

13<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Pentecost, 12<sup>th</sup> Sunday after Trinity – 2023

Saturday, 8/26 at 4:00 | Sunday, 8/27 at 9:00

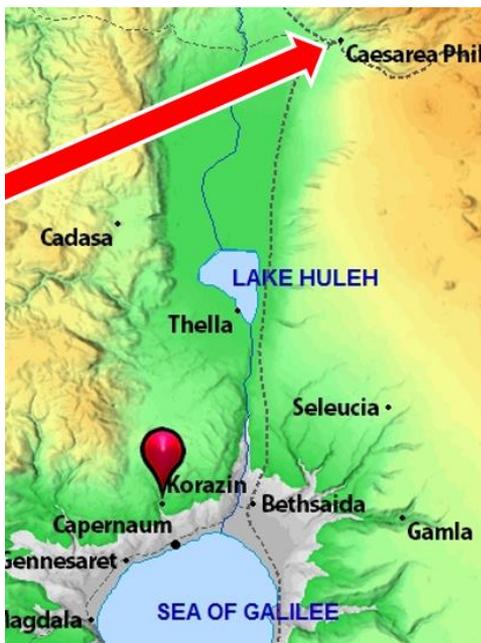
# Did Jesus Make Peter the First Pope?

Text: Matthew 16:13-20 NAS 1995

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: This sermon focuses on  
➔ Jesus, ➔ His followers, and ➔ God's gift of forgiveness!

1. **Setting:** <sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi... // Jesus and His disciples were 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee, at the base of Mt. Hermon, and near one of the largest springs feeding the Jordan River.

At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus had an important conversion with His disciples – people who trusted in Him, followed Him, and learned from Him.



2. **What Did OTHERS Say about JESUS?** He was asking His disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” <sup>14</sup> And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.”
- John ♦ was prophesied, ♦ baptized many, and ♦ prepared people for the Christ, **but he was NOT the Christ.**
  - Elijah: Malachi (4:5) mentioned about the coming of Elijah; then Jesus clarified that *the Elijah-like prophet to come is John the Baptizer (Mt. 11:14).*
  - Jeremiah, etc.: Each person mentioned was a great servant of God, **but NONE were the Christ.**
3. **What Did JESUS’ DISCIPLES Say about JESUS?** <sup>15</sup> He said to them, “But who do you [ὁμεις – plural] say that I am?”
- <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” // Peter gave a HUGE answer: You are ♦ the One promised in Eden, ♦ the focus of the OT Scriptures, ♦ the Son of God in human flesh, ♦ the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
  - <sup>17</sup> And Jesus said to [Peter], “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona [son of Jonah], because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.” // Many today are confused about Jesus’ identity, but for us, just like Peter, *God the Father has opened our eyes to the truth.* So, let us ♦ give thanks and ♦ live for Jesus!

#### 4. What Did JESUS Say to Peter?

- a. Jesus to Peter: <sup>18</sup> “I also say to you [σοι – singular] that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. //

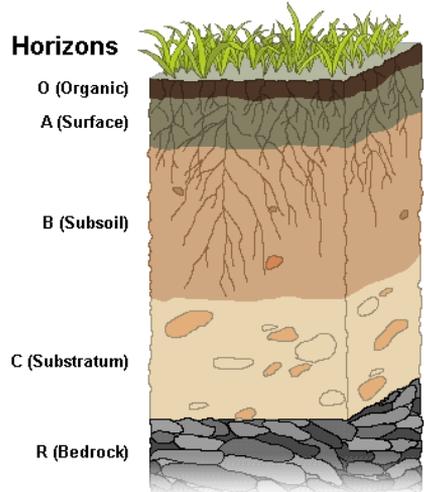
Did Jesus build His church on Peter?

**No!** Notice how these words are similar *BUT DIFFERENT*:



- i. Peter (Πέτρος – Petros): Isolated stone.

- ii. Rock (πέτρα – Petra): Bedrock.



- b. Jesus to Peter: <sup>19</sup> “I will give you [σοι – singular] the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.”

- i. Did Jesus give the keys ONLY to Peter? When Jesus called Peter, “you” (σοι), it was singular. So, with the words above, Jesus gave the keys only to Peter.
- ii. However, in Matthew 18:18, “you” is plural: Jesus said to His disciples who ▶trusted in Him, ▶learned from Him, and ▶followed Him: “Truly I say to you [ὑμῖν – plural], whatever you bind on earth shall

have been bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven.” // In other words, *the keys are given to all believers (all who trust in, learn from, and follow Jesus) – to 🔑lock heaven to the unrepentant but 🔑unlock heaven to the **repentant**. As the Bethlehem pastor, I use the keys in our Divine Services, but we can all use them in our daily lives.*

- iii. Peter was certainly a leader: 🔑when he preached to **Jews** on the Day of Pentecost ([Acts 2](#)), 🔑when believing **Samaritans** were sent to him ([Acts 8](#)), and 🔑when **Gentiles** heard about Jesus through him ([Acts 10](#)).
- iv. Peter was certainly a sinner: 🔑when Jesus called him Satan ([Mt. 16](#)), 🔑when he denied knowing Jesus ([Mt. 26](#)), and 🔑when Paul reprimanded him ([Gal. 2](#)).

**Conclusion:** <sup>20</sup> **Then [Jesus] warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ.** // Even though Jesus came to save us from our sins, many thought the Christ would be a political leader, *like David*. So, it was best to keep His identity hidden until His death and resurrection.

**Let us focus on Jesus and the Bible, not people and their sin-tainted ideas.**

**Let Us Pray:** Dear Father, TYSM for revealing Jesus to us, giving us trust in Him, and permitting us to use the keys. Help us to 🔑encourage the repentant and 🔑call others to repent.

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