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MATTHEW

The Suffering Christ Revealed

Matthew 16:13-28

I. Introduction

a. Building a Case

- i. The first 15 chapters - Jesus is the Son of David, the fulfillment of the Law and the Prophets, the one greater than Jonah, greater than the Temple
- ii. He has taught the Kingdom in parables, fed thousands, walked on water, healed the sick, given sight to the blind, raised the dead, and exposed the true hearts of the Pharisees and Sadducees
- iii. One thing Jesus hasn't done is directly claim the title of Christ
 1. Reminder - Christ is not Jesus' last time - "Christ" (Greek Christos) is the Greek translation of the Hebrew word Messiah – which means Anointed One
 - a. Prophets were anointed to represent God to the people, Priests were anointed to represent the people before God, and kings were anointed to rule God's people on His behalf
 - b. But by the first century, "the Messiah" had become the title the Jews used for the ultimate deliverer God would send to restore the throne of David, defeat Israel's enemies, and establish God's eternal reign.
- iv. Matthew calls Him this throughout His gospel – from the very beginning –
Matthew 1:1 the book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ

b. Up to this point, Jesus' identity has been demonstrated, and alluded to, but He has not directly claimed the title of Messiah

- i. Even when John the Baptist sent messengers to Jesus asking Him directly “Are you the One or should we be waiting for another?”
 1. Jesus didn't respond directly – He said “go tell John what you're seeing, the blind see, the lame walk, the dead are raised, the poor have good news preached to them, and blessed is the one who isn't offended by me.”
Directly from Isaiah 35 and 61
 2. Now Jesus did say – “Something greater than the temple is here” (12:6), “the Son of Man is lord of the Sabbath” (12:8), “I have authority on earth to forgive sins” (9:6)
 - a. And He doesn't discourage the disciples in the boat when they worship him and say “truly you are the Son of God” (14:33)
 - b. But He hasn't said “I am the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One you have been waiting for.”

ii. Now all that all changes

c. Matthew 15 marks a turning point - This is the moment that Matthew's gospel moves from Jesus' public ministry in Galilee toward Jerusalem and the road to the cross

- i. Verse 21 makes the turn clear: *"From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things."*

- ii. Everything before this has been building toward the question that the disciples asked on the boat *"Who is this man that the wind and the sea obey him?"*
- iii. Now we move to these questions - "If Jesus is the Christ, the King, the Savior of mankind – why does He have to die?"
 - 1. "And what does that mean for us, His followers?"

Matthew 16:13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" 14 So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." 17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

II. Who Do You Say I Am?

- a. Caesarea Philippi – location matters – this wasn't at the temple in Jerusalem
 - i. It was 25 miles north, at the base of Mount Hermon
 - 1. Which marks the northernmost boundary of the Promised Land in the Old Testament (Pictures)
 - ii. It had a deep history of Pagan worship
 - 1. It was the center of worship for Pan, the Greek god of nature, his shrine was carved into the mountainside
 - 2. Herod the Great built a temple of white marble to Caesar Augustus near the mouth of a cave – it was thought to be the entrance to the underworld
 - 3. Philip the Tetrarch expanded the city and renamed it after himself and Caesar, built even more shrines, including one to Zeus
 - iii. Picture this - Jesus is standing with his disciples in front of a wall carved with the images of gods: nature deities, political deities, and a cave called "the gates of Hades" and He asks: *who do people say that I am?*
 - 1. Jesus has chosen this location for a reason
- b. ***"Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."***
 - i. The crowds don't dismiss Jesus has a liar or a lunatic – He obviously someone significant
 - 1. John the Baptist reincarnated, Elijah returned, or Jeremiah or one of the prophets
 - 2. This isn't blatant unbelief - They obviously admire Him, respect Him, see Him as someone who speaks for God – but admiration is not enough
 - a. There are many world religions that admire Jesus but deny His true identity
 - b. The enemy is content with the admiration of Jesus
 - ii. A view of Jesus that stops at "great prophet" or "moral teacher" or "wise man" is still a wrong view of Jesus
 - 1. It still leaves us dead in our sins
- c. Peter's Confession
 - i. ***"But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God"***
 - ii. Remember the setting

1. Every other god carved into that mountainside was a dead idol alongside an entrance to a cave known as “The Gates of Hades (the underworld, the dead)”
 2. And Peter says “**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**”
 3. This is the first time in Matthew's Gospel that anyone says those words out loud
- d. And Jesus’ response... ***“Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah (marking a significant event - God calling "Abraham, Abraham" or "Simon, Simon"), for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.”***
- i. Jesus tells Peter that revelation, that knowledge, that understanding did not, and could not, originate inside Peter’s mind. Wasn’t his intelligence or spiritual sensitivity.
 - ii. He didn’t put the pieces together and just simply figured it out.
 1. The source of that revelation, that truth came from outside of him, the Father revealed it.
 - iii. We live in a culture where we are constantly told to look inward for our truth - "follow your heart," "your truth," "trust your gut"
 1. Jesus tells us to find the answer to the most important question anyone will ever ask, we cannot look within – we have to look to our Creator, to our Father
 - iv. This is exactly what we’ve been studying in the Proverbs
 1. Proverbs 14:12 / 16:25 — "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death."
 - a. Seems right, it feels right, my gut says...we are not waking up in the morning deciding to choose destruction but there’s a problem
 - b. Jeremiah 17 - *"The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately sick; who can understand it?"*
 - v. ***1 Cor 2:9 But as it is written: “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, Nor have entered into the heart of man The things which God has prepared for those who love Him.” 10 But God has revealed them to us through His Spirit. For the Spirit searches all things, yes, the deep things of God. 11 For what man knows the things of a man except the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so no one knows the things of God except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things that have been freely given to us by God.***
 1. True understanding – isn’t achieved, it is received

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” 20 Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

III. On This Rock

- a. On what rock? Peter?
 - i. This verse has been fought over for centuries.
 - ii. Entire religious systems have been built on a misunderstanding of this verse

- iii. "You are Petros (Peter - sliver or piece of rock), and on this petra (bedrock) I will build my church."
 - 1. That must mean Peter is the infallible foundation and head of the church along with every one of his successors
 - a. Does that track with anything we have read up to this point in Matthew's gospel or anything that comes after?
- iv. Is it possible that Jesus is using wordplay and their current setting to make this immensely significant point
 - 1. Peter, what you just said, what you just confessed – that is the foundation that I will build my church on
 - a. You are the Christ, the Son of the living God
 - b. You are the first to confess it, but you will not be the last
- b. I will build my church stone by stone and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it
 - i. ***1 Peter 2: 4 NIV As you come to him, the living Stone—rejected by humans but chosen by God and precious to him— 5 you also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.***
 - ii. ***Eph 2: 19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. 21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.***
 - 1. I will build MY church – If anything, Peter was simply the first stone laid, along with the apostles, and then all who confess "Jesus, you are the Christ, the Son of the Living God"
- c. Nothing, not even the gates of Hades, will stop the expansion of the Kingdom of God built on the foundation of Christ Himself
 - i. Gates are defensive, they don't attack – they hold something in or keep something out
 - ii. The Kingdom of God through the body of Christ is advancing on the strongholds of death
 - 1. A death's gates are not strong enough to hold against the power of the Gospel of Jesus Christ
 - iii. Looking for purpose – it starts right here
- d. Keys to the Kingdom
 - i. Keys were given to the steward of the house by the master of the house and they came with the authority of their master
 - 1. Peter isn't given authority over who gets in; he's given authority to declare on earth what God has already decided.
 - a. The church doesn't dictate to God; it announces what God has already settled
 - ii. Bind on Earth, Loosen on Earth – strange language now but not during Jesus time – they were terms commonly used by rabbis
 - 1. Bind or Tie up – meant to forbid someone or something from coming in – person or a doctrine
 - 2. Lose – Untie – meant to welcome in
 - a. This is the authority to preach the gospel with certainty. When you declare "believe and be forgiven" you know that is the open door

into the Kingdom of Heaven or "reject Christ and remain condemned," you know there is no other way

- iii. ***Tell no one?*** Peter has just been celebrated for confessing Christ and the disciples have been given the keys to kingdom of heaven and then Jesus says, "Don't tell anyone" Why?

Matt 16:21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day. 22 Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!" 23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

IV. Until Then

- a. Timing - This is the first time in Matthew that Jesus directly tells the disciples he must die
 - i. The full context of "who Jesus is" isn't complete until his death and resurrection
 - ii. A gospel proclamation of "Jesus is the Christ" without the cross and empty tomb isn't the full gospel
 - iii. People were already wanting to seize Jesus and make Him king. But before He reigns, He will suffer and die for our sins
 - iv. And then He will defeat death and the grave and rise again – and then they will proclaim Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God to all who will listen
 - 1. HE MUST - Jesus isn't predicting that bad things will happen to him; He is declaring the cross is path to redemption and victory
 - 2. Everything here on out takes place because of those two words – HE MUST
- b. Peter Rebuked
 - i. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." to taking Jesus aside and saying "You don't know what you're saying"
 - ii. Jesus responds: ***"Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block, a trap to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."***
 - 1. In Matthew 4, Satan's temptations to Jesus were offers of the Kingdom without the cross
- c. What are the things of man? Comfort, convenience, safety, control

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man will come in the glory of His Father with His angels, and then He will reward each according to his works. 28 Assuredly, I say to you, there are some standing here who shall not taste death till they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."