

MATTHEW SIXTEEN

Take - a - ways

WHAT MAKES CHRISTIANITY CLICK?

The Person - Jesus the Christ (Vss 1-17)

The Faith - The Church (Vss 18-20)

The Power - The Cross (Vss 21-28)

The Pharisees and Sadducees could never agree on anything
But they were united to destroy Jesus
Likewise, Pilate and Herod hated each other
But were united to destroy Jesus and keep their empires (Luke 23:6-12)

The disciples could not focus on the spiritual
For worrying about the physical
Perfect example of the cares of the world choking out the Seed of the Word

Why was the Cross necessary?
Why couldn't God just pronounce the "Good People" forgiven?

Taking up your Cross does not mean we must all be martyrs
It means we are all to take responsibility
For our Christian lives and witness
It is accountability

Jesus uses the word "ecclesia" to mean church
It appears more than 100 times in the New Testament
It means "called out ones"
It pictures what we today would call a "town hall meeting"

The one who dies with the most toys DOES NOT WIN
Those toys are not going into eternity with you
Only the things that count for Jesus will remain at the end

Matthew Chapter 16

Date Time: 2026-03-23 22:09:30

Location: First Baptist Tallassee

Instructor: Sid Edwards

Summary

This lesson offers an in-depth study of Matthew 16, focusing on three pillars of Christianity: the person of Jesus Christ, faith within the church, and the power of the cross. It explains Jesus's shift from public ministry to private preparation of His disciples for His death, burial, and resurrection. Key moments include the Pharisees and Sadducees demanding a sign, Jesus's warning about their "leaven" (false teaching), and Peter's pivotal confession that Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of the Living God." The lecture underscores this confession as the bedrock faith on which the church is built, clarifies the authority entrusted to the disciples, and highlights the necessity of the cross. It concludes with the cost of discipleship: self-denial, taking up one's cross, and valuing eternal reward over worldly gain.

Knowledge Points

1. The Core of Christianity and Jesus's Transition in Ministry

- **Foundations of Christianity**
 - Three distinctive elements: a person (Jesus Christ), faith expressed in the church (the body of believers), and the cross as the central axis of world history.
- **Jesus's Withdrawal from Public Ministry**
 - About 18–24 months into His work, Jesus began pulling back from crowds to prepare His disciples for His impending passion and resurrection.
 - The disciples still envisioned an earthly, political kingdom; Jesus therefore separated them from the crowds to clarify their calling and mission.
 - This phase sets the stage for Peter's confession and the final journey toward Jerusalem.

2. Confrontation with Religious Leaders

- **The Demand for a Sign**
 - Despite major differences (e.g., on the resurrection), Pharisees and Sadducees united to oppose Jesus and deny Him as Messiah.
 - They demanded a sign from heaven, dismissing previous miracles (healings, exorcisms, feeding the 4,000 and 5,000) as inadequate.
 - They likely sought a dramatic heavenly sign referenced in prophecies such as Isaiah 35 and Numbers 24.
- **Jesus's Rebuke and the Sign of Jonah**

- Jesus rebuked them for reading the skies yet ignoring the “signs of the time.”
- He exposed the irony of requesting a heavenly sign from the very Creator of the heavens.
- He declared no further sign would be given to that “evil and adulterous generation” except the “sign of Jonah.”
- As earlier in chapter 12, this sign pointed to the Son of Man’s three days and nights in the grave, like Jonah in the great fish.
- They were “adulterous” for worshiping a god of their own making and elevating tradition over true faith, thereby distorting the law.

3. The “Leaven” of the Pharisees and Sadducees

- **A Misunderstood Metaphor**

- After crossing the Sea of Galilee, Jesus warned: “Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”
- The disciples first thought He referred to their lack of bread.
- Jesus reminded them of His provision in feeding the 5,000 (about 20,000 people total) and the 4,000 (about 14,000–16,000 total), exposing their unbelief and misunderstanding.

- **The True Meaning of Leaven**

- They then understood “leaven” signified the false teachings, heresy, and hypocrisy of the religious leaders.
- While leaven often symbolizes sin and corruption (1 Corinthians 5), here it points specifically to their doctrinal error.
- Though posing as moral exemplars, they were corrupt at the core—adding man-made laws and steering people away from the Messiah.

4. Peter’s Great Confession

- **The Question of Jesus’s Identity**

- In Caesarea Philippi (about 25 miles north of Galilee), Jesus asked who the crowds believed Him to be.
- Reports included: John the Baptist risen, Elijah (cf. Malachi), Jeremiah, or another prophet.
- Jesus then asked, “But who do you say that I am?”
- The lecture frames four possible responses: Jesus is a myth, a liar, a lunatic, or the Messiah—no middle ground.

- **Peter’s Inspired Declaration**

- Peter confessed: “You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.”
- “Christ” means “Anointed One”; in the Old Testament, prophets, priests, and kings were anointed—Jesus fulfills all three offices.
- Jesus commended Peter, noting this was revealed by the Father, indicating deep heart-knowledge rather than mere head-knowledge.

5. The Foundation and Authority of the Church

- **The “Rock” of the Church**

- Jesus said, "...you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church..."
- Jesus had renamed Simon Bar-Jonah to Peter ("rock/pebble," John 1:42).
- The church is not built on Peter the man but on the rock-solid faith he confessed—Peter grew from a "pebble" to a "boulder" of faith.
- Christ is the ultimate cornerstone (Isaiah 28); the church is built on Him through the faith of believers across generations.
- "Church" means "called-out ones"; Jesus foresaw Jews and Gentiles united in His church.

● The Keys of the Kingdom

- Jesus gave Peter "the keys of the kingdom of heaven," symbolizing delegated authority.
- "Binding" and "loosing" align earth with heaven's verdicts, chiefly through preaching the gospel.
- Those who accept are "bound" for heaven; those who reject are "loosed" (separated) for eternity.
- This reflects heaven's will enacted on earth ("your will be done on earth as it is in heaven").
- Jesus instructed them not to publicize His Messiahship yet, anticipating Israel's rejection; public proclamation would follow at Pentecost.

6. The Cost of Discipleship

● The Prophecy of the Cross

- Jesus openly foretold His necessary journey to Jerusalem to suffer, be killed by elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be raised on the third day.
- He spoke of the cross as God's predetermined plan—not a fallback.
- His suffering would be comprehensive: physical, moral, mental, emotional, and spiritual, climaxing in separation from the Father.

● Peter's Rebuke and Satan's Influence

- Right after confessing Christ, Peter rebuked Jesus: "God forbid it, Lord! This shall never happen to you."
- Peter's vision of Messiah excluded suffering and humiliation; he missed the central hope of resurrection.
- Jesus replied, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me, for you are not setting your mind on God's purposes but on men," identifying the satanic impulse behind Peter's words.

● The Call to Self-Denial

- Jesus taught that following Him requires denying oneself, taking up one's cross, and following Him.
- Self-abnegation means laying aside self for a greater good.
- Taking up the cross signifies total surrender and public identification with Jesus despite hardship, like a condemned person carrying their cross to execution.

● Four Choices for Disciples

1. Lose your life in Christ or cling to selfish ways?
2. Forsake the world for heavenly treasure or live for the world?

3. Secure your soul for eternity or lose it in the lake of fire?
4. Share in heavenly reward for service or arrive empty-handed?

2. The Coming Glory and Reward

- Jesus promised to return “in the glory of His Father with His angels” to “repay each person according to his deeds.”
- Suffering precedes glory; rewards will be given at Christ’s Second Coming.
- Matthew 16:28 poses a puzzle: “Some standing here will not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom.” The resolution will be addressed next session.

Assignments

- 1. Reflect on Matthew 16:28: Which disciples would not taste death before seeing the Son of Man coming in His kingdom? Be prepared to discuss in the next session.
- 3.
 2. Reminder for senior adults: Luncheon on Tuesday at 12:00 PM at the church.