

Pentecost Study 13 - Matthew 16:13-20 NLT

13 When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14 "Well," they replied, "some say John the Baptist, some say Elijah, and others say Jeremiah or one of the other prophets."

15 Then he asked them, "But who do you say I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus replied, "You are blessed, Simon son of John,^[a] because my Father in heaven has revealed this to you. You did not learn this from any human being. 18 Now I say to you that you are Peter (which means 'rock'),^[b] and upon this rock I will build my church, and all the powers of hades will not conquer it. 19 And I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. Whatever you forbid^[c] on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit^[d] on earth will be permitted in heaven."

20 Then he sternly warned the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Q.1. What do we know of Caesarea-Philippi? Why might Jesus have brought his disciples there?

Q.2. Why does Jesus ask them about how people understand his identity?

Q.3. Why does he call himself 'the Son of Man'? See Daniel 7:13-14

Q.4. How might we describe John the Baptist, Elijah and Jeremiah? What do Prophets mostly do?

Q.5. When he asked them, 'who do you say I am?', v.15 what is he hoping they will say? Why?

Q.6. What is a Messiah? What was the general belief about the role of a Messiah?

Q.7. What might Simon Peter have understood by the title 'Son of God'? see 2 Sam 7:12-14 Psalm 2:1-8

Q.8. After Simon Peter's declaration of Jesus v.16 how should we understand v.17? Why is Simon 'blessed'?

Q.9. After Simon Peter's declaration of Jesus' identity v.16 what key declaration does Jesus make about Simon's new identity v.18?

Q.10. Whose 'church' is it v.18? Why can nothing 'conquer' it v.18c?

Q.11. What might be the 'keys of the kingdom' v.19?

Q.12. What's Jesus mean by '*Whatever you forbid on earth will be forbidden in heaven, and whatever you permit on earth will be permitted in heaven.*'?

Application: for reflection, prayer and action

Q.13. Why do you think Matthew included this story in his Gospel?

Q.14. If Jesus asked you, 'who do you say that I am?' how would you answer?

Q.15. How might Jesus want our church to grow? What's your part?

Matt 14:13-21 (my suggested answers)

NB. Please answer the questions yourself. We all have different ways of answering; God may give you greater insights than mine. Put '*John thinks*' ... before each answer.

A.1. It is 45km north, outside Galilee. It is away from crowds, the critical religious leaders and Herod-Antipas.

A.2. Jesus wants to get them thinking, 'is he just a Prophet?' or maybe he greater?

A.3. The title 'Son of Man' doesn't hold the explosive publicity of 'Messiah' or 'King' but is of equal significance as Dan 7:13-14 shows.

A.4. They were God's outspoken critics of their leaders (political and religious) and often suffered imprisonment and marginalisation as a result.

A.5. He asks because he wants to judge their understanding of who he is. Will they recognise he is the Messiah?

A.6. The title Messiah (Christ) means 'anointed one' – God's chosen king/leader. He will rescue God's people from oppression & bring peace on earth

A.7. This is a title linked to Messiah. God promised David that his son would sit of Israel's throne and that this child would also be his Son.

A.8. Jesus understands that Peter's confession of faith v.16 was an insight given to him by God, something no human could have naturally grasped v.17.

A.9. Simon's declaration is followed by Jesus' declaration: 'You are Rock (Peter) and on this rock I will build my church.' Jesus will be the King & Saviour of the church Peter will be the founding earthly leader.

A.10. The church is Jesus' community, and as Messiah/king/lord, nothing will ever stop him building it (no circumstance, no human, no demon)

A.11. The keys of the kingdom are the like entry pass to the door into God's place (kingdom). The church is the primary place and pathway through which people come into God's kingdom (under his rule).

A.12. This is a difficult sentence. The earthly church may be a community in which unsaved people and saved people come together. In that Jesus says the church should exercise the right to forbid (bind) or permit (loose) people entering the kingdom.

A.13. This is the key passage where Jesus' disciples recognise who he is, and Jesus focusses his teaching and ministry mainly towards them.

A.14. I would use 'Lord' and 'Saviour' but also 'Friend', 'God's Son'

A.15. Your answer.