

## Jesus: No Spin

### Matthew Chapter Sixteen: Who Do You Say That I Am?

*personal / group study for use with the message of January 24th and 25th, 2009*

***"Now to you who believe, this stone is precious" (1 Peter 2:7).***

This Chapter of Matthew speaks volumes about who Jesus is. He speaks harshly to the Pharisees and Sadducees who are insisting on a sign. Jesus has to remind the disciples about two miracles that involved thousands of hungry people being fed. An important event in the life of Peter is recorded in this chapter. God reveals to Peter who Jesus is, but then Jesus rebukes Peter for questioning God's redemption plan.

#### Introduction.

Chapter 16 marks the turning point in Matthew's gospel. Jesus asks the disciples what people are saying about Him. Then, He asks the disciples for their decision as to who He really is. Peter's great confession is, "the Christ, the Son of the living God". Jesus begins to predict His rejection, suffering and death which will come about in Jerusalem. The disciples have no clue as to what He is saying, and Peter leads the way (again) in making his 'great blunder' (how quickly success is followed by failure!)

Jesus then calls the multitudes to follow Him in the hard path of discipleship: "Take up your cross and follow ME!"

#### Read.

1The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven.

2He replied, "When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,' 3and in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times. 4A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah." Jesus then left them and went away.

5When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread. 6"Be careful," Jesus said to them. "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

7They discussed this among themselves and said, "It is because we didn't bring any bread."

8Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked, "You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread? 9Do you still not understand? Don't you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? 10Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? 11How is it you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees." 12Then they understood that he was not telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

13When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

14They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

16Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven. 18And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. 19I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20Then he warned his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ.

21From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

22Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!"

23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."

24 Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 25 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me will find it. 26 What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels, and then he will reward each person according to what he has done. 28 I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom."

*\*All scripture taken from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted.*

## Questions.

### Think About It...

1. Do you have "a cross to bear"?
2. Read 1 Peter 2:4-8 for a look into Peter's heart. Also see Romans 9:31-33 for Paul's teaching on Christ the rock. Who is the living stone, the cornerstone, the rejected stone, and the stumbling stone that Peter writes about?

### Reflect On It...

3. What does Jesus ask His disciples?
4. What do they reply? What does Peter answer? How did Peter know who Jesus was?
5. What authority did Jesus give to Peter?
6. Are the gates of Hell a defense or an offense? What does that tell you about the church?

### Respond To It...

7. Are you looking for another sign to prove who Jesus is? What might be a convincing sign?
8. Do you wrestle with God's plan of sending Jesus to die as an atonement for man's sin, like Peter did? Why or why not?
9. Twice in the last couple of chapters we have seen Peter's great faith (stepping out of the boat to walk on water, now proclaiming that Jesus is the Christ). Yet he quickly is doubting God's plan. How is Peter an encouragement to you in your faith walk?

Pray that God will strengthen your faith.

In Matthew chapter 10 Jesus speaks of taking up your cross, and in this chapter (verse 24) He talks about denying yourself and taking up your cross. His cross was the burden of laying down His life for you and I. Are you willing to give your whole life for Jesus' kingdom glory?