

Lesson D8: A Rock or a Stumbling Block?

Matthew 16:13-28

I. **THE FAITH OF PETER** (13-19)—Peter the Rock

A. **Praised by Jesus**

1. **Blessed** (17a; Rom 8:32; 2 Cor 1:20)—*happy, fortunate; commended; God's favor extended to us in Christ*
2. **Renamed** (18)—*Simon to Peter*
3. **Entrusted** (18b-19)—*Keys of the Kingdom*

B. **Given by God** (17b)—Not revealed by man but by my Father in Heaven

1. **Human Thought Insufficient**—*He's a great prophet!*
2. **Divine Revelation Required** (Mat 11:25; Eph 2:8)—*Even faith is the gift of God.*

C. **Foundational to the Church** (18; Eph 2:20)—Peter's testimony that Jesus is the Christ

II. **THE FOLLY OF PETER** (20-23; Acts 21:13)—Peter the Stumbling Block

A. **Rebuked by Jesus** – sternly and severely

1. **Felt Temptation to Avoid Cross**—Satan keeps bringing this up.
2. **Fatal Misunderstanding of Salvation**—There is no salvation without the cross.

B. **Misled by Human Wisdom** (Isa 55:8-9)—God's plan is bigger

C. **Used by Satan**—to tempt and discourage

III. **THE CHURCH OF CHRIST** (18)

A. **Owned by Jesus**—Each person will answer to Jesus for their leadership and behavior.

B. **Built by Jesus**—He works through His people but it is His work. He will see it through.

C. Undefeated by Hell

1. **The Church Will Endure.** Jesus will preserve it.
2. **The Church Will Triumph.** The Holy Spirit will empower it.

IV. The CALL of DISCIPLESHIP (24-28)

A. The Cost (24-25)—must be chosen intentionally and willingly

1. **Deny Yourself** (Mk 10:21; 1 Cor 6:19-20)—*Relinquish self-will, His desires over yours.*
2. **Take Up Your Cross**—*Suffer opposition, persecution for gospel.* No cross, no crown.
3. **Follow Jesus**—*Go where He goes and do what He does. If He suffers, you suffer.*

B. The Choices (25-26)

1. **Save Your Life for Yourself** (25a)—*My will, my way*
 - a. **Personal Autonomy**—*My will be done! I am sovereign over my own life!*
 - b. **Worldly Success and Approval**—*The world will accept you as its own.*
 - c. **Temporal Comfort**—*Whatever makes life easy and enjoyable now.*
→ **Eventually lose these AND forfeit your soul.**
2. **Lose Your Life for Jesus** (25b)—*means more than martyrdom; daily living sacrifice*
 - a. **Servant of Christ** (1 Cor 6:19-20)—*His kingdom, His will, His way*
 - b. **Hated by the World** (Jn 15:18-21, Jas 4:4)—*You forfeit the world's approval*
 - c. **Persecuted for Righteousness** (2 Tim 3:12)—*You accept temporal suffering*
→ **Gain True Life and Eternal Comfort.** (Jn 10:10; 2 Cor 1:5 & 4:7; 2 Ths 2:16)

V. THE IDENTITY OF JESUS (13-16)—“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

A. **Who do people say that He is?** A prophet. Not sufficient for salvation.

B. **Who does Peter say that He is?** The Christ (Messiah), the Son of the living God.

C. **Who do you say that He is?** This makes all the difference.