

Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ
Revelations at Caesarea Philippi, Part 2
The Church

Last time...At Caesarea Philippi, a very worldly and pagan place of worship,
Jesus asked His disciples 2 questions

1. non-threatening question: Who do men say that I am?
2. pointed and personal question: Who do you say that I am?

Simon Peter's correct and complete answer to the 2nd question
"You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God."
was a revelation of God the Father

At the far northern reaches of the Promised Land, the identity of Jesus of Nazareth is
revealed

- far from
 - the center of Jewish religion, the Temple in Jerusalem
 - the Jewish population centers in Judea and Galilee
- in the midst of many false hopes/gods of the nations

It is the first of 5 mysteries revealed or introduced at Caesarea Philippi...

- mysteries of God
 - truths from before the foundation of the world being revealed by God in time
 - transcending realities in heaven and on earth
1. the mystery of Christ, of "God with us", of the Incarnation (Col 2:2-3)
 2. the mystery of the Church
 3. the mystery of God's Plan of Redemption
 4. the mystery of Salvation
 5. the mystery of the Kingdom of God

<u>Mystery</u>	<u>Matt</u>	<u>Mark</u>	<u>Luke</u>
Christ	16:13-17	8:27-30	9:18-21
Church	16:18-19		
God's Plan of Redemption	16:21-23	8:31-33	9:22
Salvation	16:24-27	8:34-38	9:23-26
Kingdom of God	16:28	9:1	9:27

This time...another revelation at Caesarea Philippi
2. the mystery of the Church

This remains a study where the location is part of the lesson

Caesarea Philippi is 25 miles north of Bethsaida and the Sea of Galilee

[Map]

- at the base of Mount Hermon...a massive rock formation
- site of the headwaters of the Jordan River

[Temple of Pan]

[Caesarea Philippi Cave]

- previously known as Paneas or Panium, the center of worship for the Greek god Pan, the lord of the underworld
- site of an immense cavern/cave
(pagan belief: caves were gateways to the underworld)
- the cave at the rear of the temple was considered the 'Gate of Hades' because it was believed that the lord of the underworld would enter and leave the underworld through it
- the Roman city was originally built by Herod the Great and dedicated to Augustus Caesar (beginning of Caesar worship)
- later enlarged by his son Herod Philip, and dedicated to Tiberius Caesar
- Philip's capitol
- the city sits at the foot of Mount Hermon, which was known as the 'Rock of the Gods', referring to the many shrines built against it
- a very pagan site on the Via Maris (Egypt to Mesopotamia), the road to Damascus
- was a center of Caesar worship...and all the gods of the nations

We will be in Matt 16

Matt 16

In Jesus' response to Simon Peter's answer to His 2nd question (the revelation of God), Jesus gives us the key, the essentials, to understand the other 4 revelations of the mysteries of God He speaks of at this remarkable site

v15-17

flesh and blood

has not revealed

- carnal man
- Adam's race

but

- contrariwise
- other, different

My Father which is in heaven (has revealed)

- God (Spirit, John 4:24, John 1:18)
- Eternal, inhabits eternity

The key, the essentials, to understand the other mysteries revealed at Caesarea Philippi is:
the dichotomy (separation from, contention between) **flesh** and **Spirit**

The Mystery of the Church

v18 Peter, and upon this rock:

Peter = *petros* = piece broken off, pebble

rock = *petra* = massive, immoveable

What is the rock upon which Jesus builds His Church?

Certainly not this idolatrous rock upon which they were standing

In context and in meaning of the words, not Peter, who is but a pebble,

a piece broken off the massive, immoveable rock

It is a transcending truth that will never change and cannot be moved...

the identity of Jesus revealed by The Father in heaven – v16

The Lord Jesus Himself is the immoveable Rock/Foundation

17x in Psalms

Ps 18:2, 31, 46

Ps 31:2-3

Ps 62:2, 6-8

1 Cor 3:6-11

I will build My Church:

Church...in the ears of His Jewish disciples

- an unknown in Jewish thinking, not revealed in OT
- a new work of God based on the new covenant (Jer 31:31-33)
a work in which they will be a part at the ground level
- a mystery, a people distinct from Israel
1 Cor 10:32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God

Eph 5:32 this is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church
- those who confess/profess faith/belief/trust in the Rock, Jesus Christ
Rom 10:9-13
John 1:11-12
- a spiritual body, not a national or carnal body
Heb 11:8-10 By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went. By faith he sojourned in the land of promise, as *in* a strange country, dwelling in tabernacles with Isaac and Jacob, the heirs with him of the same promise: For he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker *is* God.

Gal 3:26-29 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus. And if ye *be* Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Eph 1-5 a Body with many diverse parts, all essential
Col 1-3
40 trillion cells in the human body, each with a specific function to keep the body in healthy equilibrium

The Church belongs to...Jesus
“My” Church

He is the head of the Church

Eph 1:22	hath put all <i>things</i> under his feet, and gave him <i>to be</i> the head over all <i>things</i> to the church
Eph 5:23	Christ is the head of the Church
Col 1:18	He is the head of the body, the church

He will build His Church

Acts 2:47	the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved
1 Cor 3:6-7	I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So then neither is he that plants any thing, neither he that waters; but God that gives the increase

The Church does NOT belong to man and it is NOT to be built by man
Church Growth Movement (CGM) is a contemporary movement within
Christianity, a movement of man vs Jesus building the Church

- The church exists for unbelievers therefore the church is not to offend unbelievers or make them uncomfortable
- Based on the American business model with marketing, management, and growth strategies implemented by religious entrepreneurs
 - Seeker Friendly
 - Purpose Driven
 - Emergent Church

Cross-less
very appealing
very “forward thinking”
very subtle
very dangerous to one’s spiritual health

- The church becomes an organization and no longer a living organism
- The wisdom of the church is man’s, not God’s
- The lifeblood of the church becomes money instead of the Holy Spirit
- The foundation is man and the American business model, not Jesus Christ

No man has the right to change the Foundation of the Church (1 Cor 3:11)
or to organize it according to man’s wisdom

gates of hell shall not prevail against it:

With the “cave of Pan” in view of the disciples, Jesus tells them that the gates of hell will not prevail against His Church

The Lord’s Church will be in a battle...spiritual warfare

The battle belongs to the Lord...the Lord always wins

Heb 2:14-15 Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage

2 Cor 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare *are* not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ

v19 keys of the kingdom of heaven:

A key was a symbol of authority

A key opens that which is closed or locked

Jesus has the keys, He alone can hold them, He is the Head of the Church

Rev 1:18 *I am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death because through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil

To His Church (on earth) He (in heaven) gives the authority and stewardship to

- faithfully teach the mysteries of God...His doctrine (Spirit vs flesh)
- to open
 - the doors of Truth to a deceived world...doors He opens
 - the locked/closed hearts of fallen man to the truths of God

1 Cor 4:1-2 Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful

Luke 8:10 Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables; that seeing they might not see, and hearing they might not understand

Also, spoken to Peter, who was an instrumental participant in the Holy Spirit's work at both Pentecosts/Baptisms of Jesus

1. Jewish (Acts 2)
2. Gentile (Acts 10)

bind...loose:

The Church (on earth) is also given the authority/governance to bind/prohibit and loose/permit...
to judge issues on earth with the guidance/direction of the Holy Spirit,
the Spirit of Christ

Acts 15

1 Cor 5:1-8

In v18-19, the mystery of the Church

Not in the Gospels written to the Gentiles (Mark and Luke) but only in the Gospel written to the Jews...because

Rom 1:16-17 the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written,
The just shall live by faith

Rom 9:4-5 Israelites; to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service *of God*, and the promises; Whose *are* the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever

v20 tell no man:

As we considered last week in Mark and Luke, the 12 disciples were not to share with anyone that He was

- Jesus the Christ
- Jehovah is Salvation is Messiah

In Matt's account, ditto that regarding the mystery of the Church?

His words/teaching/doctrine would be misinterpreted and misunderstood by the people

It was not given to them to know the mysteries of God...because of unbelief
(Luke 8:10, Matt 13:13)

It is premature to reveal these mysteries to all

Acts 2:42...the early Church

they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers

Fellowship!