



**“Who Do You Say I Am?**  
Matthew 16:13–20  
*The Authority of the King*

**Introduction:**

Matthew 16:13–20 – “Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus 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. I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.’ Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.”

**I. The Background**

Matthew 16:13 – “Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi...”

- Regarding Caesarea Philippi (Formerly Paneas)
- Regarding The Gates of Hades: The Mouth of Hell

**II. The Question of All Questions**

Matthew 16:13–15 – “He was asking His disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ And they said, ‘Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.’”

**View #1: “Some say Jesus was John the Baptist.” (cf. Matthew 14:2)**

**View #2: “Others think Jesus was Elijah.” (cf. Malachi 4:5)**

**View #3: “Some say Jesus was Jeremiah.” (i.e., The Weeping Prophet)**

**View #4: “Others think Jesus is one of the Prophets raised from the dead.” (cf. Luke 9:19)!**

Jesus is not necessarily unpopular; He’s just misunderstood!

**III. The Most Personal All Questions**

Matthew 16:15 – “But who do YOU say that I am?”

**IV. The Spiritually-Produced Answer**

Matthew 16:16 – “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

“...feeling the light of his Master’s glory shining in his soul, he breaks out—not in a tame, prosaic acknowledgment. ‘I believe Thou art, etc.’—but in the language of adoration—such as one uses in worship...”

**Declaration #1: “You are the Christ...”**

**Declaration #2: “You are the Son of God...”**

**Declaration #3: “You are the Son of the Living God.”**

“Let us then, with a fervency of affection and adoration, go to Christ, and tell him so; Lord Jesus, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God.”

Matthew 16:17 – “And Jesus 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.’”

- We have Old Testament prophets telling us who the Messiah was to be?
- We have reliable New Testament witnesses verifying what the Old Testament says about Jesus Christ.
- We have God, the Father using the Word of God, the Spirit of God, and the people of God throughout the ages revealing these things to us.

Jeremiah 29:13 – “You will seek Me and find Me when you search for Me with all your heart.”

Matthew 7:7–8 – “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.”

The Apostle John confronts those who had a distorted view of Jesus Christ, calling them liars and the spirit of antichrist (1 John 2:22; 4:2–3)

## V. The Exhortation to Simon Peter

Matthew 16:18 – “I also say to you that you are Peter (i.e., *petros*), and upon this rock (i.e., *petra*) I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”

The words *petra* and *petros* are two very distinct words in the Greek:

- *petros* refers to a shifting, rolling, or insecure stone...a pebble.
- *petra* refers to an immovable stone, a rock-solid foundation, a bedrock.

## VI. The Profound Explanation

Matthew 16:18 – “...and upon this rock I will build My church...”

### The Three Main Views

**View #1: Simon Peter himself was the solid rock.** (cf. Ephesians 2:20; Galatians 2:9)

**View #2: Peter’s Confession of Faith was the solid rock.**

**View #3: Christ Himself is the solid rock.** (cf. Acts 4:11–12; 1 Corinthians 3:11; 1 Peter 2:6–7; Ephesians 5:23)

## VII. The Unseen Battle

Matthew 16:18 – “...the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”

Satan’s goal is to overthrow the church by opposing the Gospel, discrediting Christians and presenting counterfeit religion as a substitute for the Gospel of grace alone by faith alone in Christ alone.

### **#1. Believers have victory over death.**

1 Corinthians 15:54–57 – “Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is your victory? O death, where is your sting?” The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law; but thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”

### **#2. The Universal Church will overcome.**

We are “protected by the power of God through faith for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:5)

### **#3. The testimony of who Christ is will ultimately prevail.**

All the forces of hell and all the false teachers on earth will never change the truth of who Jesus really is and what He came to do.

“On Christ the Solid Rock I stand...”

## VIII. Our Widespread Authority

Matthew 16:19 – “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”

The keys of the Kingdom of Heaven were first put in Peter’s hands because he was the first to open the doors of the gospel to the Gentiles. This is not about the primacy of Peter nor the unbroken succession of popes...

## **What are the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven?**

### **#1. We will open and close the doors of the Word of Truth.**

1 Thessalonians 2:13 – “For this reason we also constantly thank God that when you received the word of God which you heard from us, you accepted it not as the word of men, but for what it really is, the word of God, which also performs its work in you who believe.”

We have the keys of doctrine and the keys of knowledge. We open the door of the Word of God to the world.

### **#2. We will open and close the doors of fellowship in a local church.**

We have the authority to bless the people of God and to not bless the people who reject Christ. (cf. Matthew 18:15–17) The church, acting in accordance with God’s Word, has the authority to declare what is forgiven or unforgiveness, not based on their opinions but based on the facts of the case and the authority of the Scriptures.

John 20:23 – “If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained.”

We have the keys of fellowship in Christ’s Church.

## **IX. The Clear Warning**

Matthew 16:20 – “Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.”

### **Reason #1: His disciples were not yet ready.**

Acts 1:8 – “...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses...to the remotest part of the earth.”

### **Reason #2: His disciples didn’t have the full story.**

“Great truths may suffer damage by being asserted before they can be sufficiently proved.”

## **Conclusion: “Who do YOU say I am?”**

Matthew 16:17 – “Blessed are you...”

In Romans 9:33 the apostle Paul speaks of Christ as a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense (i.e., *petran skandalou*) to unbelievers. But...it goes on to say, “...he who believes in Him will not be disappointed.”

“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS & ACTION ITEMS:**

1. How does the world’s view of Jesus differ from who Jesus said He is?
2. Who do you say Jesus is?
3. What authority does Christ give us over the devil and death?
4. Why is it important to present the whole message to unbelievers about who Jesus is and what He came to do?
5. What did you get most out of this message?