

Brandon Phillips / General

The Church: Growing in Faith and Love / Church / Matthew 16:13–20

In Matthew 16:13-20, Jesus gives three vital insights into the nature and function of the church.

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## Pre-sermon Comments

[Romans 1:24–25](#) (LSB) <sup>24</sup> Therefore God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, so that their bodies would be dishonored among them. <sup>25</sup> For they exchanged the truth of God for a lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen.

How did the story of Jesus, the world's greatest love story, get twisted into a tool to judge, harm, and divide? ~ He Gets Us

Many of those who represent Jesus have made people in the LGBTQ+ community feel judged and excluded. And others have simply ignored their stories and lived experiences. ~ He Gets Us

[Exodus 34:6–7a](#) (LSB) <sup>6</sup> Then Yahweh passed by in front of him and called out, “Yahweh, Yahweh God, compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in lovingkindness and truth; <sup>7</sup> who keeps lovingkindness for thousands, who forgives iniquity, transgression, and sin;

[John 1:14](#) (LSB) <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

[Ephesians 4:14–15](#) (LSB) <sup>14</sup> so that we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.

<sup>15</sup> but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him who is the head, *that is* Christ,

[1 Timothy 3:15](#) (LSB) <sup>15</sup> but in case I am delayed, *I write* so that you will know how one ought to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and support of the truth.

[Ephesians 4:17–24](#) (LSB) <sup>17</sup> Therefore this I say, and testify in the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, <sup>18</sup> being darkened in their mind, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart. <sup>19</sup> *And* they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. <sup>20</sup> But you did not learn Christ in this way— <sup>21</sup> if indeed you heard Him and were taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus— <sup>22</sup> to lay aside, in reference to your former conduct, the old man, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, <sup>23</sup> and to be renewed in the spirit of your mind, <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new man, which in *the likeness of* God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.

[Matthew 10:34–37](#) (LSB) <sup>34</sup> “Do not think that I came to bring peace on the earth; I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. <sup>35</sup> “For I came to SET A MAN AGAINST HIS FATHER, AND A DAUGHTER AGAINST HER MOTHER, AND A DAUGHTER-IN-LAW AGAINST HER MOTHER-IN-LAW; <sup>36</sup> and A MAN’S ENEMIES WILL BE THE MEMBERS OF HIS HOUSEHOLD. <sup>37</sup> “He who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and he who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me.

## Sermon Text

### **Matthew 16:13–20** LSB

<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, saying, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” <sup>14</sup> And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” <sup>16</sup> And Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah,

because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.<sup>18</sup> “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.<sup>19</sup> “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”<sup>20</sup> Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.

## Proposition and Outline

Here in [Matthew 16:13-20](#), Jesus gives three vital insights into the nature and function of the church. Jesus has called His people based on:

- The Complete Realization of His Identity ([Matt 16:13-16](#)) [Review]
- The Consummate Reality of His Work ([Matt 16:17-18](#))
- **The Clear Recognition of His Power** ([Matt 16:19](#))

## Review

[Matthew 16:13](#) (LSB)<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, saying, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

## The Complete Realization of His Identity ([Matt 16:13-16](#))

[Matthew 16:13](#) (LSB)<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, saying, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

[Mark 8:27](#) (LSB)<sup>27</sup> And Jesus went out, along with His disciples, to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way He was asking His disciples, saying to them, “Who do people say that I am?”

[Luke 9:18](#) (LSB) <sup>18</sup> And it happened that while He was praying alone, the disciples were with Him, and He questioned them, saying, “Who do the crowds say that I am?”

[Daniel 7:13-14](#) (LSB) <sup>13</sup> “I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And came near before Him. <sup>14</sup> “And to Him was given dominion, Glory, and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations, and *men of every tongue* Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not be taken away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.

[Matthew 16:14-15](#) (LSB) <sup>14</sup> And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.”

<sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

[Matthew 16:16](#) (LSB) <sup>16</sup> And Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

[Philippians 2:9-11](#) (LSB) <sup>9</sup> Therefore, God also highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> so that at the name of Jesus EVERY KNEE WILL BOW, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and that EVERY TONGUE WILL CONFESS that Jesus Christ is LORD, to the glory of God the Father.

## The Consummate Reality of His Work [Review] ([Matt 16:17-18](#))

[Matthew 16:17](#) (LSB) <sup>17</sup> And Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

[Ephesians 1:3-4](#) (LSB) <sup>3</sup> Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ, <sup>4</sup> just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him in love,

[Matthew 16:18](#) (LSB) <sup>18</sup> “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

[Ephesians 2:19–20](#) (LSB) <sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, <sup>20</sup> having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,

[Acts 2:42](#) (LSB) <sup>42</sup> And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

[John 1:1](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

[John 1:14](#) (LSB) <sup>14</sup> And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.

[Matthew 16:18](#) (LSB) <sup>18</sup> “And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.

[Ephesians 1:20](#) (LSB) <sup>20</sup> which He worked in Christ, by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavenly places,

[Ephesians 2:5–6](#) (LSB) <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— <sup>6</sup> and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,

[Acts 20:28](#) (LSB) <sup>28</sup> “Be on guard for yourselves and for all the flock, among which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers, to shepherd the church of God which He purchased with His own blood.

## The Clear Recognition of His Power ([Matt 16:19-20](#))

[Matthew 16:19](#) (LSB) <sup>19</sup> “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”

## The Kingdom of Heaven

[Matthew 3:1-2](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, <sup>2</sup> “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

[Matthew 4:17](#) (LSB) <sup>17</sup> From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

[Matthew 5:3](#) (LSB) <sup>3</sup> “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[Matthew 5:10](#) (LSB) <sup>10</sup> Blessed are those who have been persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

[Ephesians 2:1-2](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> And you were dead in your transgressions and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience,

[Job 1:12](#) (LSB) <sup>12</sup> Then Yahweh said to Satan, “Behold, all that he has is in your hand, only do not send forth your hand toward him.” So Satan went out from the presence of Yahweh.

[Matthew 28:18](#) (LSB) <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”

## God’s Current Rule

[Matthew 16:19](#) (LSB) <sup>19</sup> “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”

[Luke 11:52](#) (LSB) <sup>52</sup> “Woe to you, scholars of the Law! For you have taken away the key of knowledge; you yourselves did not enter, and you hindered those who were entering.”

## **The Church Possesses the Keys of the Kingdom**

[Matthew 16:19](#) (LSB) <sup>19</sup> “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”

## **What Does Jesus Authorize the Church To Do?**

### **Make and Teach Disciples of Jesus!**

[Matthew 28:18–20](#) (LSB) <sup>18</sup> And Jesus came up and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.

<sup>19</sup> “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, <sup>20</sup> teaching them to keep all that I commanded you; and behold, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

[Revelation 5:9](#) (LSB) <sup>9</sup> And they sang a new song, saying, “Worthy are You to take the scroll and to open its seals, because You were slain and purchased for God with Your blood *people* from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

### **Baptize New Converts**

[Matthew 28:19](#) (LSB) <sup>19</sup> “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,

[1 Corinthians 12:13](#) (LSB) <sup>13</sup> For also by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit.

### **This Authority Was Manifested At Pentecost**

[Acts 2:38-41](#) (LSB) <sup>38</sup> And Peter *said* to them, “Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” <sup>39</sup> “For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.” <sup>40</sup> And with many other words he solemnly bore witness and kept on exhorting them, saying, “Be saved from this crooked generation!” <sup>41</sup> So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.

[Acts 2:42](#) (LSB) <sup>42</sup> And they were continually devoting themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to the prayers.

[Colossians 1:28](#) (LSB) <sup>28</sup> Him we proclaim, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, so that we may present every man complete in Christ.

## **Discipline Sinning Christians In Our Midst!**

### **Church Discipline Process**

[Matthew 18:15-20](#) (LSB) <sup>15</sup> “Now if your brother sins, go and show him his fault, between you and him alone; if he listens to you, you have won your brother. <sup>16</sup> “But if he does not listen *to you*, take one or two more with you, so that BY THE MOUTH OF TWO OR THREE WITNESSES EVERY FACT MAY BE CONFIRMED. <sup>17</sup> “And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as the Gentile and the tax collector. <sup>18</sup> Truly I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven. <sup>19</sup> “Again I say to you, that if two of you agree on earth about anything that they may ask, it shall be done for them by My Father who is in heaven. <sup>20</sup> “For where two or three have gathered together in My name, I am there in their midst.”

### **Annias and Sapphira Disciplined**



[Acts 5:3-5](#) (LSB) <sup>3</sup> But Peter said, “Ananias, why has Satan filled your heart to lie to the Holy Spirit and to keep back *some* of the price of the land? <sup>4</sup> “While it remained *unsold*, did it not remain your own? And after it was sold, was it not under your authority? Why is it that you laid this deed in your heart? You have not lied to men but to God.” <sup>5</sup> And as he heard these words, Ananias fell down and breathed his last; and great fear came over all who heard.

## The Sinning Brother in [1 Cor 5](#) -

[1 Corinthians 5:1-5](#) (LSB) <sup>1</sup> It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and sexual immorality of such a kind as does not exist even among the Gentiles, that someone has his father’s wife. <sup>2</sup> And you have become puffed up and have not mourned instead, so that the one who had done this deed would be removed from your midst. <sup>3</sup> For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present: <sup>4</sup> in the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus, <sup>5</sup> deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

[2 Corinthians 2:8](#) (LSB) <sup>8</sup> Therefore I encourage you to reaffirm *your* love for him.

## Peter’s Authority

[Matthew 16:19](#) (LSB) <sup>19</sup> “I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”

[Acts 1:26](#) (LSB) <sup>26</sup> And they cast lots for them, and the lot fell to Matthias; and he was added to the eleven apostles.

[Acts 1:8](#) (LSB) <sup>8</sup> but you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be My witnesses both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and even to THE END OF THE EARTH.”

It is especially [in [Acts 10](#)] that Peter makes the most exemplary use of the “keys” and of his authority to “loose.” (Had Paul been the initiator of gentile evangelization, it perhaps would have been forever suspect.) Matthew’s Jewish-Christian readers would have taken pride in the knowledge that Christianity was Jewish before the influx of the Gentiles and that the church as a whole depended upon its Jewish roots in Peter and the apostles. ~ Donald Hagner

## Conclusion:

Let me give you a few truths that flow from our study!

From this study, we can derive several truths that illuminate the clear recognition of Jesus's power and authority:

**Kingdom Authority:** Jesus entrusted the keys of the kingdom of heaven to Peter and the rest of His disciples, symbolizing the power and authority granted to them by heaven itself. These keys signify they were vested with Jesus's authority to act on behalf of the kingdom ([Matt 16:19](#)).

**Heavenly Alignment:** Jesus's declaration that actions on earth are bound or loosed in heaven emphasizes the alignment between heavenly decree and earthly manifestation. The disciples' efforts, when done according to God's will, reflect the predetermined plans of heaven ([Matt 16:19](#); [18:18-20](#)).

**Sovereign Rule:** The phrase "kingdom of heaven" underscores God's sovereign rule from heaven, contrasting with the temporary dominion of the demonic powers, including Satan. Despite appearances, God's authority remains absolute. He reigns supreme ([Matt 16:19](#)).

**Power of the Keys:** The keys represent not just authority but also the means of unlocking and locking spiritual realities. They signify the delegated power to open the kingdom's gates to believers through preaching the gospel and to close them against unbelief ([Matt 16:19](#)).

**Great Commission Authority:** Jesus commissions His disciples to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to obey his commands. This mandate is accompanied by the authority Jesus granted them, indicating heaven's sanction of their mission ([Matt 28:18-20](#)).

**Sacramental Authority:** The authority to baptize new converts signifies the disciples' role in bringing future believers into the church and symbolizing the new believer's union with Christ in his death and resurrection and with other Christians in fellowship ([Acts 2:41-42](#), [Matt 28:18-20](#)).

**Spirit-Empowered Ministry:** The authority given by Jesus is manifested by the power of the Holy Spirit, as seen in the dramatic events of Pentecost, where Christ added thousands to the church through Peter's preaching through the Spirit's power ([Acts 2:42](#)).

**Church Discipline Authority:** Jesus grants the local church the authority to discipline and restore members who stray from the path of righteousness. This authority, exercised in love and accordance with Scripture, aims to restore the individual and protect the purity of the body of Christ ([Matt 18:15-20](#)).

**Continuation of Apostolic Authority:** The authority given to Peter and the apostles extends to the broader church, as seen in establishing local congregations without direct involvement by the apostles - for example, the church at Colossae founded by Epaphras ([Col 1:1-2](#); [1:7](#); [4:12](#))

**Gentile Inclusion in the Church:** Peter's role in preaching to the Gentiles illustrates the church's expansion beyond its Jewish roots, demonstrating the power of the gospel message to include Gentiles in the kingdom of God ([Acts 10](#)).

**All of these truths are applied to the local church!**