

20:20 Vision Ministries – Devotions by Roger Browning Week 19 (May 7-13, 2017)

We will continue to study the life of the Apostle Peter in this week's devotions.

Sunday, May 7 (read Matthew 16:13-16)

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16)

As Jesus comes to Caesarea Philippi with His disciples, He asks them what the polls say about His identity (v. 13). As always, those who do not know the **living** Lord, answer as if He is one of the great heroes from their past (v. 14). Then Jesus asks the most important question that any of us will ever face (v. 15b): "Who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter gives the correct answer ahead of the others (v. 16). Like Peter and the other disciples, you must answer that question for yourself. Some say Jesus was a good man and a good teacher. What about you? Who do you say that He is? Is He the Son of the living God to you? Is He your Savior? Is He your Lord? Eternity awaits your answer.

Monday, May 8 (read Matthew 16:17-20)

Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven." (Matthew 16:17)

Simon Peter answers the question correctly, but Jesus gives him no credit for figuring this out. Instead, He teaches that this truth can be revealed only when **God** opens your eyes (v. 17). We come to Jesus **only** when the Father draws us (John 6:44), and we understand divine truth **only** when He opens our ears and hearts. Many people make their professions of faith because of peer pressure from parents or friends, prior to hearing from God. This kind of faith will not hold up under the pressure of the existing worldview, especially when persecutions come. God does not allow us to brag about our knowledge of Him (Ephesians 2:8-9). Salvation originates with Him, and each new truth we learn originates with Him. He **alone** is to be praised!

Tuesday, May 9 (reread Matthew 16:17-20)

"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." (Matthew 16:18)

Here Jesus changes Simon's name to Peter, which means rock. It actually means "little rock," or as we would say, "a chip off the old block." Jesus is the big Rock who supplies us with Living Water. He is the only Rock who will never roll (1 Cor. 10:4)! Many have misunderstood this verse; thus, they think that the church is built on Peter and that he becomes the first pope. But what Jesus means is that His Church will be built on the proclamation, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." The gates of Hades or Hell will never prevail against a church that is built on Jesus and on the Word of God. "On Christ the solid Rock I stand. All other ground is sinking sand." (From the hymn, "The Solid Rock")

Wednesday, May 10 (reread Matthew 16:17-20)

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

Because of the misinterpretation of verse 18, this printed verse is also misunderstood. All who correctly answer the question, "Who do you say that I am?" will receive salvation. They will also receive the Holy Spirit, just like Peter does on the day of Pentecost, recorded in Acts 2:1-13 (see Acts 2:28-39). His Spirit will guide you into all truth (John 16:13) as you walk with Jesus daily; therefore, when you speak from the Word of God by the Spirit of God, whatever promises you claim on earth will be bound in Heaven. The keys to the kingdom of heaven are given to all who make the profession of faith (v. 16), receive the Holy Spirit and walk in the light of His Word. Jesus knows that the lost world is not ready for this truth, so the disciples are not yet allowed to tell it (v. 20). After Pentecost, these men will change the world with this message!

Thursday, May 11 (read Matthew 16:21-23)

Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men." (Matthew 16:23)

Like these disciples, you will not understand the necessity of the **cross** and the empty tomb until you realize that it is the **only** way that God could redeem sinful man (v. 21). These men are looking for a reigning king, but Jesus cannot be King to those who have no Savior. Those who question the exclusiveness of Jesus do not yet understand the price He paid (John 3:16, 14:6). Like poor Peter, they are a stumbling block to the ministry of Jesus and His Word (v. 23). Imagine how Peter must feel now. One moment, he is feeling proud because he correctly answers the vital question from our Lord (v. 16). Then Jesus strips him of all his pride by telling him that his answer came from God and not from his own wisdom. Finally, Jesus calls him Satan because he is unknowingly thwarting the true plan of God (v. 22-23). Before you get too hard on Peter, haven't you unknowingly done the same thing? I know that I have!

Friday, May 12 (read Matthew 16:24-28)

Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Matthew 16:24)

You will not see the printed verse come up on your television screen if you watch most of the preachers on TV. That's because many have bought into the "Health and Wealth" doctrine, otherwise known as the "Name It and Claim It" doctrine (or as I call it, "The Blab It and Grab It"). Jesus gave His life to give us eternal life, not health and wealth! If He blesses us with the latter, it must be for His glory alone! Our world is not much in tune with self-denial. Instead, we want instant gratification of our every desire. Jesus says, "Whoever serves me must follow me; and where I am, my servant also will be" (John 12:26a). Are you a follower of Jesus or the world?

Saturday, May 13 (reread Matthew 16:24-28)

"What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matthew 16:26)

The printed verse should be posted in every corporate boardroom and it should be posted over every porn sight. In fact, it should be printed over every pulpit where **only** the Word of God should be preached. Being saved means that we have accepted the gift of God, repented of our sins, and set out to follow Jesus. Anything else is just church membership and not true salvation. With blessings in this life **and** in the one to come, the Lord will reward those who follow Him (v. 27). Like the disciples, we have yet to see Jesus in His glorified form (v. 28). Three of these men are about to get a glimpse of His glory, but that will be our topic of study next week.