think this is why Peter said Jesus was the *"Living God"* as apposed to these dead pagan gods. Looking at the shrine of Pan, which was called the "rock of the gods," Jesus said, *"Upon this rock I will build my church."* Jesus could have been pointing to the "rock of the gods" when He made this statement. "Rock" is the Greek word *petra* in the feminine gender, referring to a large outcrop of rock, similar to what the disciples might have been viewing at the moment. He is telling the disciples their mission is going to be to leave their homes and godly communities and build His church in place of this paganism. He wants them to do something about this. They have the answer that people are looking for when they're down there with the goats.

That may sound like a stretch to you, but notice what else Jesus says:

"And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it. (Matthew 16:18 NASB)

Gates of hades – what do city gates do for a city? They defend it or protect it. The Greek word for "overpower" here is [katischuo](#) [katisxu/w], which means: *"to prevail against, to be superior in strength."* If the gates of [hades](#) won't stand, who is attacking who?

The pagans of Jesus' day commonly believed that their fertility gods lived in the underworld during the winter and returned to earth each spring. They saw water as a symbol of the underworld and thought that their gods traveled to and from that world through caves.

To the pagan mind, then, the cave and spring water at Caesarea Philippi created a gate to the underworld. They believed that their city was literally at the gates of the underworld—the gates of [hades](#).

Jesus is telling His disciples: Your mission is to take the gospel to a dark and corrupt world. Jesus walked these kids 25 miles into the gutter to say: Look at it! Did Jesus take them that far and then talk about the gates of Hades in a place where they couldn't see it? I don't think so! Jesus is saying: Yes, I'm the Christ and you are my disciples, now clean this place up!

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matthew 16:19 NASB)

Jesus confers upon Peter symbols of authority, the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Decisions or rulings Peter makes will have the authority of Heaven behind them. His decisions will be upheld by God. "Heaven" is an evasive synonym for "God."

In the time of Jesus the word "bind" had the meaning—"bind" in the sense of "forbid." And "loose" had the meaning of "permit." These meanings of "bind" and "loose" are the ones we most often find in Rabbinic Literature. They "bound" (prohibited) certain activities, and "loosed" (allowed) other activities. So what Peter forbade, heaven would forbid. What Peter permitted, Heaven would permit.

Situations would soon arise which none of the Jews in this new Church had ever had to face, situations about which the Bible gave no instructions yet. Decisions would have been made, solutions found. Jesus had given them the authority to make these decisions.

One of the curious parts of this passage to me is in verse 20. Peter has got it: Jesus is the Messiah. And then Jesus

said, “Shh, don’t tell anyone.”

Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ. (Matthew 16:20 NASB)

Why? After this startling revelation, why would you say, “Don’t tell anyone”? I think it has to do with the popular concept of Messiah at the time. The Jews were looking for a militaristic Messiah to throw off the Roman Empire in a great military victory. Obviously, that concept of Messiah has huge political problems for Jesus.

Please, please understand that this verse is not directed to us. Jesus does not want us to remain silent about who He is. We are called to share the glorious gospel of the blessed God with all who are willing to listen.

Please take Jesus’ words to heart, ***“The gates of Hades will not prevail against it.”*** Jesus is building His church on the rock that was once demonic and pagan. We are to do the same. If you want your life to be meaningful and have purpose—share the gospel! What could be more meaningful, what could give us more purpose than to share the gospel with those who are dying. Listen to me, people—the gospel is the power of God. The gospel transforms lives. The gospel gives eternal life. We have it, what are we doing with it?

This message was preached by [David B. Curtis](#) on February 24, 2008. Media #404.



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