Further Study Notes and Applications with today's Sunday Message

Who do you say I am? Matthew 16:13-28

HCC, 1 November 2027.

Extracts from Class Notes by "Stand Firm" Speaker Geoff Smith

The Rock on which Christ will build his church v18

Three principal interpretations regarding "You are Peter and on this rock I will build my church.":

a) Peter himself is the rock. Certainly Peter = prominent in the gospels (see before & after v18) & the church (Acts 2-10, Acts 15 & Peter ('you' = singular) is given the keys of the kingdom (16:19) – BUT (1) if Christ wanted us to think Peter is the foundation He could have said "you are Peter, and on you I will build my church" (2) the demonstrative 'this' = feminine – thus not Peter…why would Christ use 'this' (fem) if talking to Peter? (3) doesn't explain the grammar… 'petros' (masc) / 'petra' (fem). Have to give Christ credit for knowing grammar; (3) Peter = part of the foundation of the Church Eph 2:20, Rev 21:14, but not sole foundation.

b) Christ Himself is the rock. These verses should be read 'on location' as if Christ was pointing to Peter (You are Petros) and, then, pointing to Himself says "on this rock" (petra) I will build my church. Points in favour: Christ is the chief cornerstone (1 Cor 3) or rock (Rom 9:33; 1 Cor 10:4; 1 Peter 2:4-8; Acts 4:11); Petros = the building block or detached stone (an idea developed in 1 Peter – 'living stones'), but 'petra' = the quarry or mass of rock from which the detached stone is taken. BUT (1) there is some ambiguity…why didn't Christ just say "on me I will build my church"?; (2) the third person demonstrative "this" is feminine and can't refer to Christ (masculine).

(c) Peter's confession is the rock. "Upon this rock of revealed truth I will build my church". Preferred because the third person feminine demonstrative "this" ("upon this rock") fits grammatically with the confession view.

The Church v18

Note 1. "I will build" (future). The Church did not exist (a) in the OT era, or (b) during earthly ministry of Christ.

Note 2. The church is a 'mystery' (Eph 2:14-15; 3:9) i.e. previously unknown but now disclosed (Rom 16:25-26; Col 1:26)

Note 3. Church could not have existed prior to the Ascension of Christ, since He is the Head of the body (Eph 5:23), a position He assumed after His resurrection and Ascension (Eph 1:20-22). If the church already existed in OT or in lifetime of Jesus it would have had no head.

Note 4. Church could not have existed prior to coming of the Spirit in Acts 2 because (a) it required the baptising work of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:13; Acts 1:5, Acts 11:15-16) to place people into the body; (b) it needed the gifts of the Spirit to 'get it off the ground' (i.e. for building up and edification)
Note 5. The church is NOT to be confused with the kingdom Jesus was speaking about. PTO

The Keys of the Kingdom vv19-20
Note 1. Keys symbolize authority (Rev 1:8; 3:7
Luke 11:52), and/or open doors. Peter will open the door to the coming kingdom for the Jews (Acts 2:14-41; 3:12-26) and the Gentiles (Acts 10:9-45) by bringing them the gospel message. Peter does not possess authority to decide who enters the kingdom, but he (along with the other apostles Matt 18:18) will be heaven's representatives speaking what has previously been determined in Heaven.

Jesus Predicts His Death 16:21-28
Note 1. "from that time on" appears only twice in Matt – 4:17 (The Kingdom) & 16:21 (the Cross). Jesus is now preparing the disciples for His death.
Note 2. 16:22 Peter is worried the Kingdom will never come if Christ dies. He goes from great heights of faith (16:16) to a total lack of understanding (16:22)…from commendation (16:17-18) to rebuke (16:23)
Note 3. It Moves from his cross to ours (24-27)

SALVATION	DISCIPLESHIP
His Cross	Our Cross
Totally Free	Personal Cost
Trusting Christ	Following Christ
Jesus = Saviour	Jesus = Lord
Eternal Life	Eternal Rewards
Sacrifice we trust	Sacrifice we make