

Take Away – What is the Church?

Text: Matthew 16: 13 - 20

Date: 6-5-22



With your group...

Answer each of the following questions prompted by the text and/or today's sermon.

1. Considering their location at Caesarea Philippi and what we know about its wild and immoral culture where the people worshiped their god Pan, why was Peter's use of the word "living" so significant when he declared Jesus to be "the Christ, the Son of the *living* God"? How does Isaiah 44: 9 – 20 accentuate Peter's statement of faith in the *living* God?
2. In your own words, what is "the church"?
3. Who do people that you know say that the Son of Man is? List a few examples of people you know and their opinion(s) of Jesus.
4. In what ways does Matt 16:13-20 refute the popular notion that Jesus was just a good teacher, prophet or good example?
5. What is the next question Jesus puts before his disciples? What is the significance of him beginning the next question with the word "But" ...?
6. Reread Matthew 16:18. This is one of the most debated verses in all the Scriptures. What are some viable understandings of the meaning of "this rock" and what are their implications?
7. To whom does the word "rock" refer in the following verses and how does this give us clarity for what Jesus meant in Matthew 16:18:
 - a. Psalm 18:2 –
 - b. Acts 4:10 –
 - c. 1 Corinthians 10:4 –
 - d. Romans 9:33 –
 - e. Ephesians 2:20 –
8. Which persons today do you respect and look up to because they boldly proclaim Jesus' message? How might following their example influence you to be bolder in proclaiming the gospel message, even if it might lead to persecution or hardship?
9. In verse 18, we read "...and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it." Gates are built as a defensive mechanism. The mission of the community of God – the Church -

is to bring the message to the gates of Hades/Hell because God promised that those gates would fall.

- a. Would you say the church today generally views itself as being offensive or defensive in the battle against evil?
- b. How might an offensive vs. defensive mentality affect the way we minister in the world around us?