

## **Declared by Peter – Teaching Notes**

(Matthew 16:13-27; 2/14/10)

**Introduction:** A key idea in today's lesson is God is calling believers to be disciples of Christ. Prayerfully, we will be challenged to work on our discipleship.

### **Body:**

#### **Read Matthew 16:13-16**

**I. Probing.** Jesus and His disciple were at Caesarea Philippi. There Jesus asked about what people were saying about His identity. He also asked about what the disciples were saying.

#### **Applications –**

- **Assessing and responding.** Notice in vss. 13-16 that Jesus spent time assessing the level of understanding that people had. He asked about what people were saying about Him. He asked what the disciples were saying about Him. It was good to see that Peter had some understanding of who He really was. Jesus is the Christ, Anointed One, Messiah, and the One to set things in order. And He is the Son of the Living God. Jesus is so much more than the other prophets and Bible characters. First, we should stay in touch with those we seek to minister to. If we don't stay in touch, we may be talking much more than we are teaching and going through more motions than we are healing and meeting the needs of people. Second, we should live like we believe that Jesus is in a category all by Himself. Such living should be noted for obedience to God's word. *Let's work on assessing and responding appropriately to the understanding of Jesus.* The more one knows, the more one should obey. Where there is not understanding, there will be no sustained fruit that glorifies God.

#### **Read Matthew 16:17-21**

**II. Preparation.** Jesus commends Peter's acknowledgment. He talks about the foundation and power of the Church. He tells His disciples to keep quiet about His being the Christ, as He sought to prepare them for what was going to happen.

#### **Applications –**

- **Hearing and obeying God's word.** Notice in vss. 18-19 that God revealed that upon the profession of Peter's faith, the powerful Church of Jesus Christ is built. Its power is greater than that of Hell and the grave. Furthermore, the disciples were given the keys to the kingdom. This seems to be a symbolic reference to their ability to declare the Word of God, which teaches those who have accepted Jesus shall be saved. And those who do not shall be doomed. First, we should be open to what God reveals to His people. The most authoritative things we have to know God and His will is to prayerfully study the Bible. Second, Jesus being the Christ, the One sent by the Father to set things in order, is the rock on which the powerful Christian Church stands. It is not upon Peter. Furthermore, the Church of Christ is more powerful than the devil and grave, because we offer eternal life with the Lord. Third, we ought not think that the keys give power other than that which is seen in the word. *Let's strive to hear and obey God's word, which should urge us to help people get saved and help them grow in the Lord.* We should do this with the blessed assurance that neither death nor the devil can stop what God intends for His people.

- **Living by God's timetable.** Notice in vss. 20-21 that God operates on a timetable, which includes preparing people for major events. In our text, it was not time for the disciples to tell others about Jesus being the Christ. However, it was the time to prepare the disciples for the terrible crucifixion and glorious resurrection that was

to come. *Let's strive to live by God's timetable.* It is time for us to grow up to be disciples of Christ (i.e., study, serve, give, witness, worship, follow leadership, love, etc.). It is time for us to trust God, even when we don't understand Him. It is time for us to try to make change a process, instead of a shocking event, when the situation merits it.

### **Read Matthew 16:22-27**

**III. Priorities.** Peter rebukes Jesus. Jesus refers to him as being influenced by the Satan. Jesus goes on to talk about the requirements, necessities, and hope of discipleship.

#### **Applications –**

- **Striving to obey God, instead of the devil or triggering godly rebuke.** Notice in vss. 22-23 that Peter was out of order in not only publically challenging but rebuking Jesus. It was wrong for Peter to rebuke Jesus at all. Even if our leaders are wrong, there are proper ways to respond to such. It was more wrong for Peter to rebuke and challenge Jesus, in front of others. There are some conversations that need to take place, but they are better conducted in private. Satan had a part in getting Peter to say the wrong thing at the wrong time. And Jesus did not count to ten, wait until tomorrow, or pray about it. Jesus responded immediately. First, we should always stay in our lane. We should do our best in doing our parts and leave the rest to God, who can handle it. God will handle that which is beyond our responsibility. God will see to it that good will float to the top, and bad will sink to the bottom. Second, we should not allow the devil to use our apparent good intentions and emotions to get us away from God's will for us to do all things decently and in order. Third, as leaders, we should have the wisdom and courage to respond to some things immediately. If we are not careful, our silence can be viewed as enabling consent. And others need to strive to trust God, when the leader has to stop smiling and handle the business at hand. *Let's strive to do our part, in God's plan, instead of allowing the devil to get us out of order and the recipient of godly rebuke.*

- **Discipleship.** Notice in vss. 24-27 the requirements, necessity, and hope of discipleship. To be a disciple/follower of Christ, one is called to deny and dedicate one's self to following divine directions. Discipleship is necessary, because life is so vain, when God is not at the center. And then the hope of discipleship is that there are rewards that make our struggles worthwhile. *Let's work even harder on our discipleship.* If we are not tithing, not worshipping and witnessing with great energy, not involved in a ministry group, not giving ourselves to being trained servants of God, not working on being a loving and loveable personality then there is room for major and immediate improvement in our discipleship.

**Conclusion:** Let's work on our discipleship. God has much for those who obey His will.