

## “The Gates of Hell will Not Prevail”

### -Matthew 16:18 (13-20) The Sure Success of the Savior and His Saints

What should be the opening sermon for a new church? I’ve been wrestling with this question for some time and have landed on our text for this morning. It is a text that informs us about the state of affairs both in the past and present. It also forges a vision, God’s vision, His plan, for the future.

Please join me in turning in your Bibles (you did bring them correct?) to Matthew 16:13-20

READ THE TEXT

Context: The IDENTITY of Jesus.

Context is a question that Jesus asked the disciples: “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” verse 13 Son of man is title that Jesus used for Himself. Various responses were given that question he asked.

Prophets

Liar, Lunatic, or LORD.

I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I’m ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don’t accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronising nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. . . . Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God. (CS Lewis *Mere Christianity*, 55-56)

**I. Decision Point: But who do you say that I am?**

You are the Christ. Another word for messiah.

-king

-it is a title not a name.

-Ps 2 and 110 are in view here. If you are not familiar with them, you need to be. They are the two most alluded to passages from the Old Testament in the NT.

-Hebrews has much to say about this fact.

Son of the Living God

-deity

-“living God” a term for the fact that the Triune God of Scripture is not like the other so called gods of the nations or our imagination. He is indeed alive. He sees and hears everything. In Hebrews 10:31 Says that it is a terrible thing to fall into the hands of the living God. God’s judgement is a rarely talked about concepts in many churches today but it is entirely appropriate given the context of this passage to remember that Jesus is the righteous judge and He, having sat down at the right hand of God the Father, will judge the deeds and intents of the heart. We will all stand before Him. Those who do not know Him as Lord will not know Him as savior. He is coming on the clouds and He is bringing His reward and punishment with Him.

## **II. Successful Mission**

“I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not prevail against (overpower) it.”

Verses 17-19 are specifically Matthean, meaning that they are not in the other two synoptic gospels.

I -Jesus Himself. He is the one who died for the church and He is the one who will build it. Ps 127:1 says that “unless the LORD builds the house, the work of the builders is useless.” This is a personal matter for Him.

Will build

My -possessed bride

Church -common Greek term for congregation, group of people, crowd

(invert the terms for emphasis in preaching). This is the first occurrence of the the term “church” in the gospels. BTW, it does NOT mean “called out ones.” This is a root error or etymological fallacy.

Gates of hell (hades) “The phrase *pulai hadou* (gates of hell) is a Jewish expression meaning “realm of the dead.” The same two words appear in the Septuagint version of [Job 38:17](#): “Have the gates of death been revealed to you, or have you seen the gates of deep darkness [*puloroi de hadou*]?” They appear again in [Isaiah 38:10](#): “I said in the middle of my days I must depart; I am consigned to the gates of Sheol [*pulais hadou*] for the rest of my years.” In both passages, *pulai hadou* is a euphemism for death.” -KDY <https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/gates-of-hell>

Not prevail -Will not win. Death will not win. The world will not win. God’s kingdom rule and His King will overcome. Psalm 2 & 110. He will rule them with a rod of iron.

### III. Personal responsibility “I will give you the keys to the kingdom” (v19)

A. “keys to the kingdom”

B. “you”

C. Binding and loosing

**-note about Roman Catholic theology**

The most disputed text on ecclesiology (the doctrine of the church) is [Matthew 16:13–20](#). Protestants and Eastern Orthodox alike contest the use of Christ’s affirmation of Peter by Roman Catholics to establish the papacy.

Unfortunately, we can consider the issues raised by today’s passage only in brief. Foremost among these is what Jesus does not say in His commendation of Peter. Though invested with authority in verse 19, Peter is not thereby given supreme authority over the church universal. As a steward over God’s house, Peter’s keys give him (but not only him) authority among God’s people. For example, he can assure repentant sinners of divine pardon, not because he is able to forgive sin, but because he proclaims the free Gospel of forgiveness. Therefore, the keys also enable him to assure the impenitent that they can by no means inherit the kingdom of God. Yet Peter’s keys also belong to every apostle and, in a qualified sense, church leaders today as well (18:15–20; [Eph. 2:19–20](#)). Furthermore, [Matthew 16:13–20](#) says nothing about Peter passing on a “unique” office to successive bishops, and it gives no support for papal infallibility.

Historic Protestantism recognizes such truths, and often says that Peter’s confession is the rock to which Jesus refers. This makes good sense, but we err if we say that Peter himself is not in any sense a rock upon which the church is built ([Eph. 2:22](#)). There is a play on words in the original Greek text: Peter’s name, *Petros*, is based on *petra*, that is, “rock” (v. 18). In other words, Jesus declares, “Simon, you are the rock, and on this rock I will build my church.” Peter has primacy in the church — a historical primacy, not papal primacy. Aside from being the first to confess Christ, Peter is the first apostle to extend the Gospel to the Gentiles ([Acts 10](#)), and his leadership and teaching set the stage for the church’s expansion and maturity (chap. 1–15; 1 and 2 Peter). Thus, we conclude with John Calvin: “It is a foolish inference of the Papists, that he received the primacy, and became the universal head of the whole Church. Rank is a different thing from power, and to be elevated to the highest place of honor among a few persons is a different thing from embracing the whole world under his dominion.”

<https://www.ligonier.org/learn/devotionals/peter-rock>

### **Implication for us today:**

Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father and will come back in judgement.

He is in control and actively extending His kingdom rule. That includes us individually, our families, this church, Midland, the Permian Basin, Texas, the USA, and the entire world.

### **Application:**

**Calm demeanor in the tumult.**

**Optimism (Eschatology) #datpostmill**

We should have an optimistic view of the future (why I'm postmill).

**Enthusiasm about your role in God's plan.**

We should not lose heart or give up, but instead, we should be enthusiastic about serving a risen king who commands all men everywhere to repent and believe the gospel.

We should be joyously strong in the Lord and get married, and raise kids, and start churches, and businesses and build cities and nations.

You may say Cody, you don't see what's going on in the world right now. We have a federal government that is actively promoting satanism, sexual mutilation, filicide (killing of one's own children). We have beta males Biden voters overrunning our cities, state sponsored drag queen story hour, the woke industrial complex, uniparty swamp in DC along with unelected alphabet boy federal agency burecrats running amok. Even in the church, in the PCA tolerating the gay Revoice conference and the SBC's ERLC pushing for all this cultural appropriation. I'm sure there's even more. Don't you see all that? Yes, I see it. I also see the King of glory, high and lifted up.

I also see His gospel being preached, babies are being born, men and women are marrying, His men are discipling their families and are running for office, Texas is shutting the border.

He is sovereign. He is in control. He is not surprised or frustrated. His plan never fails. The decree of God will prevail. Jesus and His bride, the church will overcome the whiles of the devil and "the earth will be full of the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea." (Hab 2:14).

Watch and pray people. Fight and build. Love and feast. Let all the earth praise the LORD.

And to the unbeliever, yes, I will address the unbeliever most weeks so I tell you to invite your unbelieving, lost, ungodly, barbarian friends... to the unbeliever, today if you hear His voice, repent and believe the gospel. Turn from your sins to Christ and trust His finished work on the cross for forgiveness and new life, adoption in His family. Forsake your old ways and cling to Him. Submit yourself to the true and living God and find peace for your soul.

Next week, we will start a sermon series going verse by verse through the book of Acts.

To God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, blessed Trinity, be all power, glory and honor forever and ever. Amen? Amen!