

Gospel of Matthew “Rocks, Gates and Keys”
Matthew 16:13-20
August 13, 2023

Matthew 16:13-20

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” 14 And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” 16 Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” 17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” 20 Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

Caesarea Philippi and the “fringe.”

Believing and belonging.

“Who do you say that I am?”

Matthew 16:17

17 And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.

“Flesh and blood.”

Matthew 11:27

27 All things have been handed over to me by my Father, and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

Faith in Christ is a gift of God.

Matthew 16:18

18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Ekklesia.

“The church is God’s new community. For his purpose, conceived in a past eternity, being worked out in history, and to be perfected in future eternity, is not just isolated individuals and so perpetuate our loneliness, but rather to build his church, that is, to call out of the world a people for his own glory.”- Sinclair Ferguson

1 Peter 2:4-6

4 As you come to him, a living stone rejected by men but in the sight of God chosen and precious, 5 you yourselves like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For it stands in Scripture:

“Behold, I am laying in Zion a stone,
a cornerstone chosen and precious,
and whoever believes in him will not be put to shame.”

Isaiah 28:16

16 So this is what the Sovereign Lord says:
“See, I lay a stone in Zion, a tested stone,
a precious cornerstone for a sure foundation;
the one who relies on it
will never be stricken with panic.

The church is the very heart and center of God’s activity in the world.

Christianity is not a private pursuit.

The universal and the local.

Romans 12:5

so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.

Hebrews 10:19-25

19 Therefore, brothers, since we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of Jesus, 20 by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain, that is, through his flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. 23 Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. 24 And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, 25 not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.

Grow Group Discussion Questions

- What did God say to you during our Sunday gathering?
- Peter’s great confession on the fringe of Israel reminds us that great confessions can happen anywhere. Where and when did you believe that Jesus was the Christ, Son of the living God?
- Share your thoughts related to how long the disciples were with Jesus before he asked them directly about His identity. How can one’s belonging help their believing?

- Jesus states that Peter couldn't have known Jesus' identity without help. How does this highlight our errant human nature? What does it mean that even faith in Christ is a gift from God? (Ephesians 2:8-9)
- How is Jesus' commitment to build the church meant to reinforce our commitment to the church?
- In what way can your Grow Group help you apply this passage to your life this week?