

Thursday, August 27

Read Matthew 16:13-20. Jesus seems pleased at Peter's profession. In Matthew's gospel Jesus responds, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! . . . And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it." The message pointed out that Jesus is utilizing a word play in congratulating Peter for professing the deep truth that Jesus is the Messiah – the son of the living God. Peter honors Jesus and Jesus returns the honor by calling Peter the rock upon which He will build His church.

To be called a rock is to be compared to Abraham and to God himself! Peter's faith enabled him to do great things for God's Kingdom on earth. This is an incredible claim given the rest of Peter's story – his fading loyalty and denial of Jesus during Jesus' last hours alive on earth. It is a grace-filled realization that we don't have to be perfect to be blessed by Christ and exalted within His church – we have to be willing to step up and step up in faith. Blessings to God who enable extraordinary things to occur from the ministry of ordinary people – like Peter – like you and me.

Friday, August 28

Read Mark 8:27-38 and Romans 12:1-8. Read also I Peter 2:1-10. Peter shares with each of us the responsibility to be built into a spiritual house! Notice that it is Jesus who builds the church — Peter is simply the foundation. Jesus continues to have an active role in constructing the Christian community as a spiritual house, and there will be many "living stones" added to this building over the generations. We are those stones!

We have a place and a purpose in God's kingdom work – a place and a task in God's church! The Romans passage reminds us that we are a critical part of the living body of Christ in the world today. We are the church, powerful with a purpose and a direction, strengthen and guided by Christ. When we recognize Jesus as the Messiah – He returns the praise saying, "You are the rock! Praise God for this gift of grace and guidance!

Message Notes – August 23, 2020

Questions from God – Who Do You Say I Am?*

- I. It seems that in our scripture lesson from Mark, Jesus is conducting his own _____.
 - A. The _____ of this exchange between Jesus and the disciples make the exchange all the more meaningful.
 - B. It is an area with so much religious _____.
 - C. Labeling Jesus as the Messiah is a real slap in the face to all of the _____ messiahs who were revered on that spot.

- II. It is important to understand the dramatic setting in which Jesus asked the question, "Who do _____ say that I am?"
 - A. The disciples answer, "John the Baptist; and others, _____; and still others, one of the prophets."
 - B. You can recognize what's happening here – the disciples are providing neat little _____ in which to place Jesus.
 - C. Jesus gets more to the point, "But who do _____ say that I am?"
 - D. It's the singular voice of _____ who answered, "You are the Messiah."
 - E. There are two great _____ about this profession of Peter.
 1. First, no human category is adequate in describing _____.
 2. Second, our profession of Jesus the Christ is a _____ event in our lives.

*Mark 8:27-38 and I Peter 2:1-10

- III. Jesus seems _____ at Peter's profession.
- Jesus responds, "I tell you, you are Peter, and on this _____ I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it."
 - To call someone a rock is _____.
 - The great and wonderful part of this high praise that Jesus places upon Peter – Peter _____ with each of us!
 - Peter wrote, "Come to him, a living stone, though rejected by mortals yet chosen and precious in God's sight, and like living stones, let yourselves be built into a _____ house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. (I Peter 2:5)
 - When we profess Jesus as the Messiah – _____ can stop us! Not even the gates of hell.
 - We are the rock – _____ and steady – a foundation from which Jesus is lifted up as we profess Him to be "the Messiah."

Daily Meditations and Study Guide

The following is a daily meditation and study guide meant to enhance your understanding of the message and grow as a Christian.

It is offered for your personal reflection or to share with others.

Monday, August 24

Read Mark 8:27-38. What are your immediate thoughts – your immediate answer – when you hear the question: Who is Jesus? The message was about Jesus' identity, and how Peter responded. How would you answer that question? Honestly think about your answer and write your thoughts here. Pray for insight this week as we consider the Biblical answer to this central question of our Christian faith.

Tuesday, August 25

Read Mark 8:27-38. When Jesus first asked, "Who do people say that I am?" The disciples answered, "John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets." You can recognize what's happening here – the disciples are providing neat little boxes in which to place Jesus. Certainly, Jesus was a prophet, a teacher and a healer as witnessed in the New Testament. But Jesus was much more than that – Jesus was and is the Son of God!

We know Peter's profess to be central to our faith, however we tend to do exactly what the people of Jesus' day did – we put Jesus into little boxes that which, in turn, make us comfortable with Jesus. We proclaim that Jesus loved everyone and we gloss over the fact that Jesus brought a word of judgment also. Our faith stalls a little after the birth of Jesus and we cherish the nativity of Christmas but never quite embrace the cross of Easter. What box or boxes do you place Jesus? What view of our Lord and Savior makes Him most comfortable for you? Meditate upon these questions and ask that God expand the boxes you've constructed around our uncontainable Jesus the Christ!

Wednesday, August 26

Read Mark 8:27-38. When Jesus asked more specifically, "But who do you say that I am?" it's the singular voice of Simon Peter who answered, "You are the Messiah." It is an awesome responsibility when one professes his or her faith in the highest yet most concrete terms. Messiah (and its Greek counterpart, Christ) means "the Anointed One." This means that Jesus was sent by God to be the savior of the earth. It means that Jesus is God's messenger and conveyer of divine love and guidance.

How is Jesus your Messiah? Your guide and companion? What name do you have for Jesus that confers the greatest responsibility? Pray that God will reveal that responsibility to you as you honor Jesus by naming him your Messiah – your Christ.