**Calvary Fellowship 10.9.2022 Matthew 16:1-20 “Not What I Expected”**

* **So a few years ago I was scheduled to teach a group of pastors in Brooklyn, NY - a friend was w/ me b/c he was going to teach as well**
* So the host says, “We put U up in a hotel here in Brooklyn that’s just been renovated. You’re going to love it. That’s where we put all of our guests”
* So we fly in, grab a cab, & arrive at the hotel, check in, & walk into our room
* That’s when I realized our host had booked us into this hotel’s lover’s suite
* It was odd that the guy at the front desk kept apologizing, saying he only had a room w/ 2 double beds, so I was so tired I didn’t notice
* The room was softly lit w/ a view overlooking the city of Brooklyn - The shower & bathroom were all glass, which is awkward whether you’re married or not
* So I said to my friend, “Here’s how it’s going to work: when 1 of us needs to use the bathroom, the other person leaves the room. When 1 of us has to take a shower, the other person leaves the room. When in doubt, leave the room.”
* So my friend leaves so I can take a shower - but he forgets his room key & ID
* So as he tries to get back onto the elevator, he can’t b/c doesn’t have a key
* So he asks the guy at the front desk to let him in & the guy says, “What room are U staying in? He tells him & the guy says, “Oh, the lover’s suite.”
* “Are you Mr. Franquiz?” - No I’m not, but I’m staying in that room
* So the guy won’t let him up & he calls the room b/c I’m.. well, indisposed.”
* My friend is texting me & calling & I’m not picking up
* Then I get out of the shower & hear the phone ring - it’s the front desk clerk
* He says, “Hello Mr. Franquiz, there’s a man here who says he is staying in the lover’s suite w/ U. Is that true?” - I say, “Sir, you’re making it sound a lot worse than it is, & I think it’s important for me to say that I am happily married to a beautiful woman.” - He said, “Sir, we don’t judge here.”
* I said, “Sir, this is not a moment for judgment at all b/c but yes, I know him & yes, he’s staying in this room, but for the record, I didn’t book this room” - click
* **Here was the problem - expectations - we had this idea of what the room was supposed to be like & we were very, very wrong**
* I have learned that many of our problems in life can be found in expectations we had that weren’t met
* **We see this in marriage - weddings are the biggest problem in marriage**
* Think about it - ladies, your husband has never dressed as well as he did on your wedding day - he was wearing a tux that was customized to fit him
* Think about it: On your wedding day, your husband looked like James Bond
* Today, U can’t get him to put on pants - It creates false expectations
* **Guys - your wife has never looked as good as she did on her wedding day**
* Why? B/c that’s what 6 hours of hair & make up will do
* B/c I have never seen an ugly bride - every bride I have seen is stunningly beautiful - so there’s never been an ugly bride
* I’ve met many ugly wives - but no ugly brides - this is part of the problem b/c she’s only going to look like that for 1 day
* So how does this happen? God does a miracle - it’s the only explanation
* **But here’s the worst expectation that messes us up - when God doesn’t do what we expect Him to do when we expect Him to do it**
* There was an illness that U wanted God to heal & He hasn’t as of yet
* There was a bill U needed paid & God didn’t answer the way U wanted Him
* There was that special someone & God hasn’t brought that person yet
* Whenever these things happen, we feel let down & it causes us to want to take matters into our own hands
* **In our story as we’ve been journeying through the Gospel of Matthew, we’re going to see everyone reveal their expectations**
* B/c everyone in our story has expectations about Jesus & about who the Messiah is & what He should be doing when He arrives
* And here’s what is so important for us - if we don’t get this right, we’ll live disappointed lives b/c Jesus didn’t do what we expected Him to do
* “You are good, and do good; teach me Your statutes.” (Psalm 119:68)
* Whenever God acts fast it’s b/c He is good & He does good
* Whenever God acts seemingly slow, it’s b/c He is good & He does good
* Whenever God does exactly what I prayed for, it’s He is Good & does good
* And whenever God doesn’t do anything remotely like what I prayed for, as hard as this is to accept, it’s b/c He is good & He does good
* And this is the lessons that Jesus wants His disciples back then to learn & it’s His desire to teach His disciples today that same lesson….

**———(v. 1-4)———**

**#1 - Expectations can become a Stumbling Block**

* **Last week it was the Scribes & the Pharisees who came to Jesus asking for answers - today, it’s the Pharisees & Sadducees**
* We talked about the Pharisees last week - they were the separated ones - they rejected all pagan culture & strictly adhered to the Law of Moses
* The Pharisees had influence as teachers in the synagogues throughout Israel
* They were uncompromising on their desire to keep the law of God
* **The Sadducees were a completely different animal - they had no problem making compromises if it meant gaining more power in the seat of Rome** They were the official teachers of Israel & were very tied into the power structure of Rome, which is where they derived all of their power
* B/c they depended on Rome to keep their power, so they were not in favor of anything changing - they didn’t revolution - they wanted things to stay the same
* The Pharisees & Sadducees both served on the Sanhedrin, which was the Jewish ruling council of 71 members - like our Supreme Court
* However, they differed theologically - the Pharisees were very evangelistic, seeking to convert people to Judaism - the Sadducees were not
* The pharisees believed in the resurrection of the dead & eternal life for God’s people - we’ll explore that in a future message
* The Sadducees did not believe in the resurrection - they believed this life was all that there is - that’s why they were sad-U-see
* They simply believed that following the Lord gave U the best life possible, but that’s it - Jesus will correct them on this issue in a future message
* **So here’s the question - if these 2 groups can’t agree on anything, why are they united in confronting Jesus**
* Maybe they subscribed to the Sun-Tzu philosophy that the enemy of my enemy is my friend - but while they disagreed on everything, they both agreed that Jesus was a problem b/c He threatened both of them
* But they ask Jesus to perform a sign - a popular Jewish superstition in that day held that demons could perform earthly miracles but that only God could perform heavenly ones - so they asked for a sign form the heavens
* Jesus’ answer is really powerful b/c it’s saying more than we realize at 1st glance - Jesus isn’t simply refusing - He’s saying He is the sign from heaven
* When Jesus was born, His parents took Him to the temple & a godly named Simeon prayed & blessed Jesus & Mary & prayed a beautiful prayer
* “Then Simeon blessed them, and said to Mary His mother, “Behold, this Child is destined for the fall and rising of many in Israel, and for a sign which will be spoken against.” (Luke 2:34)
* Jesus gives them a nautical proverb that exists to this day
* Today we say, “Red sky in the morning, sailor take warning. Red sky at night, sailor’s delight” - Jesus is indicting them for not understanding the times
* He expected them to know the times in which the Messiah would come
* They were the people who knew the Bible the best & they didn’t see it
* In fact, when we get to chapter 21, we’re going look at a prophecy from the book of Daniel where Daniel pinpoints the exact day the Messiah would arrive
* But they missed it & b/c of that they missed out …
* **So my niece Sarah is like my 4th child - we have always been super close w/ her & her & I have been like peas & carrots since she was born**
* Well, years ago, when she in Kindergarten, she was going to a Christian school at the church where I used to be an assistant pastor
* So I said to her, “Sarah, when do U have lunch at school? How about I bring U McDonald’s & we have lunch together?”
* She said, “That would be great. I have lunch at noon.” - So that week I was in the area for a meeting & I swung by McDonald’s & picked up 2 meals
* Then I got to the school & I found out that Sarah’s class has lunch at 11am
* So they let me take her out of class & we talk for a few minutes
* Then I said, “Sarah, why did U say U had lunch at noon, when it’s really 11?”
* She said, “Uncle Bobby, I’m really sorry about that. I think the problem is that I’m 5 & I don’t know how to tell time.” - U can’t argue w/ that
* But it wasn’t a total loss - I hung out for a while & ate both McDonald’s meals
* But w/ the Pharisees & Sadducees, it wasn’t that they couldn’t tell time in the hours & minutes sense - that’s a specific word in Greek - Chronos
* The word Jesus uses is “Kairos” which refers to seasons of time
* If we lived in a region that had seasons, we could tell when the season was changing - the leaves start turning to tell us that summer is gone
* Trees love all of their leave to tell that winter is around the corner
* And then things start budding again, we know that Spring is here
* But these religious leaders couldn’t figure out what God was doing
* That’s why in the following verses, Jesus tells the disciples to beware of the hypocrisy of the Pharisees & the Sadducees - we’ll cover that in Matthew 23
* But Jesus refers to 1 sign - the sign of Jonah - this is the 2nd time that he brings this up - he previously mentioned in Matthew 12
* Jesus brings this up for a couple of reasons - first, b/c He says this will be what happens to Him - He’ll be buried for 3 days
* But 2nd, b/c the men of Nineveh repented at Jonah’s preaching - why?
* It wasn’t a great sermon - in fact, it was a terrible sermon
* But the Assyrians worshipped Dagon, the fish god - so when they hear about Jonah being vomited out of the fish - that was the sign that changed them
* In the same way, the resurrection of Jesus is the thing that changes everything
* **The truth of Christianity is built on 1 thing - the resurrection of Jesus**
* Listen - the only thing that has to be true for Christianity to be true is the resurrection of Jesus - even if the Bible didn’t exist - Christianity is still true
* B/c for the 1st 300 years of church history, followers of Jesus didn’t have the Bible - a few had pieces of letters written by Paul or part of a Gospel
* But the invention of the printing press, coupled w/ the Protestant Reformation is what put the Bible in our hands
* That’s why, when people say thing like, “Well, there are contradictions in the Bible. That’s why I don’t believe.” - press them on that claim
* I have done this so many times - U should try it - it’s super fun
* I will hand my Bible to them & say, “Great. Show me one.”
* I love doing this b/c non-Christians are scared of the Bible - they don’t want to touch it - they think it’s going to start to sizzle in their hands
* B/c they don’t know of any contradictions - it’s non-sense they picked up from a college prof. who’s still mad at his parents for taking him to a boring church
* B/c all that’s needed for the Christianity to be true is what Jesus told the Pharisees & Sadducees - the sign of Jonah - the resurrection of Jesus

**———(v. 13-18)———**

**#2 - Expectations can Blind Me to Truth**

* **So Jesus & the disciples head north to Caesarea Philippi - this city was only 25 miles north of Galilee, but it was dominated by pagan practices**
* There were 14 pagan temples in Caesarea Philippi
* In OT times, this is where the kings would set up what were called “the high places”, & they would set up images of the god, Baal (pic)
* Baal (pic) was the god of rain, thunder & agriculture & that meant something when the culture depended on the ground for sustenance
* In an agrarian culture, this was the god U prayed to when U wanted your career to go better or U needed money
* Eventually, the pagan Canaanite gods gave way to the Greek fertility gods
* 1 god, Pan, was the main god worshipped there & the Greeks renamed the city Panias in his honor (pic) - head of a man, body of a goat & playing the flute
* Years later, when Romans conquered the territory, Herod Philip rebuilt the city & named it after himself, but Caesarea Philippi continued to worshipping Pan
* The reason being, b/c it was believed that Pan lived in those caves
* B/c of all this, the Jews avoided the city at all cost b/c they believed it was the very entrance to hell - I’m sure His disciples were worried about being taken there b/c more than likely none of them had ever been there
* But Jesus is doing all of this to show His disciples who He really is
* **So last week I officiated a wedding for a great couple in our church - the wedding was up in Stuart, so my wife & I drove in up the day before**
* When we were checking out on Saturday, the girl at the front desk says, “Sir, has anyone told U that U look like an actor?”
* I said, “Yes. I get confused w/ all the handsome ones all the time.”
* Now this girl is shaking b/c she’s so nervous - she says, “B/c U look like an actor from this TV show I watched when I was kid
* Now this girl is like 20 years old, so “when I was a kid” was 2 summers ago
* She says, “U look just like the dad on the show.” - “Are U sure you’re not him?”
* I said, “If I were him, would I be using the nam Bob Franquiz as my alias?”
* She says, “B/c U look exactly like the dad on this show “No Ordinary Family”
* My wife says, “Bob, just take picture w/ her so she calms down b/c she’s about to pass out.”- I said, “I don’t know who the dad is. Maybe he’s not good-looking”
* So I said, “I’m not him, but I wish I was. But here’s the other thing, I’m going to look this guy up, & he’s not super good-looking, I’m goin to drive back up here & we are going to have words.” So here’s the guy (pic) -It’s Michael Chiklis (pic)
* And it turns out we grew up about 20 minutes from each other in Boston
* He was the star of a show called “The Shield” & my brother who is an actor was on an episode of the Shield - so that bothered me
* Well, my wife thinks this is the funniest thing that’s ever happened in the history of the world b/c she used to watch this show called “The Commish” (pic)
* So she’s telling everyone this story, saying, “She thinks Bob looks like the Commish” - friends, this is why I have low self-esteem
* But we were driving home & I said, “Of all the members of the Fantastic 4 to compare me to, it’s The Thing (pic) - if she said I looked like The Human Torch I would have taken the picture w/ her, but now, her & I are done
* **But Jesus is going to ask 2 questions - “Who do men say that I am?” & “Who do U think I am?” - He wants them to recognize Him for who He is**
* They answer w/ what people are saying - You’re John the Baptist - that is, you’re a powerful preacher - remember, that’s what Herod Philip said about Him
* They thought He might be Elijah b/c there’s a prophecy that before the Messiah comes, Elijah would return (Mal. 4) plus b/c He worked miracles, they thought He might be the 1 who comes before the Messiah
* They thought He might be Jeremiah b/c He cared about lost people - Jeremiah was called the weeping prophet & Jesus was always moved w/ compassion
* Also, there was belief that when the Babylonians came & conquered Jerusalem, that Jeremiah took the Ark of the Covenant & hid it on Mt. Nebo
* The people believed that Jeremiah would return & bring back the ark & return Israel to their former place of glory
* **But then Jesus asks the most important question that anyone will ever answer - “But who U do say that I am?”**
* Peter says that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah - by the way, Christ was not Jesus’ last name - I know people like to curse & say “Jesus H. Christ”
* But Christ is not a last name - Mary wasn’t Mary Christ & her husband Joseph Christ - "Honey, are we having the Christs over for dinner the week?”
* Christ is a title:Jesus’ name was Yeshua ben Yoseph - Jesus, the son of Joseph
* Christ means anointed 1 - it’s the Greek version of Messiah
* Jesus says, “Who is the son of man?” - Peter doesn’t just say that He’s the Messiah - Peter says “You’re the son of the living God”
* **Then Jesus says something so important to us - He says “U are Peter & upon this rock I will build by church & the gate of hell won’t prevail”**
* Here’s what U need to understand - gates are defensive structures - no 1 brings a gate to conquer a city - instead, gates are there to protect the city
* So what does it mean that the gates of hell won’t prevail? It means that the church will keep advancing & the power of hell won’t be able to stop it
* The Church is going to be built on the confession that Peter gives - that Jesus is the Messiah - and all of hell won’t be able to stop it
* **Listen, when you’re doing what God has called U to do, it might get difficult, but all of hell won’t be able to atop it**
* That’s why the Devil tries to discourage U & get U to quit - b/c he can’t stop U, but he’ll try to get U to stop U
* But if U have an expectation that it’s supposed to be easy, you’re going to miss out on what God wants to do w/ your life & you’ll be disappoint w/ God
* “And David was greatly distressed; for the people spoke of stoning him, because the soul of all the people was grieved, every man for his sons and for his daughters: but David encouraged himself in the Lord his God.” (1 Samuel 30:6)
* Sometimes U need to talk to yourself & tell yourself what’s up
* **I had this happen to me a while ago - I was a bit down about something & it was affecting everything - how I talked, how I listened, what I did**
* I was driving w/ the windows down & I was at a red light & I said to myself, “Bob, snap out of it. You’re a Christian. God is for U & if God is for U, who can be against U? Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but God delivers them out of them all. So cut it out. You’re making me crazy w/ your moping around.”
* I got done saying that & I felt so much better when I looked over & the guy in the car next to me was listening to everything I said
* So I said, “It’s ok. I’m listening to some old school rap. West coast.”
* Everyone wants to listen to their heart - sometimes, U need to talk to your heart b/c your heart is thinking stupid things
* So keep pressing forward b/c the gates of hell can’t stop U if you’re doing what God has called U to do…

**———(v. 19-20)———**

**#3 - Expectations can Make Me Miss the Point**

* **Think about what keys do - they open doors or close them**
* Jesus is building His church (by the way, this is the 1st time in the Bible we hear about the word “church”), but Jesus is inviting His disciples to be part of it
* He’s inviting his followers to open the doors of the kingdom for others
* B/c keys always symbolize power & authority - if U have to key to get in, then U have some authority wherever U are able to unlock the doors
* We’re opening the doors when we preach the Gospel to someone or invite them to church & hear about God’s love & grace
* We’re closing the doors when we stand up for what’s right
* **Back in the 80’s, 42nd street in New York City was the hub of things pornographic & sexual perversion in the world - all on that street**
* But a group of Christian businessmen got together & bought every building on that block & then sat on them b/c there were leases that needed to be honored
* And every time 1 of the leases ran out, they closed that porn business down
* And in 2002, the New York Times ran a story that the last porn shop on 42nd street had closed - why? B/c His people closed the door
* Jesus is inviting us to do things that matter, that leave an impact for eternity
* And we don’t have to be afraid b/c the gates of hell won’t be able to stand when the church is on the offensive, taking ground for the kingdom
* **But here’s where it begins - we have to deal w/ the gates of hell internally**
* We have to deal w/ the stuff in our own lives that’s keeping us full commitment to Jesus - that means taking radical action
* Some of us have emotions that are totally out of control - anger is ruling our lives - listen, that’s hell setting up a gate in your life
* Here’s what Jesus says, “U have the keys to open the door & get it out”
* Now, that might require some help, maybe some counseling, to knock down the gate - but that’s the alternative? To let it ruin your life - no way
* We’re deciding today that hell doesn’t get to win in my life
* Some of us have marriage problems & we’re not even sure how to fix it
* Here’s where U start - by deciding that you’re going to do whatever it takes to fix & to have a desperation that you’ll do whatever it takes to fix it
* B/c you’re deciding that the gates of hell aren’t going to live at your house anymore & the gates of hell aren’t going to in in your family
* Listen, some of us have been everything else a priority in our lives & then we wonder why there’s no spiritual power & we don’t see God work
* Listen, if U will deal w/ the places in your life where the gates of hell want to park, U will begin having victories in your life that transform your life for good
* And if you’ll deal w/ the places in your marriage where the gates of hell want to park, it will transform, not only your marriage, but your family & your legacy
* And that’s how the world changes - b/c the people of God wouldn’t allow hell to take any ground in their life or in their homes
* And when enough of us stand as God’s people, well, hell starts running…