

A Declaration of Those Things Which Are Most Surely Believed Among Us

An Expositional Study of **The Gospel According to Luke**

Chapter 7- Jesus Chooses His Apostles- Luke 6:12-16

81- Jesus Chooses His Apostles- Part 5

Peter- Part 2

July 18, 2010

Luke 6:12-16

¹² One of those days Jesus went out to a mountainside to pray, and spent the night praying to God.

¹³ When morning came, he called his disciples to him and chose twelve of them, whom he also designated apostles:

¹⁴ Simon (whom he named Peter), his brother Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew,

¹⁵ Matthew, Thomas, James son of Alphaeus, Simon who was called the Zealot,

¹⁶ Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

Now, we are continuing our in-depth look at the 12 Apostles that Jesus chooses here, and the first man on everybody's list is always the Apostle Peter- and there is a reason for this. As I told you last week- Jesus actually said that Peter was the leader of the Apostles. Please turn again with me to **Matthew 10:2**. That verse says:

These are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon (who is called Peter) and his brother Andrew; James son of Zebedee, and his brother John;

Now as I told you last week- the word, "first" that Matthew quotes Jesus saying in this verse is the Greek word *protos*. And this is a very important word because this word does not simply mean the first in a particular list- but this word actually means: *the chief* or *the leader*. So Jesus Himself says right here in **Matthew 10:2** that Peter was the *protos*, or the chief or the leader of the Apostles. Now when I bring this out- many of my Protestant friends get real nervous because now that I said this- they are wondering if I am going to uphold the false teaching that

Peter was the first pope or that Peter was the God ordained "head" of the Christian Church. No, I'm not.

I teach that Peter was the leader of the Apostles because that is what the Bible says- he absolutely was. They were not all equal- Peter was definitely the leader, but there is no absolutely no Biblical reason to take that Truth and then believe or teach that Peter must have then been the head of the Church or the first pope- he wasn't. The Bible does not teach that at all.

I can find absolutely no evidence anywhere in the Scriptures to even suggest that Peter was ever in the ministry of the Church at Rome, in *any* capacity- not as a Pastor or an Elder or a Bishop or even a member. The only time that Peter ever went to Rome was to be martyred, and when you read what the Apostle Paul wrote to the Church at Rome in his Epistle- he identified several people who were in that Church- but he never even mentioned Peter- and that would have been the most obvious slight had Peter been the leader of that Church or the "head" of the Christian Church.

And as far as the office of pope is concerned- there isn't any shred of Biblical evidence whatsoever to even suggest that the office of the papacy is a legitimate Biblical office that should be followed or emulated in the Christian Church- and, therefore, we are correct to say that the office of pope is an *illegitimate* office- even as is the Patriarchal office of the Eastern Orthodox Church.

No Church seeking to graciously and humbly follow Scripture would ever have a person installed in any position whereby he acted or carried out the duties assigned to the pope. The office of the pope is simply a title and an office and a responsibility that is the complete fabrication of Man, and has absolutely nothing to do with Scriptural integrity, it has absolutely nothing to do with Christianity, and which cannot be justified by anything that the Bible teaches.

But much damage to many millions of souls has been done by this illegitimate office, and the power and authority that has been wrongly assigned to this man and this office over the centuries, and the effort to uphold the pope as the head of the Church and the vicar of Jesus Christ is an apostate teaching and a heresy that is fighting against Biblical Christianity- not complementing it.

But even though every bit of what I just said is true- it is equally true that Peter was, in fact, the leader of the Apostles. And even

though many people today want to try to paint the picture of the Apostles as being 12 men with equal standing and equal relationship- that is simply not true. Jesus said that Peter was the leader- he was the chief. And there is really no question about this. So we need to all be willing to deal with this man Biblically and not add to or take away from what both Jesus Himself and the Scriptures say about this man named Peter.

Now as I told you last week- Peter was a fisherman by trade. And he lived with his brother Andrew- who was also a fisherman. And they had a fairly large family fishing business. They caught fish on the Sea of Galilee- a certain kind of fish that exists only in the Sea of Galilee- which you might know today is called "St. Peter's fish". And if you ever go to the Sea of Galilee, you can have it for lunch. And I understand that if it's cooked right- it's very good- as long as they get all the bones out.

So that's what Simon and Andrew did. They were fishermen and they were originally from a small village called Bethsaida, but later moved to Capernaum. And Capernaum was the major town on the north tip of the Sea of Galilee. And it's only ruins today. The Lord said that Capernaum would be destroyed and never rebuilt, and that's exactly the case. They have found ruins of a synagogue there. And they have found the ruins of a Church. And the tradition is that they built the first church in Capernaum on the foundation of the home of Peter.

Now, I also mentioned to you last week that Peter is known as the Apostle with the foot-shaped mouth because he was always putting his foot in his mouth. Peter was eager and bold and aggressive and impulsive and very verbal. And there seems to be a correlation between Peter's behavior and what the Lord called him. When Peter acted spiritual and strong- like a rock- then Jesus called him "Peter", and when he was weak and sinful- Jesus called him- "Simon". And it appears that when he was a little bit strong and a little bit weak- then they split the difference and called him "Simon Peter"

For example- let's look at **John 21**. Now as you know in this passage- Jesus has risen from the dead and He tells Peter- "You go to Galilee and I'll appear to you there," post-resurrection, "And you stay there and wait for Me." So they go there. And Peter says, *"I'm not going to wait any longer- this is getting ridiculous. I don't know if I'm really cut out for this or not- I'm going to go back and take up my fishing business"*

again." And so he goes down and gets into his boat and gets all his nets and all his ropes and the whole paraphernalia and the rest of the men said, "We're going with you." Because Peter was their leader and so they all waddled down to the shore and got on the boats and went back to fishing.

And then Jesus showed up and rerouted all the fish so they couldn't catch any. And then they came into the shore and Jesus made them breakfast. Now let's pick up this story in verses 15-19 of **John 21**:

¹⁵ When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, **"Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"**

"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."

Jesus said, **"Feed my lambs."**

¹⁶ Again Jesus said, **"Simon son of John, do you love me?"**

He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."

Jesus said, **"Take care of my sheep."**

¹⁷ The third time he said to him, **"Simon son of John, do you love me?"**

Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, **"Do you love me?"** He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, **"Feed my sheep."**

¹⁸ **Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go."**

¹⁹ Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, **"Follow me!"**

Peter was acting weak and fleshly and Jesus called him "Simon". Now look at **Matthew 16:13-18**:

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, **"Who do people say the Son of Man is?"**

¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

¹⁵ **"But what about you?"** he asked. **"Who do you say I am?"**

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

¹⁷ Jesus replied, **"Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven."**

¹⁸ **And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."**

When God the Father revealed to Peter that Jesus was, in fact, the Christ- the Son of the living God- what Peter was saying is that he now knew and believed and confessed that Jesus was, in fact, the long awaited Messiah who all the Old Testament Prophets foretold, and that Jesus Himself was, in fact, God Almighty in human flesh- that is what the phrase- "Son of the living God" means- that Jesus was Himself fully Deity- that He was God.

And upon hearing Peter's confession- Jesus cried out,

Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.

Now by saying this- Jesus was saying that no Man can know this Truth about Who Jesus is unless God Sovereignly *reveals* it to him. No human is born with this knowledge and no human can believe this Truth and trust in this Truth without the Sovereign intervention of God Himself. We do not possess this Truth by way of human intellect or human research- it must be revealed supernaturally or it isn't known. And if it isn't known- it cannot be believed or confessed, and if it isn't believed and confessed- there can be no Salvation, and if there is no Salvation- then there is no Church. So without this Divine Revelation- of Who Jesus is- we have no Church. That is how serious this is.

The Divine Revelation that Jesus is the fulfillment of all the OT Messianic prophecies and the Divine Revelation that Jesus Himself is God in human flesh is a Supernatural and Sovereign Revelation that does not come to anyone through human logic or human reasoning or human will power. This Revelation is directly and Sovereignly and individually revealed to the elect of God- who have been chosen for Salvation from before the foundation of the world. They are the only people on the face of the earth who know and who believe and who trust in and who confess this Truth and the rest of the world- while giving lip service to it- will at some point and in some way deny it and reject it. Now look what Jesus Himself said in verse 18:

And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it.

Simon the son of Jonas was never so spiritual as he is right now because now he knows Who Jesus is. He doesn't guess, he doesn't wonder, and he isn't confused anymore. Peter speaks out with all authority and all conviction and all certainty precisely because God the Father Almighty has Sovereignly *revealed* to Peter that although many people think that Jesus is Elijah or Jeremiah or some other prophet- Peter has been graced by God to know that and he now fully believes and he now passionately and joyfully confesses with his mouth that Jesus is the Christ- that Jesus is the Messiah- and that Jesus is God Almighty in human flesh!

Many today try to devalue Jesus to being nothing more than a "good man" or a "teacher" or a "social worker" or a "hippie" or a "community organizer" or a "force for social justice"- but the Divine Revelation is that Jesus is the Christ- the Son of the living God, and without that Revelation being taught and believed on and trusted in and publicly confessed- there is no Salvation and there is no Church!

And so because of this glorious gift of grace that God has bestowed on Peter right here to grant him this Revelation- Jesus refers to him here as "Peter", and not as "Simon".

So, Jesus is proud of Peter here. And He shows His approval by calling him "Peter", instead of "Simon". So in *that* sense- Jesus is telling Peter that he is a rock- that he is strong and solid and sure and confident and able to lead. And this is good. But now we must look at this passage in yet *another* sense also because we must understand that all "rocks" are not the same.

So as you study this verse very carefully- you begin to realize just how this all plays out. Now, you can't tell this from the English- but as you go back to the Greek- the language that Matthew originally wrote these verses in- you see clearly that what Jesus was saying here is that there are actually two different kinds of "rocks" in play here.

When Jesus said, **“And I tell you that you are Peter”**, He meant to say, "Peter- you are a 'rock'". And by saying this- Jesus used the masculine form of the Greek word "Petros", which means: *a small rock*; or *a pebble*. But when Jesus then said, **“on this rock I will build my church”**- He used a completely different word- the Greek word "Petras", which means: *a large or giant rock- a mountain*. So I pray you can see here that all rocks are not the same.

By calling Peter- *Petros*- Jesus was saying that Peter was right; that he was strong as opposed to him being weak; that he was solid as opposed to being flimsy; that he was true instead of him being carried away by every wind of Doctrine.

But by saying that He was going to build His Church on the petras- Jesus was not referring to Peter- but to the mountain of stability, the giant rock of Truth, the huge boulder, or Divine Revelation that Jesus is the Christ- the Son of the living God.

So Jesus was telling Peter here that he was acting like a rock, or in other words- that he was acting very spiritual right now because He had given the correct confession about Who Jesus is. And so Jesus called him "Peter"- or Petros -which is a small pebble or rock as opposed to calling him "Simon".

But then Jesus *immediately* changed the focus and the thrust of His conversation *away* from Peter acting strong like a rock, and He switched it back to the powerful and eternal Divine Revelation that God Almighty had given to Peter- that Jesus is the Christ - the Son of the living God- and Jesus called that Divine Revelation the "petras" or the giant "Rock" upon which the Christian Church is built and through which the gates of hell cannot prevail against.

You see the Christian Church is not built on any frail, weak or sinful human being- not even one who is chosen to be the leader of the Apostles- because no matter how godly the man might be, no matter how glorious his teachings may be, no matter how powerful he may preach- that man is flesh and he will eventually die- and he will fail, and he will sin, and he will fall short of God's Glory, and if the Church was built in any way on him- then when he failed- the Church itself would then fail.

But the Church of Jesus cannot fail and it cannot fall, and even the gates of hell cannot prevail against the Church that Christ builds because that Church is built on and it stands on and it will forever be established on the eternal Divine Revelation that Jesus is the Christ- the Son of the living God!

And so Jesus calls Peter a "rock" here only because he is believing and confessing and trusting in the Truth- the Word of God- the Revelation of God - and anytime we believe God's Word, anytime we trust God's Word, anytime we confess God's Word, anytime we quote God's Word or teach God's Word or preach God's Word, any time we

obey God's Word and love and honor God's Word and confess God's Word- we are putting our trust in something higher than we are, something more important than we are, something more valuable than we are, and something that was exhaled out of the very Mouth of the Owner and Creator of the Universe, and that trust and that confession and that obedience makes us to be spiritual, and it makes us pleasing to God, and it makes us strong, and it causes us to cease to be weak and flimsy and childish and silly and unstable, and we become stable and strong and solid and holy and able to be used for God. Now look at verse **19**:

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Now the Roman Catholic Church has wrongly interpreted this verse to mean that the pope himself and in that office has the power and authority of the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, and so he *personally* possess the ability to "bind" or "loose" things on earth, and so whatever the pope "binds" or "looses" on earth is, therefore, bound or loosed in Heaven, and that this power and this authority is handed down from one pope to the next through a very confusing and contradictory man-made teaching called "apostolic succession". Let me just say to you that this teaching is false- it isn't true- the Bible does not teach this- they are wrong about this.

Others in the modern Church teach that *all* believers have this power and authority to literally "bind" or "loose" something on earth, and so they are encouraged to believe that whatever we as children of God "bind" or "loose" on earth will be bound or loosed in Heaven. And it is from this false teaching that believers all over the world today are saying things like, "*I bind you, satan*", or they are going around trying to "release" or "loose" things in the Name of Jesus that they think are good.

But that isn't what this passage is talking about at all. First of all- we have already established that Jesus as not building His Church on Peter- but on the giant mountain of the Divine Revelation of Who Jesus is. So if that is true- then the pope doesn't have the authority that people have given him, and his entire office is a fabrication of Man,

and he is not the successor of Peter, and he doesn't hold the keys of the kingdom of Heaven and he doesn't have the power to bind or loose.

But if that is true- which it is- then we don't have that authority either. So we must be consistent here. If the pope doesn't have that kind of power and authority- then neither do we. The only way that believers could have that kind of power and authority is if the pope did, too.

Once again- we must understand that Jesus was not talking about Peter or any other human being here. The Christian Church is not built on man- not even strong men, not even spiritual men- it is built only on the Divine Revelation of Who Jesus is. And so if the "rock of verse 18 is not Peter but the mountain of the Divine Revelation- then the next statement by Jesus in verse 19 is not about Peter or any other man either- but it, too, is also about the huge and gigantic and glorious mountain of the Divine Revelation that Jesus is the Christ- the Son of the living God.

So if that is true- then just how does the Divine Revelation bind or loose on earth? Through being preached. The Revelation of Who Jesus is must be not only believed and confessed by those who are already saved- it must also be preached and taught and practiced and defended to those who are not saved. To understand this- please turn with me to a very familiar passage in **Romans 10:9**:

⁹ If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

¹⁰ For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

So here the Apostle Paul teaches that there are two elements to true conversion- belief and profess. If anybody is to be saved- they must profess- what- that Jesus is Lord, right? Well, what does that mean? It means that we must confess with our mouth that Jesus is God, that Jesus is Yahweh in a body, that Jesus is fully Divine, that Jesus is God Almighty wrapped in human flesh- or in other words- we must confess with our mouth that Jesus is the Christ- the Son of the living God. Well, that is exactly the "petras", or the "rock" or the mountain, of the Divine Revelation on which Jesus said He would build His Church.

Can anyone be saved without that one single confession? The Bible says, "No." So unless and until a person receives this Divine Revelation from God the Father that Jesus is the Christ, that He is Lord- that He is the Son of the living God, and trusts in that Revelation and believes it and then confesses it with his mouth- he cannot and he will not be saved.

So what happens to this person's sins when he *does* believe this Divine Revelation about Who Jesus is, and he *does* place his trust in that Revelation, and he does confess this very same Divine Revelation with his mouth? What happens to that man's sins at that time? They are completely forgiven, right? Why are they forgiven? Because he said, "*I'm sorry?*" Not at all. Well, why are his sins forgiven? Because he confessed with his mouth the Divine Revelation of Who Jesus is.

God the Father has Sovereignly and Mercifully graced that individual with eyes to see and ears to hear and a heart to trust in and believe and confess the Divine Revelation of Who Jesus is, and as that man confesses with his mouth- the Lord Jesus- he also believes in his heart that God has raised Jesus from the dead and all his sins are forgiven him and he is saved.

Forgiven by who? By us? No. This man's sins are forgiven by God. Well, where is God? Is God on the earth? No. Where is God? He is in heaven. So what is on the earth? The Divine Revelation.

So as this Divine Revelation of Who Jesus is- is preached, and as it is taught and as God Sovereignly allows his elect to hear and to understand this Divine Revelation- and as this Divine Revelation on which the Church is built is believed on and trusted in and confessed here on the earth- all of the sins of those people that have been committed here on the earth are forever bound and they are forgiven in Heaven.

Now what happens to somebody who *rejects* the Divine Revelation of Who Jesus is that is preached and taught here on the earth? What happens to people who do not believe and who do not trust in and who do not confess that Jesus is the Christ- the Lord, and who not confess that Jesus is the Son of the living God? What happens to their sins? Are they forgiven? No. Their sins are not forgiven in Heaven and they keep their sins- right?

So this "binding" and this "loosing" that Jesus is talking about here in verse 19 has absolutely nothing to do with the pope or even

individual believers- but it has to do with the Divine Revelation of Who Jesus is.

And so as this one single Divine Revelation on which the Christian Church is built is preached and as it is taught, and as it is proclaimed and defended in the earth, and as it is believed on and trusted in, and as it is confessed by lost unworthy sinners- then the sins of those chosen people whom God has graciously shown Mercy to- to open their eyes and to open their ears and to give them an heart of flesh so they can believe this Divine Revelation- their sins are forever "loosed" from them and they are forever forgiven by God in Heaven and they are forever saved.

And the sins of those who reject this Divine Revelation as it is preached on the earth and who do not believe it and who do not trust in it and who do not confess with their mouth that Jesus is the Christ- the Son of the living God- their sins are forever "bound" to them and they keep their sins and they will die in their sins and they will perish in hell forever. That is what Jesus meant when he said this.

And so the sins of people are either being bound or loosed in Heaven as this Divine Revelation is proclaimed and believe and confessed here on the earth.

And so, this is Peter- sometimes a rock and sometimes not, and sometimes strong and sometimes not. But in all his flimsy wishy washy up one day and down the next indecisiveness- God chose Peter, and God called him and God washed him and God saved him and God Almighty revealed to Peter the one single Divine Revelation upon which the Church is built, and upon which the Church stands today after 2,000 years, and upon which the Church will always stand until Jesus comes back, and the Revelation on which all our sins are either "bound" or "loosed", and the Revelation on which very gates of hell itself cannot prevail against it, and that one single Revelation is that Jesus alone is the Christ and Jesus alone is the Son of the living God.

And nobody can be saved today without believing that Divine Revelation. And nobody can be rescued from sin without confessing that Divine Revelation, and nobody can have their sins forever forgiven in Heaven without trusting in and confessing that one single Divine Revelation. And not one single soul who denies or who rejects that one single Divine Revelation will ever see Heaven.

And that Revelation is under attack today, and that Revelation has been maligned and laughed at and ridiculed and minimized and cast down and tramped under foot by people both within and without the modern Church, but I tell you on the authority of God's Word that this one single Divine Revelation stands strong today, and it stands firm and it is unmovable and it is unimpeachable, and it is what we preach today and it is what we teach today and it is what we believe today and it is what we trust in today and it is what we confess today and it is what we stand upon today, and even though things may get harder and harder for us here in America just before Jesus comes back- this Divine Revelation will remain and it will stand and it will not be destroyed because not even the gates of hell itself can prevail against it.

So we must know and be assured that the Christian Church is not built upon the pebble of Peter or the pope or us- but it is built upon the giant mountain of the Divine Revelation that Jesus is the Christ and He is the Son of the living God!

So the question that I want to ask this morning is this. Has God given you ears to hear and eyes to see and a heart to believe this Divine Revelation? Do you believe that Jesus is the Christ- the Son of the living God? Do you trust in that Divine Revelation? Do you confess it with your mouth? If so- then the Promise to you is that all of your sins and all of your failings and all of your wickedness are loosed from you, and you no longer have ownership of those sins because God has forgiven all of them in Heaven.

Now here's the catch. If you truly do believe in that Divine Revelation, if you truly do trust in it and confess it- then your life will prove that by the way you live your daily life. Because if you are truly saved- the power and domination of sin has been broken and you have been given the overwhelming desire to love and serve God. All saved people love Jesus and their love for Jesus is proven on a daily basis by and through their obedience. Now this is not *perfect* or *sinless* obedience, but it is *honest* obedience.

Let's come and pray.

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The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. Be watchful and quicken your pace. Soli Deo Gloria. For the Glory of God alone.