

Introductory

This text has parallels in Mark (8: 27-30) and Luke (9: 18-21). Those texts don't include the commentary of Jesus, the complimenting of Peter, the naming of him as "Rock," and the authority to bind and loose. Nor do they include the part where Jesus calls Peter "Satan." Neither of those parallels is appointed to be read in the TLH one-year lectionary.

In the LW three-year lectionary, the Matthew text is appointed to be read on Pentecost 14A. The Mark text extended (27-35) is appointed to be read on Pentecost 17B. The reading of the Luke text extended (18-24) is appointed for Pentecost 5C. In LSB the Mark text extended (27-38) is appointed for Lent 2B, but the reading from Luke is never read.

Following last week's healing of the woman's daughter, an event that took place on the eastern coast of the Mediterranean Sea, the westernmost location of His journeys, Jesus heads back to the east. We find Jesus traveling along the Sea of Galilee, healing as He goes, until He goes up on "the mountain," where He feeds four thousand people.

Besides women and children. He then heads by boat for "the region of Magadan (Magdala)," generally thought to be on the northwestern side of the Sea of Galilee, possibly or probably the hometown of Mary Magdalene. While they were there, Pharisees and Sadducees came to "test" Jesus by asking Him to do a "sign."

He did not give them the answer that they wanted, and He was mean to them, and then He left them. His destination from there is given as "the other side," which we ought to take as the northern shore of the Sea of Galilee, probably the area around Capernaum, a good jumping-off for their next destination up the Jordan to where we find Him now.

Textual Notes

13. The setting for what is about to happen is given as "τὰ μέρη Καισαρίας τῆς Φιλίππου – in the region of Caesarea Philippi." The city was located about twenty-five miles north of the Sea of Galilee, and it marks the northernmost point of the journeys of Jesus. These days, the site of the ruins of Caesarea Philippi is in the Golan Heights region of Israel.

The city was in former times called Banias, after a spring that still flows there. The name was changed by Phillip II (the Tetrarch) to what we read in the Bible. Their favored god

in OT times was Baal Hadad – god of rain and storm, and in NT times Pan – among many others – was the preferred deity. Pan was the god of nature, fertility, and the like.

The commentaries have a lot to say about the religious tone of the area and of the city. Those people were very religious, or at least had the trappings of religion. It is here, among temples and monuments to false gods, dead gods made of wood and stone, that Jesus is first confessed by Peter to be the One True God, the Son of the living – not dead – God.

Making their way to that place, “ἡρώτα τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ λέγων Τίνα λέγουσιν οἱ ἄνθρωποι εἶναι τὸν Υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου – He was asking His disciples ‘who the men say is the Son of Man?’” The verb is in the imperfect tense; He began to ask them, or that He asked them repeatedly, and He did not ask it only once. There were many correct answers.

There are several words in the Greek language that can be translated “ask,” and the one here is quite nuanced. The most common verb “αἰτέω” appears seventy times in the NT, and it is often used of an inferior requesting (petitioning) a superior, like when we ask God for something, like in Matthw 7:7. This verb “ἐρωτάω” occurs sixty-three times in the NT.

In An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words – available online for free – W.E. Vine says of ἐρωτάω that it “more frequently suggests that the petitioner is on a footing of equality or familiarity with the person who he requests. It is used of a king in making request from another king Luke 14:32...” Jesus, he adds, never uses “αἰτέω” in referring to the Father.

By this time, having spent many months with them, they are familiar with His teachings, and in some regard, He sees them as being on a “footing of equality” with Him. We will soon see that it is in regard to the keys and the forgiving of sins – or not – that they will stand in His stead. The Word proclaimed by them will be equal to that proclaimed by Him.

When I pronounce the Absolution “in His stead” the effect is the same as if Jesus had pronounced the Absolution. I think the Catechism says that. When the Pastor exegetes and proclaims a part of the Bible, it works as well as if Jesus had preached that sermon – except that text exegeted and preached by Jesus would be absolutely perfect in every way.

It’s a two-part question, and after all this time at the feet of Jesus, they should know the answers. The first question is about what other people are saying about Jesus, and they know the answer, and that was easy. The second question is about what “you” plural think about Jesus, and they know the answer to that one as well, or at least Peter knows it.

Right before this, we see Jesus redirecting the thoughts of His disciples from physical bread to figurative bread. Having earlier fed five thousand, He then feeds four thousand, then

has a dust-up with the Pharisees and Sadducees, then tells them to beware the leaven of those people. The disciples heard that, talked among themselves and came to a conclusion.

They concluded that we have no bread. Apparently, Jesus' referencing leaven had gotten them to thinking about food, and they discussed, and they concluded that we don't have any bread. Jesus calls them men of little faith, and He seems incredulous that they are discussing among themselves their next meal. He reminds them what just happened.

He reminds them that He had fed five thousand from five loaves and that there were leftovers, and four thousand from seven, with leftovers. Then He brought it back to the leaven of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and they finally got it. "Then they understood that" He was not talking about bread, but "the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees."

The commentators put some time between that and this, and I'm not sure it makes a whole lot of difference. What is important is that Matthew puts this after that, and the question Jesus seems to be asking if anybody gets it about Jesus. You? The problem is not that Jesus doesn't know Himself to be the Son of Man. The problem is nobody else seems to.

That term, "The Son of Man" is common in the OT, especially in the book of Ezekiel, and it is also found in the literature of other ancient religions. By the time of Jesus, the term had taken on a clear messianic tone. It is a title that Jesus often applies to Himself in other places, as well as here. He clearly understands Himself to be the Son of God; Messiah.

14. They answer His query by saying, "οἱ δὲ εἶπαν Οἱ μὲν Ἰωάννην τὸν Βαπτιστήν, ἄλλοι δὲ Ἠλείαν, ἕτεροι δὲ Ἰερεμίαν ἢ ἓνα τῶν προφητῶν – some say John the Baptizer, others Elijah, others Jeremiah or one of the Prophets." Those are all very prominent and important people. What people are saying about Jesus is – nobody ever says that about me or you.

But none of them are saying that He is the Son of Man. The sentence structure of the response of the disciples to the question of Jesus takes the form of what Voelz calls a "μέν δέ clause." He explains that "When two balanced things are contrasted, μέν and δέ are usually used, each postpositively (i.e., after the first word) in its own clause" (FGG 96).

The disciples put all those people, including the unspecified "one of the prophets," – and there are more than two – into the same category, all of them equally important. The differing understandings of the identity of Jesus, according to the masses, are presented here as being equally valid. In this case the understood identities are all also equally wrong.

It is understandable that some people would think that Jesus is John the Baptizer, or at least equate His work with that of him. There had been a very long-standing and deep bond between John and Jesus. They were kin, they had been introduced to one another early on, almost certainly they knew each other growing up, and their message was the same.

John B himself, the noted and loved preacher, publicly and unabashedly connects himself to Jesus when Jesus comes to receive His baptism, and he even proclaims in no uncertain terms that Jesus is above him in the whole scheme of things, “he must be greater, and I must be lesser.” It has not been that long since the death of John B at the hand of Herod.

Some now apparently see Jesus as the one who will now carry on the work of John, and by saying that, and by identifying Him with or as John, they would have been paying Jesus high honor. Herod, for one, is specifically said by Matthew (14:2) to have thought Jesus was John, whom he had killed, whom he thought to have been raised from the dead.

Here, the disciples thrown in “ἄλλοι,” the emphatic “but others.” The effect of that word is to put separation between those who believe that Jesus is John, a NT personage, and those who believe that He is an OT personage. John is someone you may have known, while the OT Prophets are only a distant memory several hundred years removed from their present.

They would have similarly been paying Jesus high honor in saying that He is Elijah. Elijah not only had a place on the Mt. Rushmore of OT prophets, but he was considered to be THE OT prophet. We maybe get the idea that all OT prophets did miracles, but few did. Elijah did miraculous things, including the very uncommon act of raising a dead person.

Jesus did a plethora of miracles as well, including raising a person from the dead, and He was recognized as one who spoke the Word of God, and He spoke it “with authority,” like Elijah had. And of course, we know that Elijah was going to return before the coming of Messiah, making the perception that Jesus is Elijah more than just a little bit ironic.

While Jeremiah would not have been a stone-cold lead-pipe lock for one of the other three spots on The Mountain, he would have been in the conversation. He is, after all, considered to be one of the Major, not one of the Minor Prophets, he suffered greatly because of what he said, and he brought to us talk of the New Covenant and the Restoration of Israel.

We might wonder why Jesus even cares what other people think about Him. On some level such thinking seems to be below the Messiah. But on a very human level, and Jesus was fully and completely human, everybody cares – more or less – what people are thinking and saying about them. In that regard Jesus is simply being a human in asking that question.

There’s certainly nothing wrong with wanting to know and asking the question, and somebody in Jesus’ position especially would want to know the answer to it. In our time and place, I want to know what people think of Jesus. Barclay has a point,

Confronting Jesus at this time was one clamant and demanding problem. His time was short; his days in the flesh were numbered. Was there anyone who understood him? Was there anyone who had recognized him for who

and what he was? Were there any who, when he was gone from the flesh, would carry on his work, and labour for his kingdom?

Obviously, that was a crucial problem, for it involved the very survival of the Christian faith. If there were none who had grasped the truth, or even glimpsed it, then all his work was undone; if there were some few who realized the truth, his work was safe. So Jesus was determined to put all to the test and ask his followers who they believed him to be.”

This continues to be a crucial issue and a problem in our day. Ask the question today, “Who are Americans saying the Son of Man is,” and what will be the response? If the response in the day of Jesus was limited to a few, then the response now will be more. A surprising number of Americans know about Jesus, and He is generally well-liked, but not really.

With a few notable exceptions, like Sara Lee, nobody doesn’t like Jesus. Most Americans have a positive view of Jesus, and a lot of them view Him as a role model to be followed, and many even believe that He did miracles. Not surprisingly, given bad shepherding, the younger the sheep, the less likely they are to believe in a Jesus who is more than just a man.

As for Jesus being The Christ, Son of the Living God, that’s harder, and now we’re making them uncomfortable. There are precious few who are proclaiming Jesus as more than just a man, proclaiming His Word in its truth and purity, and we need to keep moving that work forward. That’s where our roots lie, and that’s who we are today, and we are a rarity.

15. Another question, put like this “λέγει αὐτοῖς Ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι – He said, ‘but whom do you say I am?’” To be sure, Jesus wanted to know what the general public – the crowds – were saying about Him. But He especially wants to know what these men – He has chosen them personally to carry on after He is gone – think of His identity.

Specifically, the verb “to say” is in the present tense; what do they say about Him. It sounds a lot like they are thinking and saying the same thing as everybody else! It sounds like that even more when you peek ahead and hear Peter’s response, and then the response of Jesus to it! Today, a lot of “Christians” are included in those who don’t not like Jesus, but...

The question is directed to all disciples present, and it is answered by Peter. It is generally thought that Peter, in responding to the question, is answering for himself and for the rest also. Peter becomes the spokesman for the rest. I don’t think so, and neither does Jesus. There’s no evidence for Peter as spokesman, and ample evidence that he spoke for himself.

16. You wonder if there was an awkward silence before Peter answered the question by saying “Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστὸς ὁ Υἱὸς τοῦ Θεοῦ τοῦ ζῶντος – You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God.” Peter calls Jesus two things; he calls Him the Christ, and he calls Him the Son of the Living God. We note that Peter uses the definite article as a matter of course.

Both terms would have been familiar to the hearer. Neither term means anything to most Americans, and many Americans *think* they know what those things mean, and a precious few do. They are important concepts that need to be taught. A good place to start is to do some vocabulary work from the pulpit about the meaning of the word we see as “Christ.”

Go ahead and say the Hebrew word “מָשִׁיחַ” and then tell them that it’s a Hebrew word that the Bible transliterates with the word “Messiah,” and that it means “anointed.” Then say that in the OT prophets, priests and kings were anointed, and that Jesus is our prophet, priest, and king. In the NT, Jesus is identified as The Prophet, The Priest, and The King.

Then tell them that the Greek NT word “χρίστος” means the same thing, and that the Bible uses the word “Christ” to transliterate that word, which we would call a “title.” Now bring in the OT reading for today, from Isaiah 51: 1-6. Like the rest of the OT, this reading is rich in messianic language and imagery. It talks about the day of deliverance, twice.

It also talks about “the rock” from which Israel had been cut. It talks about Abraham and Sarah and Zion and Eden, and it talks about joy and comfort and gladness and thanksgiving. It talks about justice and salvation. He encourages the listener to look up for deliverance. All these things, and more, come in the Messiah, the Christ, Son of the Living God.

The phrase, “The Living God” occurs often in both the OT and the NT, and the NT contains several instances of other sentences that include that phrase, like for example, “the temple of the living God,” and “children of the living God.” This phrase, “Son of the Living God,” i.e. the descendant of that Father, occurs in the NT only here and in Mark’s parallel account.

The obvious meaning of “living God,” is to juxtapose that God to other gods, none of which are living, all of which are dead, whose temples surround them there. Isaiah famously mocks those who worship and talk to the “Ashterah” and “Ahsteroth” (girl trees and boy trees), that can’t talk back to them. You can say that same about a lot of modern gods.

Peter is often called the “spokesman” for the rest, but I don’t know why anybody would think that. There is nothing in the text that would indicate that Peter was speaking for anybody save himself. Nor is there anything anywhere else in the Bible that would indicate that Peter is any more than the man in the group – every group has one – who speaks up.

Is it a Protestant thing to make Peter the “spokesman” for the rest, motivated by an abhorrence of anything that remotely makes Peter look or sound like the first Pope? Sometimes the Lutherans take on protestant ideas without thinking them through, and maybe they spend too much time reading protestant commentaries in an uncritical manner.

Making the Bible, and what it says, conform to our pre-conceived notions, fears, or theology is problematic, and we can end up with flawed exegesis, and that kind of exegesis is not good exegesis. Peter is specifically singled out by Matthew, who was there, as the one who spoke. Would not Matthew have told us if Peter was speaking for the rest?

Could he not have indicated that Peter was speaking for others besides himself? The response of Jesus to the response of Peter is directed at Peter and Peter alone, not at anybody else. That response is, in fact, very personal. To include others in that response directed at Peter is exegetically not feasible as well, since Jesus answered “him,” singular.

Peter is not the first Pope, but he is the one person first recorded to have confessed Jesus as the Christ. But being the first confessor and being the first Pope are two different things. Oh, wait. In The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, (24) The Book of Concord calls Peter, “the representative of the entire assembly of the apostles.” Forget about it.

17. Jesus seems almost to be giddy here that finally somebody gets it, “εἶπεν αὐτῷ Μακάριος εἶ, Σίμων Βαριωνᾶ - saying to him, ‘blessed are you, Simon Son of Jona!’” Peter has correctly answered the question of identity, who Jesus is, and now Jesus proclaims to Peter his identity, who Peter is. Peter, Jesus says, is “blessed,” and that’s a good thing.

In the Bible, you are either wise or foolish, and you are either cursed or blessed. When Jesus calls Peter “blessed,” he is calling him a Christian and attributing to him all things that being a Christian entails, including the peace that allows the Christian to receive every circumstance in life and deal with it in this life, and also includes life for eternity in heaven.

Following His calling Peter “blessed,” He continues with a ὅτι clause, telling Peter the reason why He calls him that, “ὅτι σὰρξ καὶ αἷμα οὐκ ἀπεκάλυψέν σοι ἀλλ’ ὁ Πατήρ μου ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς – because flesh and blood has not revealed to you, but the My Father who is in the heavens.” God Himself, not man, has revealed the identity of Jesus to Peter.

The idiom “flesh and blood” has made its way through two thousand years and ten thousand miles into our vernacular. It occurs five times in the NT, three of them in the writings of Paul. Particularly noteworthy is Galatians (1:16), where Paul emphatically makes the case that he really is an apostle, no, I mean really, just like the rest of them, “flesh and blood.”

Jesus’ talking about His Father in heaven contrasts with that flesh and blood, a term that is decidedly earthly and physical. When Jesus tells Peter that it is His Father in heaven who is responsible for Peter’s understanding of Jesus as the Christ, He is saying that nobody can understand this or any other thing about God unless and until God reveals it to him.

No words of man can convince or persuade another person of the truths of Christianity. Even the person who has been exposed to the Word of God, like Peter, does not understand it unless God gives him understanding. The Word is the means used by God the Holy Spirit to make and to retain the Christian. That is, always has been, and always will be the case.

Not only does man not become a Christian unless and until God makes him into one, a Christian does not understand things about God unless and until God gives understanding. Such a thing should not be surprising to pastors especially, who spend a lot of time studying the Bible, and who are taught new things by God all the time. But if you don't study...

I have read *The Grapes of Wrath* twice, and that's probably enough. A third reading is not likely to yield much new to my understanding of the story and of Steinbeck. God is even more of a genius than Steinbeck, which is why every time the exegete exegetes a text, he finds that there's more there, something new, something I missed the first twenty times.

If the preacher isn't doing exegetical work for every sermon, he's not likely to have new things revealed to him by God. His understanding of the text will become old and stale, and his preaching is likely to follow into that state of being. The pastor who says "I think I told them three years ago all there is to know about that text" – get ready for old and stale.

18. But wait. There's more. Jesus continues on, "σὺ εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν – you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." The man commonly known as Peter, sometimes called "Cephas," was actually named Simon until Jesus here changed it to Peter, and that name is very deliberately chosen.

The name "Peter" means something, and turning the phrase, Jesus then says that He will build His church at or upon (ἐπὶ + dative ταύτῃ) this πέτρᾳ ("little rock" or "piece of a rock). Robertson sloppily calls this figure of speech a "pun." Bullinger correctly calls the figure of speech used a "Paragmenon," or the term we are more likely to use, "Derivation."

Bullinger says that "In this figure the repeated words are derived from the same root." In the Greek language, the terms Peter and little rock have the same root or are "of the same derivation." He also sees here "in the use of petros another figure: viz. Syllepsis, for the word is used in two senses, though used only once (304)." Or maybe call it a "pun."

So what are we to make of this verse? The particular figures of speech being used here, especially Derivation, are almost entirely, if not completely stylistic or rhetorical, and that's the long and short of it. It's prose. It sounds pretty, like French sounds pretty. Jesus calls this man "Peter" and then says that He will build His church at or upon this "little rock."

And He says it in a way that is more pleasant to the ear, and that's a good thing. Our preaching should be, as much as possible, pleasant on the ear. You would rather listen to a

speaker whose words are pleasant to the ear than one whose words are grating. I would rather have the English Sally read to me on Kindle than American Amy. It's more pleasant.

The exact identity of this “little rock” is the question, and a lot of people who are smarter than I – including some of the Lutherans – have answered that question in different ways. There is even discussion as to the exact meaning of and distinction between the words Πέτρος and πέτρα. Their materials are available, and you have probably already read some.

The Treatise continues (25),

However, as to the declaration: Upon this rock I will build My Church, certainly the Church has not been built upon the authority of man, but upon the ministry of the confession which Peter made, in which he proclaims that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God. He accordingly addresses him as a minister: Upon this rock, i.e., upon this ministry. [Therefore he addresses him as a minister of this office in which this confession and doctrine is to be in operation and says: Upon this rock, i.e., this preaching and ministry.]

Theodore of Mopsuestia, 350 – 428, Archbishop Mopsuestia, says of this text, the rock,

This is not the property of Peter alone, but it came about on behalf of every human being. Having said that the confession is a rock, He stated that upon this rock I will build my church. This means He will build His church upon this same confession and faith, et al.

The Foundation of the Church, the rock upon which she is built is “confession of faith,” which confession of faith, he says “was to come to be first in Peter. “This then is what He says, that in the Church would be the key of the kingdom of heaven. If anyone holds the key to this, to the church, in the same way he will also hold it for all heavenly things.”

Jesus speaks of “this Church,” and He says of it that “πύλαι Ἰδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν τῆς – the gates of hell will not defeat it.” This assurance is well-known among Christians and is often invoked in times of great trouble. We wonder today if the Christian religion has run its course and will soon disappear or become irrelevant. It won't, but it may move.

Some would look around at this world of several billion population and say that our religion has already become irrelevant, and that it's only a matter of time before it is extinct. One cannot live in America and fail to notice the waning influence of our religion, the increase of heresy and “Nones,” and declining membership and attendance at LCMS congregations.

The promise of Jesus is sure, and while the Church seems to be weakening here, it is becoming stronger in other places, and none of us know what the future holds for the

Christian religion in America. Like all Christian nations, we see a historical ebb and flow, nobody really knows, and we'll have to wait and see what the future holds for America.

19. But wait. There's more. Using the future tense, Jesus says to Peter that “δώσω σοι τὰς κλεῖδας τῆς βασιλείας τῶν οὐρανῶν – I will give to you (s) the keys of the Kingdom of the Heavens.” Here again, there is no mention of Peter representing the rest; Jesus will give keys to Peter, who some think serves as a spokesman or even representative for the rest.

He continues, “καὶ ὃ ἐὰν δήσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται δεδεμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς, καὶ ὃ ἐὰν λύσῃς ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἔσται λελυμένον ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς – and whatever you should bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you should loose on earth will be loosed in heaven,” and the words used here indicate that He's talking about binding and loosing sin.

At the time of the translation of the Textus Receptus into the KJV (1611) version of the Bible, English reading people could distinguish between singular and plural forms of the second person in places like this. In this verse, the KJV has the word “thee,” second person objective singular, not “you,” second person objective plural. This is all spoken to Peter.

Because of the way that the English language has developed, we can no longer make this distinction. The word “you” is used for almost all occurrences of the second person, both singular and plural, in modern American. The word in the original is “σοι,” second person personal pronoun - dative singular, not plural. This is all spoken to Peter, singular.

Jesus here gives the keys to Peter. Peter is the one who had just made the good confession, and Peter is the one who gets the keys. We note that in Matthew 18 Jesus does not give the keys to the church, but He does give to the whole church the power to “bind and loose” sins, and in John 20: 23 He gives that same authority to the twelve, to The Apostles.

There is no mention of keys in either place. Talk of a “key” implies the presence of a tumbler lock, the kind of lock that formerly secured the door to your house and your place of work, your car, and various and sundry other items. While they were rather expensive and therefore rather rare, locks and keys were around and known in the time of Jesus,

The concept of lock and key would have been understood by people in the time of Jesus in basically the same way that we used to understand it. The Egyptians seem to be generally thought to have invented the tumbler lock. The most common uses of locks in that day were to lock doors, lock up valuables, and most of all to lock up people. Or to loose them.

When we talk about the power and authority of the Church to forgive sins, or not, we get grief. It goes something like this, “who do you people think you are? You aren't God.” That's correct, we are not God. But God says that we do speak for God, and God does not reveal Himself or more fully reveal Himself to people except through Word and Sacrament.

20. Several times Mark has Jesus instructing people to keep it on the QT. This is the only time Matthew records that Jesus “ἐπετίμησεν τοῖς μαθηταῖς ἵνα μηδενὶ εἰπωσιν ὅτι αὐτός ἐστιν ὁ Χριστός – instructed the disciples that they should not say to anybody that He is the Christ,” which Peter had just confessed Him to be, and no, it’s not reverse psychology.

I rue the day Pop Psychology first reared its ugly head in the Church. Other people called Him “Messiah,” but He never called Himself that. Having said that, He does here call Himself “Son of Man” a Messianic term, but in private. You can imagine the commotion if He ever were to declare Himself Messiah, which would have been like a call to arms.

Joseph Benson, Methodist Pastor in England around the turn of the 19th Century, expresses the idea about the meaning of this exhortation that has come to prevail in the Church,

what our Lord forbade them to tell was simply that he was the Christ, that is, the Messiah, or, as Luke expresses it, the Christ of God. This truth, however important to be known and believed, the disciples were not to announce to the people till the grand proof of it was given, namely, his resurrection.

So, if He at this point had publicly proclaimed Himself “Messiah,” it would likely have gone down like all the rest of the calls to arms in those days, ending with a great slaughter of Jews. By the time Jesus is proclaimed Messiah – post Ascension – He’s already gone. There is no one leader present to rally around, but Twelve leaders who were equal.

Law/Gospel

Doubt/Certainty – Doubts will always creep in to the lives of Christians. Such doubts are part of life in the fallen world and reveal a lack of faith. We have the certainty expressed by Peter that Jesus is the Christ, and all that being the Christ implies. We have the further certainty that the Church will never die and that God is victorious over Satan.

No Christ/Christ – With no Christ, there is no salvation. There may have been a plethora of different religions represented in Caesarea Phillipi, and there are a lot more in our day, but without the Christ there is no salvation. We have the Christ and we have salvation.

Hell/Heaven – The yawning “gates of hell” confront fallen man each day of his life, our just desserts for our continuing rejection of the One True God. That God has been revealed in Word and Sacrament, and we live our lives with the assurance that heaven, the place where our Father dwells, not hell, is in our eternal future.

Sermon Titles

Who is Jesus?

Peter's Great Confession

About Locking and Unlocking

Who Do You Think You Are?

Hymns

Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies – LSB 873

Christ Is Our Cornerstone – LSB 912

By All Your Saints in Warfare – LSB 517

Beautiful Savior – LSB 537

Anything from the *The Church* Section

Rev. Steven L. Anderson
Pastor, Immanuel Lutheran Church
Grand Mound, Iowa

Resources

ACC – Manlio Simonetti, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture (Matthew).
Intervarsity Press, 2002

BAG – Walter Bauer, A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament. Translated by
William F. Arndt and F. Wilbur Gingrich, University of Chicago Press, 1979

BCLY – William Barclay, The Gospel of Luke. The Westminster Press, 1975

FGG – James W. Voelz, Fundamental Greek Grammar. Concordia Publishing House, 1993

GBS – Jeffrey Gibbs, Concordia Commentary, Matthew, CPH, 2006

GND – Robert H. Gundry, Matthew A Commentary on His Literary and Theological Art, Eerdmans, 1982

MGM – W.F. Moulton, A.S. Geden, H.K. Moulton, A Concordance to the Greek Testament. T & T Clark LTD., 1978

MM – James Hope Moulton and George Milligan, The Vocabulary of the Greek Testament. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1982

ODCC – F.L. Cross, Editor, Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church. Oxford University Press, 1978

RNK – Fritz Rienecker, A Linguistic Key to the Greek New Testament, Zondervan, 1976

RSV – Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Zondervan Publishing House, 1965

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