

## Sunday School Lesson

### Matthew 15 & 16: Peter's Messianic Declaration (February 18, 2024)

#### ***Preparing Peter***

- Jesus was at Gennesaret (west side of Sea of Galilee)
- Continued criticism from Pharisees (read **Matthew 15:1-2**)

What was Jesus' responsive challenge? (Read **Matthew 15:3-5**) \_\_\_\_\_

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From Isaiah 29:13, "*The Lord says: "These people come near to me with their mouth and honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."*

Then Jesus said, "*Listen and understand. <sup>11</sup> What goes into someone's mouth does not defile them, but what comes out of their mouth, that is what defiles them.*"

- Disciples said Pharisees were offended by this.
- Peter did not understand (Read **Matthew 15:16-20**)

What is your answer? \_\_\_\_\_

#### ***Journey to Tyre & Sidon*** (on Mediterranean coast)

- Canaanite woman cried to Jesus for mercy to heal her demon-possessed daughter.
- No response from Jesus; so she cried to the disciples
- Disciples asked Jesus to send her away. What was Jesus' response? (read **Matthew 15:24**)
- She knelt to Jesus and begged.
- Jesus defended His position, but relented.
- The Canaanite woman was the turning point in Jesus' ministry

#### ***Feeding Four Thousand***

- Back to the Sea of Galilee, healing those whom the crowd brought to Him
- Jesus felt compassion for the hungry crowd: "I am unwilling to send them away hungry, lest they faint on the way."
- Disciples don't know where to acquire sufficient food. They have 7 loaves and "a few small fish." (feeding the 5,000, they had 5 loaves and 2 fish – for Jews); this is a Gentile area. Read **Matthew 15:34-38**.
- 7 baskets => ("7" is complete number) completion for His ministry

## ***Demand for Sign from Heaven***

- Pharisees & Sadducees asked Jesus to show a sign from Heaven
  - Jesus counters that they can interpret signs for weather, but not signs of the times.
  - What is “the sign of Jonah?” \_\_\_\_\_
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- When they left these people, the disciples forgot to bring any bread!! Jesus told them to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees & Sadducees. They argued over this.

## ***Peter’s Confession, then Jesus’ Rebuke***

In Caesarea Philippi (about 20 mi north of Sea of Galilee, in foothills of Mt. Hermon), Jesus asked the disciples who people thought He was. From Matthew 16:13-16:

What was Jesus’ response? (Read **Matthew 16:17-19**)

- Roman Catholic interpretation of this
  - It specifically relates to Peter, the individual man
  - Peter has the power to damn or forgive anything or anyone
- This is the first use of the word *ekklēsia*, meaning assembly of summoned citizens, or “the called ones. “The church is not a building, nor a religious institution, nor an ethnic group, but is the company of the committed, the covenant community where we are brothers and sisters in fellowship with Christ. The church is people – the redeemed people of God.”<sup>1</sup>
- Greek play on words: *Petros* (Greek for Peter) and *petra* (Greek for rock), but in Aramaic “*Cepha*” means both.
- The church is built on confessing people, a community of people confessing such as Peter just made. Read **1Peter 2:4-8**.
- “My church” will be proactive and the powers of death/hell can’t hold it back.
- The “keys” of understanding are usually held/controlled by the teachers; now they are in the hands of the community of believers.  
“Nor is it to be supposed that the power of the keys includes the power of any individual to forgive sins. The Greek tense of the verbs *shall be bound* and *shall be loosed* means ‘shall have been.’ Thus men of God have the power to

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<sup>1</sup> Augsburg, p. 203.

declare that God has forgiven the sins of those who have repented and received Christ by faith. No one may pronounce absolution, but anyone may announce the sins have been forgiven when gospel terms have been met.”<sup>2</sup>

- “Whatever” you bind, not “whoever.”
- HUGE milestone in their relationship – now Jesus clearly describes what is about to happen and Peter can’t believe it!!

*<sup>21</sup> From that time Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised. <sup>22</sup> And Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying, “God forbid, Lord! This shall never happen to you.” <sup>23</sup> But he turned and said to Peter, “Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me; for you are not on the side of God, but of men.”*

- This sounded to Jesus like the tempter in the desert.

### **Cost of Discipleship**

Read **Matthew 16:24-26**.

- What are we supposed to deny? \_\_\_\_\_
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### **Summary:**

- Jesus came first for the Jews. The Canaanite woman was the turning point in Jesus’ ministry to now include Gentiles.
- Peter’s confession was a milestone in Jesus relationship with His disciples; from now on He is more focused and descriptive on the conclusion of His earthly ministry.
- “Grace is represented as the Church’s inexhaustible treasury, from which she showers blessings with generous hands, without asking questions or fixing limits.”<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Harper Study Bible, p. 1465.

<sup>3</sup> Bonhoeffer, p. 45.

## **References**

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