

The Christ, His Church, & The Cost—Part 2
The Foundations of Christ's Church?
Matthew 16:17-20

(Mark 8:27–30; Luke 9:18–21)

- I. **The _____** (v. 17)
- a. **Simon Barjona = Bariōna (Βαριωνᾶ)** = son of John or Jonah
 - b. **Blessed** because God given him Holy Spirit empowered special revelation
 - c. Spiritual matters are not understood by **flesh and blood** (cf. 1 Cor. 2:14)
 - d. The Holy Spirit enlightens us, fashions and shapes us into Jesus' image, and places us as living stones into a "spiritual house for a holy priesthood" (cf. 1 Peter 2:2-6; Eph. 2:19-22; Isa. 28:16; Ps. 118:22; Isa. 8:14; Matt. 21:42)
 - e. A **cornerstone** is the first and most important stone laid in a building because all other stones are lined up with that one stone.
- II. **_____ the _____** (v. 18-19)
- a. **church = Ekklēsia (ἐκκλησία)** = "an assembly of persons constituted by well-defined membership"
 - b. There are 3 general interpretations of **this rock**:
 - i. **this rock = Peter**
 1. Catholicism says that Peter is the first pope, but that is flatly wrong:
 - a. There is zero biblical support
 - b. Peter does not think of himself as a pope (cf. 1 Peter 1:1; 5:1; 2 Peter 1:1)
 - c. The disciples continued to argue over who was the greatest (cf. Matt. 18:1, 18; John. 20:21)
 - d. Mark and Luke's parallel accounts do not mention it
 - e. In the next verses Peter allows himself to be used by Satan to try and lure Jesus from His mission

2. Peter symbolizes all of the Apostles (cf. Eph. 2:19-20; Rev. 21:14)

ii. **this rock = Peter's Confession**

1. **Peter = Petros (Πέτρος)** = "a small stone"
2. **rock = petra (πέτρα)** = "rock," "boulder," or "bedrock" (cf. Matt. 7:24; 16:18; 27:51, 60; Mark 15:46; Luke 6:48; Rom. 9:33; 1 Cor. 10:4; 1 Peter 2:8; Rev. 6:15)
 - a. This holds that Jesus is drawing a contrast between the "small stone" of Peter and the "bedrock" of his Confession, on which Jesus will build His church (cf. Chrysostom, Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa, Isidore of Pelusium, Hilary, Theodoret, Theophanes, Theophylact, John of Damascus)

iii. **this rock = Jesus the Christ**

1. Matthew was written to a predominantly Jewish audience and they were very familiar with the imagery of God as the **Rock** (cf. Deut. 32:4, 13, 15, 18, 30, 31; 1 Sam. 2:2; 2 Sam. 22:2-3, 32, 47; 23:3; Isa. 17:10; 26:4; 30:29; 44:8; 51:1; Habakk. 1:12; Ps. 18:2, 31, 46; 19:14; 28:1; 31:2-3; 42:9; 62:2, 6-7; 71:3; 78:35; 89:26; 92:15; 94:22; 95:1; 144:1)
2. The Apostles taught that Jesus was the **spiritual rock** (cf. 1 Peter 2:2-6; Acts 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 3:11; 10:4; Eph. 1:20–23; 2:19–22; 4:8–16; 5:23; Col. 1:18)
3. Jesus alluded to Himself as **the rock** (cf. Matt 7:24–25; 21:42–43)

- c. Regardless of which interpretation you lean toward, the key is that Jesus declares: **I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.**

III. **Jesus' _____** (v. 20)

- a. Jesus most likely told His disciples not to mention that He was the Christ, to avoid any unnecessary conflict just months away from His crucifixion.

- b. Jesus is speaking to Peter, but He is referring to all of His disciples through the entire Church Age (cf. Acts 2, 8, 10, 11, 14ff)
- c. ***the keys of the kingdom of heaven*** = the local church's authority and responsibility to declare whose sins are forgiven, ***been loosed in heaven***, and whose sins are NOT, ***been bound in heaven***. (cf. Isaiah 22:15, 22; Luke 11:52; Rev. 1:18; 3:7)
 - i. In Matthew 18, Jesus uses the same language of loosening and binding in heaven when referring to the church's authority and responsibility in Church Discipline (Rescue & Restoration)
 - ii. Jesus' disciples, the church, do not save or condemn anyone, they merely confirm what Jesus has already done in heaven (cf. John 20:23; think Baptism & Discipline)
 - iii. This duty is so serious that Jesus reminds us in verses 19 & 20 that He is a witness in our midst!
 - 1. Therefore, a church must move slowly, with much prayer, patience, humility, and discernment!