

Sermon Series Title: "The Church of God"

Sermon Series Summary: The Church of God is the people of God throughout the ages, redeemed by Jesus Christ. We're going to take a look at who we are and who we are called to be as the church of God. More specifically, we see that who we are is directly connected to whose we are in Christ.

"We are in our "The Church of God" sermon series, and we see that we are defined not by who we are but whose we are as the Church."

Call: Isaiah 26:12

Text: Matthew 16:13-20

Title: "The Power of the Church"

Next Week's Call: Isaiah 26:13

Next Week's Text: Matthew 16:21-28

Next Week's Title: "The Pathway of the Church"

Future Calls: Luke 1:46-48a, 48b-49, 50, 51-52, 53, 54-55, 68-69, 70-73, 74-75, 78-79; Luke 2:13-14, 29-32; Revelation 5:6-8, 9-10, 11-12, 13-14; Revelation 15:3, 4; Revelation 21:1-4, 5-7, 22-23

Future Titles: "The Unity of the Church" (Ephesians 4:1-7), "The Diversity of the Church" (Romans 12:1-8), "The Sufficiency of the Church" (Ephesians 4:11-16), "The Identity of the Church" (Matthew 5:13-16), "The Humility of the Church" (1 John 1:5-10), "The Draw of the Church" (2 Corinthians 2:14-17), "The Distinction of the Church" (1 Peter 2:11-12), "The Instrumentality of the Church" (1 Peter 2:9-10), "Church as Building" (1 Peter 2:6-8), "Church as City" (Ephesians 2:19-22), "Church as Body" (1 Corinthians 12:12-31), "Church as Family" (John 1:12-13), "Church as Bride" (Ephesians 5:22-33), "The Eternality of the Church" (Revelation 21:1-7)

Fallen Condition Focus: We do not confess Jesus as Savior, and we don't share the gospel or discipline in the gospel.

Christ redeeming FCF: Christ confessed our name, and He is the One who opened heaven for us.

Central Truth: Our confession is our foundation, and our proclamation is our power in Christ.

Summary: In our passage, we see that our confession of Christ is the rock upon which God builds His church. Who do we confess Jesus to be? This is the most important question we need to answer in our lifetime. And our confession and proclamation of the gospel are the keys to the kingdom. This power is by grace on the finished work of Christ.

Reflective Questions:

1. What does our passage teach us about the church's foundation?
2. What is the power of the church? What does that mean for us?

I. Introduction

- A. Hook- Power and church do not mix well together. Abuse of power. Church history- Crusades, religious wars, racism, sexual abuse, scandal, etc. Jars of clay last week. What power? This power is found in the gospel, rooted in grace.
- B. Transition
- C. Proposition
- D. Points

II. The Personhood (vv. 13-15)

- A. Caesarea Philippi- history of idolatry; worship place for Baal, then Pan; then King Herod, Caesar Augustus, and Philip the Tetrarch.
- B. With a city full of idols, Jesus takes this time to ask his disciples who people say He is.
- C. They avoid telling him the bad names of Jesus- out of his mind, destroyer of Israel, blasphemer, worker with the Devil, etc.
- D. They tell him what people say about him:
 1. John the Baptist- ppl who thought of JTB really highly could not believe Herod's execution was the last of him
 2. Elijah- Malachi 4:5- Elijah would return some day
 3. Jeremiah- extra-biblical materials (2 Esdras 2:18)- weeping prophet; Jesus wept in His teaching- Man of Sorrows
 4. One of the prophets- not sure which one but a man of God
- E. But who do you say that I am?
 1. You is emphatic
 2. Most important question we can answer in our lives
 3. Throughout the Gospels, Jesus makes claims that only God can make. C.S. Lewis- liar, lunatic, Lord

III. The Profession (vv. 16-18a)

- A. Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God.
 - 1. Christ means Anointed One- in Israel, priests, kings, and prophets might all be anointed; or warrior king in the line of David- political Messiah who will deliver Israel from Roman rule
 - 2. Apostles don't understand what kind of Messiah/Christ Jesus is. We see that in next week's passage.
 - 3. But Peter stating that Jesus is the Son of the Living God (not dead) shows that he knows that Jesus is not just a political messiah but something more
- B. Peter is blessed (religious delight; holy joy) for this confession.
 - 1. Not by flesh and blood- Peter did not discover this truth by His own work and enlightenment.
 - 2. But my Father who is heaven revealed this to you- not discovery based on merit or strength, but revelation by the renewal/regeneration of His Holy Spirit; My- special relationship with God
 - 3. This is the same thing for us and our confession; it is all by grace. And we are blessed because of it.
- C. You are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church
 - 1. I is emphatic- man is not the builder of His church but Christ is
 - 2. Petros v. Petra- different
 - 1. Catholic church and others believe that Jesus is setting Peter apart as pope with this verse.
 - 2. Easier to say "you" rather than rock
 - 3. Paul says that Jesus is the church's chief cornerstone, and the church is built on the foundation of the apostles.
 - 4. Peter is called Satan in next week's passage, denies Jesus 3 times, and lived by wrong practical theology.
 - 5. Peter may be the spokesperson in the early church, but he is not the sole authority. He still had to submit to the Jerusalem council (with James having the final word in Acts 15) and he was sent out by the other apostles to Samaria in Acts 8.
 - 3. So what is the rock? Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God.
 - 4. Church- only one of two times this word is used in the NT
 - 5. How do we grow in our Christian walk? How do we build up the church? It's through that confession

IV. The Power (vv. 18b-20)

- A. Gates of hell shall not prevail against it

1. Gates are seen as beautiful and strong in the NT
 2. The church in the power of Christ will be stronger.
 3. The devil will not be able to hold the church down and keep it contained. Even death will not be able to overpower the church. The gospel is not bound! It will not stop winning people to Christ and raising the dead to life.
- B. Keys of the kingdom- jokes about St. Peter in front of the door to heaven
1. Keys mean access and belonging
 2. Not pointing to pope- access to determine who gets into heaven or not
 1. Church history before the Reformation- three rival popes condemned the other two and their followers
 3. Open by way of the gospel- Peter does this in Acts 2, preaching at Pentecost, and Acts 8, preaching to Samaritans, and in Acts 10, preaching to Gentiles.
- C. Bound/loosed- shall have been in the Greek
1. God's actions aren't determined by man's actions but the opposite
- D. Keys are extended to the church- church discipline in Matthew 18, John 20, and Paul in 1 Corinthians 5; Lord's Supper
1. The gospel is the power- open doors for others, gates of hell will not prevail against them, even closes doors for others
- E. Jesus instructs them to tell no one- not complete in their knowledge of Messiah; secrecy to complete mission
- F. How can we live with such power? Through Christ.
1. Christ is the One who first confessed us (name on possession).
 2. Christ is the One who took on hell and broke its power to raise life in us.
 3. Christ has opened the gate for us, because it was closed on Him on the cross.
 4. We have the power of the gospel, keys of the kingdom; because Jesus surrendered all power on the cross to produce life in us