

=FAVORITE BIBLE CHAPTERS=

Lesson 27

Matthew 16

INTRODUCTION: This has to do with Peter's great confession of the faith. It teaches us such doctrines as the doctrine of the church, the doctrine of salvation and other wonderful truths found not only here but elsewhere in the Scriptures as well.

- I. JESUS ASKED A STARTLING QUESTION. Notice in Matthew 16:13 the words, "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" The term "Son of man" was a stronger word to the people of Bible times than it is today. It means "THE Son of man" or "THE Messiah." Jesus was saying, "I am the Messiah. What are folks thinking about Me?"
  
- II. THE DISCIPLES GAVE VARIED ANSWERS. Read Matthew 16:14.
  1. Some said He was John the Baptist. John the Baptist had just been beheaded. The Jews felt that he would rise again. Jesus was so much like him that some thought that He was John the Baptist raised from the dead. This is an amazing truth! John the Baptist was so much like Jesus that some folks could not tell them apart. (Teacher, stress this to the pupils.)
  2. Some thought He was Elijah. The Jews thought that Elijah was going to be raised from the dead and come before the Messiah came. Not many of them thought that Jesus was the Messiah. They felt that Elijah must come before the Messiah did, so they felt that He was perhaps Elijah. What they did not realize was, Elijah will come before Jesus comes, but it will be before His second coming. Malachi 4:5, "Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD."
  3. Some thought He was Jeremiah. The Jews had the strange belief that Jeremiah would rise from the dead also. They thought that during his lifetime he had taken the ark of the covenant and the altar of incense and placed them on Mount Nebo, and that Jeremiah someday would come back with these two pieces of furniture and present them once again to God's people.
  4. Some thought He was one of the prophets or, better still, the one "Prophet." Moses prophesied that a Prophet like unto him would rise. They thought that perhaps Jesus was this Prophet. Deuteronomy 18:15, "The LORD thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me; unto him ye shall hearken."
  
- III. JESUS ASKED THE QUESTION AGAIN. In Matthew 16:15 He pinpoints it, "But whom say ye that I am?" This is the important thing. The important question is not, "What do other people think of Jesus?" It is, "What do I think about Jesus?" Jesus wanted each of them to face this question for himself. Each of us must face the same question. Mother's religion will not do for us; Preacher's religion will not do for us; Daddy's religion will not do for us. We must face the issue squarely by ourselves: What will I do with Jesus?
  
- IV. PETER GAVE THE RIGHT ANSWER. Notice in Matthew 16:16 the words, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This is the answer! He is the King, but He is more than a King; He is the Son of the living God. He is God's Son. He is the promised Messiah. He is our Saviour from sin!
  
- V. JESUS REMINDED THEM THAT THIS WAS A SPIRITUAL REVELATION. Notice in Matthew 16:17 the name, "Simon Bar-jona." This word "Bar" means son. "Jona" was Simon Peter's father. Here is what Jesus was saying: "Blessed art thou, Simon, the son of Jona." He went on to say, "...flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee." Jesus was saying, "Your father didn't tell you this; My Father told you this."
  
- VI. JESUS REMINDED PETER ABOUT THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH. In Matthew 16:18 notice the words, "And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." There are two words here which mean "rock"—the word which is translated "Peter," and, of course, the word, "rock." The word for "Peter," however, is the word "petros," and the word "rock" in this verse is "petra." The difference is this: "Petra" is a big rock; "petros" is a "little rock" or, better still, "a piece of the big rock." Jesus was saying, "The big rock upon which I build My church is the fact that I am the Son of God." Peter is a little piece of that Rock. Here is a beautiful picture of the body of Christ.

When a person is saved, he is baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ. Here is a wonderful truth! Jesus is the Big Rock, but we are a piece of that Rock!

- VII. JESUS PROMISED PERPETUITY FOR THE CHURCH. Notice in Matthew 16:18b the words, "...and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Some people say that this means that it matters not how many attacks Satan makes against the church or Hell makes against the church, the church will prevail. This is not what it teaches. The gates of a city were in the wall around the city. The gates were for protection. They were not for offensive warfare; they were for defensive warfare. What Jesus is saying here is as long as we will attack Hell, Hell cannot resist us. When Hell attacks us, we lose. When we attack Hell, we win! The gates of Hell cannot prevail against us. This means the church is to stay on the attack all the time. **WE** are to be on the offensive. We are to be soul winning, we are to be attacking sin, we are to be aggressive. We are to take the lead, we are to take the initiative, we must take the offensive side. The church is a moving institution. We are not to hold the fort or to stand still and fight only when fought. We are to fight sin, go soul winning, and attack the opposition!
- VIII. JESUS IS BUILDING HIS CHURCH. There are those who say that the church is composed of all believers. This will be true some day. The "church" means "a called-out assembly." When Jesus comes again and all Christians are called out, then all Christians become "a called-out assembly" or the "church." Until that day, however, the only church is a local body of called-out believers when they come to assemble. (Teacher, stress the importance of church. Teach the pupils to build their lives around the church, be faithful to the church, give to the church, serve the Lord in the church, etc.)
- IX. JESUS GAVE THE KEYS OF THE KINGDOM TO PETER. Notice Matthew 16:19a. This does not mean that Peter was the first Pope and has the keys to the kingdom. This does not mean that Peter was given the keys—one key for the Jews on Pentecost and another key for the Gentiles in Acts 10. Bear in mind, we are talking about a warfare. We are talking about our attacking the gates of Hell. Jesus is simply saying, "I will give you the keys to the gates." He was saying, "The victory is yours if you keep on attacking."
- X. JESUS PROMISED THAT WHAT WE BIND AND LOOSE SHALL BE BOUND AND LOOSED IN HEAVEN. Read Matthew 16:19b. Once again, it deals with warfare. When we attack Hell, He gives us the keys to the gates. We can enter and win the victory. The enemies we capture He recognizes as being captured, and the victories we win He recognizes as being divine victories.