

Lectures on the life of Peter

Part 4

Speaker	W. Missen
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[00:00:01] Let us turn to the sixth chapter of John. We read from, first of all, verse 22.

The day following, when the people which stood on the other side of the sea saw that there was none other boat there save the one wherein to his disciples were entered, and that Jesus went not with his disciples into the boat, but his disciples were gone away alone. Verse 24, when the people therefore saw that Jesus was not there, neither his disciples, they also took shipping and came to Capernaum, seeking for Jesus. We go down to verse 26.

Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves and the filth, neither not for the meat which perisheth, but for the meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of Man shall give unto you.

[00:01:01] For him hath God the Father sealed.

Now, for the sake of brevity, although it would be good to read the whole chapter, but we'll pass over to the fifty-third verse.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

Going on now to the sixty-sixth verse.

From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him.

[00:02:06] Then said Jesus unto them, unto the twelve, Will ye also go away?

Then Simon Peter answered him, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life, and we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil? He spake of Judas

Iscariot, the son of Simon, for he it was that should betray him.

He is one of the twelve.

In the beginning of this sixth chapter we have the Lord feeding the five thousand. And then in the fifteenth verse it says, When Jesus therefore perceived that they would come and take him by force to make him a king, he departed again into a mountain himself alone.

[00:03:03] And Matthew tells us he went up into this mountain to pray, and then as the disciples were crossing the lake, and the great storm came up, we read the account of how the water appeared to them, walking on the water, and how Peter went out to walk on the water to go to Jesus.

Then we have in verse twenty-two what happened the day following, which is the next day after that. And we find the Lord speaking to these people and reminding them that they're really seeking him not because they were seeking the truth, but because they were the very ones that he fed with the loaves and fishes there in the wilderness when he fed the five thousand with the five barley loaves and two small fishes. And then we have the rest of this sixth chapter where we have this discourse of the Lord.

[00:04:01] And he makes statements here that have been greatly misunderstood.

They were misunderstood then. They couldn't understand what the Lord meant when he said, for instance, in verse fifty-three, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. They couldn't understand what the Lord said. And right down through the history of Christendom, this is the passage that has been misunderstood. We know that there's one certain denomination, in fact more than one. There are several denominations who take this up and teach that this is the Lord's supper and that when we break the bread, we're eating the Lord's flesh and drinking his blood. Now I think there's one verse in this chapter that shows the wrong of that preaching, and that is the sixty-third verse.

He says there, it is the spirit that taketh us, the flesh profiteth nothing. [00:05:02] The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.

So the Lord gives us to understand there that when he says, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you, that he's not referring to something material. He's referring to something spiritual.

This is a spiritual assimilation of the truth of the Lord's death.

The very fact that when we remember the Lord in the breaking of bread, that the bread and wine are separate, is a proof that this speaks of death. We remember one who died.

We worship one who lives, but we remember one who died. We call to mind this one who went down into death itself and who was raised up again by the glory of the Father and is now seated at the Father's right hand in heaven. But the Lord does not allow us to forget that in order that we might have life, [00:06:02] he went down into death.

The breaking of bread is, we might say, a spiritual entering into what this sets forth.

But here it's referring to the fact that through the Lord's death and through our acceptance of that work that he did for us, when he died and shed his precious blood, that we have spiritual life. What the Lord is really setting forth here is the necessity of believing in him as our Saviour.

That's really what it is, making a spiritual application of this precious truth. I wonder if everyone here this evening can say, I have eaten the flesh of the Son of Man and drunk his blood. You may have partaken of the Lord's Supper many times, many days, but you haven't eaten his flesh and drunk his blood in the sense that it says here, [00:07:01] unless you've seen yourself as a lost sinner and have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour, that you've believed on him, that you've taken him as the one who died and shed his precious blood for you. And so it tells us here, after the Lord had made this discourse, in verse 65 he said, Therefore said I unto you, no man can come unto me, except it was given him of my Father. And the next verse says, From that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him.

You say, well, were these people converted or went back? It doesn't say. It says they were disciples. But we remember that Judas was a disciple.

A disciple is one who makes a profession of following the Master. Whether he's real or whether he's not is proved in the end. And apparently there were a great many who became the Lord's disciples in this outward sense, [00:08:05] but they didn't follow on. They went back and walked no more with him. And so that the Lord turns around and he says to the twelve, Would you also go away?

Would you need me too?

He says to Peter and the others, the twelve of them, and Peter answers. You know, Peter is always in the forefront to give the answer. Sometimes he says the right thing and sometimes he says the wrong thing. Here he says the right thing. Peter says, Lord, to whom shall we go?

To whom shall we go, Lord? If we go away, where shall we go?

Those who are going away, where are they going? Where were they going? They had nothing. The Lord was the only one who could give them something. Isn't that true today?

The Lord's the only one that can give Saul anything. He is the answer to every problem in the world. This world today is full of problems. And people are seeking to satisfy their souls with all kinds of things.

[00:09:07] And the Lord is the answer. But they don't want him.

He's the only one who can meet their needs. It doesn't matter what the condition is in which we find ourselves. Christ is the one who has the answer. And so Peter says, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.

He makes two statements that Peter makes here. The first one is, Thou hast the words of eternal life. What the Lord has.

He refers to what the Lord has. That is, the Lord's teaching.

What he says.

Thou hast the words of eternal life. The Lord has spoken to them of eternal life. Eating his flesh and drinking his blood is the acceptance of Christ as our Savior, which gives us eternal life. And he's the only one who has eternal life. He's the only one who can give us eternal life. We have that verse in John, the previous chapter, in verse 24.

[00:10:03] Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him, that shall think half everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but is passed from death unto life. Thou hast the words of eternal life.

And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God. Or that Thou art the Holy One of God.

I understand that there's a little difference there in some of the manuscripts. Some just state Thou art the Holy One of God and some state Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, which is the same as what we have in Matthew that we'll turn to presently. But whichever it is, he's referring to the person. Thou art.

So he spoke about what the Lord had and who the Lord was.

And beloved, this is most important too. We must lay hold of the truth as to who He is. Thou art the Holy One of God.

[00:11:03] As we go through these Gospels and we trace the life of the Lord and the apprehension of Him that the apostles received, we find that they own Him as the Messiah. That they own Him as the Son of Man.

And then, finally, we find they come to own Him as the Son of God.

They make progress, as it were. They own Him as the Son of God and they see in Him all of those things. And it is only because the Father revealed that to them that they were able to take that home to their hearts. And so it is tonight. We have many people today who say, well, it doesn't matter whether we believe that Jesus is the Son of God or whether we believe that He's just a good man. If He's a good man, He's a great example to us. Beloved friends, tonight, there's nothing in that.

If the Lord Jesus was just a good man, He couldn't give us anything. He couldn't give us any more than any other good man could give us. [00:12:01] Praying God.

He was the Son of God.

And He was God the Son.

He came there to His people as their Messiah. He came and was made known as the Son of Man as we have Him prophesied in Daniel, the 7th chapter of Daniel and in the 8th Psalm, the Son of Man. And He came as the Son of God, coming down from the presence of God. And it was because He was the Son of God that He was able to do an infinite work to save our souls. So Peter speaks the truth when he says, Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe

and assure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the Living God. Lord, Thou art the Holy One of God.

When the Lord says, haven't I chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil? He spoke of Judas Iscariot.

You know, it's been suggested, this isn't a religion that's thought with me. It's been suggested that when it says, [00:13:03] many of them went back and walked no more with him, that possibly Judas was on the point of joining them. He thought, this is too hard a shame for me. I can't walk anymore with him. I don't believe those words. Judas didn't. And he was about to leave, too, with the others. And then he thought, well, I'll stay with him a little longer. I can make a little more money off this. I'll sell him to the high priests and they'll pay me the money and he'll escape anyhow like he always does. And then I needn't continue being one of the twelve apostles any longer. And of course, Satan led Judas on to his doom.

That's what he always does. So that the Lord makes this statement here that must have gone home to the heart of Judas. The Lord knew what Judas was thinking. He says, haven't I chosen you twelve and one of you is a devil? John is writing this many years afterwards [00:14:02] under the guidance of the Spirit and looking back on that very thing that happened at that time. How sad.

Not only that there were many that walked with him, weren't there, one? But there was one who continued on with him in his hypocrisy and stayed with the Lord in spite of what the Lord said even though he didn't believe it. That's a very, very sad thing. And you know, beloved friends, people can do that. Souls can do that. They can go on with the saints of God in hypocrisy and hiding what's really in their hearts that is going to come out sooner or later. And if it doesn't come out here on earth it'll certainly come out when we all have to stand before God and give an account. For we do trust there are none here tonight that are just mere professors, just disciples in an outward sense that you're only that and haven't accepted the Lord Jesus [00:15:01] as your own personal Savior. Be sure that you have eaten the Lord's flesh and drunk his blood in the spiritual sense that you've taken the Lord as your Savior, that you've trusted in him and in that work that he finished for your salvation.

Now let us turn to Matthew's Gospel to the 16th chapter of Matthew. In the 16th chapter of Matthew we find what, in the chronological order of events of the Lord's life down here, what took place shortly afterward.

You see, we have the feeding of the 5,000 and then we have the feeding of the 4,000 in the 15th chapter here.

And then in the 16th chapter we find the Lord speaking to them and reminding them in verses 9 and 10 of how he had fed 5,000 and fed 4,000 and then he goes away, it says in verse 13, [00:16:01] to the coast of Caesarea Philippi, way up in the very north.

And he said to his disciples, Whom did men say that I the son of man am?

And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremiah saw one of the prophets. He said unto them, But who say ye that I am?

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. Peter again, you see it's very similar to what we have in chapter 6. Peter comes out to make a statement both as to

the work and the person of Christ. Peter is the one here again who makes a statement about the person of Christ. Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, [00:17:02] and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. Then charged these disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ. From that time forth began Jesus to show his disciples how that he was killed in Jerusalem and suffered many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes and be killed and be raised again the third day. And Peter took him and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord, this shall not be unto thee. And the Lord then said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan, thou art an offense unto me, for thou savest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men.

We learn from this portion that all kinds of speculations [00:18:02] were going on in the land of Israel at this time.

The Lord had been baptized in Jerusalem.

The Lord had called out his twelve apostles. The Lord was traveling up and down the land teaching the people.

The gospel of the kingdom was being preached and the apostles were preaching. And people were wondering who this one was.

There were those who accepted him as we've seen, as the Christ of God.

But when the Lord asks, What do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? They say, well, men say this. Some say, thou art Elias, or Elijah, some Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.

They were speculating, this must be one of the old prophets that's come back again.

But they didn't own him for who he was. [00:19:02] So then he says to the apostles, Who say you that I am?

And Peter says, thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. You know, we have again here the great truth as to the person of the Lord Jesus. I don't believe in these days in which we live that we can lay too much stress on the truth that the scripture presents to us as to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because if the Lord Jesus Christ was not what he claims to be and the one that we believe him to be, beloved, we have nothing.

We have nothing.

And we have three things here. We have, first of all, the last Lord asked the question, Whom say men that I, the Son of Man, am? He refers to himself as the Son of Man. Now we know that that's an Old Testament title of the Lord.

In the 8th Psalm, we have the Lord is the Son of Man.

[00:20:03] What is man that thou art mindful of him? All the Son of Man that thou visitest him. That's not referring to us.

That's referring to the Lord. What is man is referring to Adam's race. But when it says all the Son of Man that thou visitest him, that's referring to the Lord. Because it says thou makest him a little lower than the angels, thou hast crowned him with glory and honor. And in Hebrews 2, we have that definitely explained as referring to the Lord Jesus. That he was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, and he's now crowned with glory and honor. And in the 7th chapter of Daniel, Daniel sees the vision of the Son of Man coming in the clouds of heaven.

The one who's going to reign. So the title of the Son of Man is the title that sets the Lord forth as the one who has the right to reign over this sea.

That is, he's the second man. [00:21:01] He takes the place of Adam. Adam was the federal head of the old race. The Lord takes his place as the Son of Man as the head of the new race. As the one who has the right to judge, as we have it in John 5, and as the one who has the right to reign. And the religious leaders of that, they knew that. They knew when the Lord claimed that he was the Son of Man, that he was referring to himself as the one that Daniel spoke of who was coming to reign.

And they said, well, this is blasphemy. He's making himself God. They knew that the Son of Man was one that came through glory. That's why they refused it. So, he says, whom say men that I the Son of Man am?

And they said, well, some of them say you're Elias or Jeremiah.

That's not only him as the Son of Man.

So then the Lord says, whom say you that I am?

And Peter says, thou art the Christ.

[00:22:02] That is the Messiah, the promised anointed one of Israel.

Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Peter really refers to the two titles of the Lord that we have in the second psalm. In the second psalm, the Lord says, if we turn back to it for a minute, the second psalm, it says there, in the second verse, the kings of the earth set themselves and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord, that's Jehovah, and against his anointed.

And Peter uses this verse when he's preaching to the Jews on the day of Pentecost and shows that this, the word anointed, is the word Christ or Messiah.

The word Messiah is the Old Testament, the Hebrew word that's translated here anointed.

The word Christ is the Greek word that means the same thing. So whether we use the word [00:23:02] the anointed, the Messiah, or the Christ, it's just the same word.

And so when Peter says, thou art the Christ, he really says, thou art the Messiah, thou art the anointed one, thou art the one that Psalm 2 refers to.

And it was the kings of the earth of that day, and the kings of the, I believe that it says the kings of the earth, that's the Gentiles and the rulers of Israel, they took counsel together. Pilate and Herod were made friends together to get rid of the Lord, to crucify the Lord. They took counsel against the Lord and against his anointed, against his Messiah, against his Christ. So when Peter says, thou art the Christ, he's aiming, the Lord is the one that's referred to here. Further on in the psalm, it says in verse 7, I will declare the decree, the Lord has said unto me, thou art my son, [00:24:02] this day have I begotten thee. So there we get him as the son of God.

And so Peter aims him as that. Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. Thou art the one Lord that he's referred to in the second psalm.

And what's the Lord say to Peter? He says, Worship thou Simon, thou Jonah for flesh, and God hath not revealed it unto thee. You didn't get this, Peter, by some revelation from any other human being. My Father which is in heaven made this known to you.

Peter was in fellowship with the Father, and the Father made known to Peter and brought it home to him in living power that that one that he was following, that he set out to follow there at the Sea of Galilee, first of all down there when John was baptizing in the River Jordan. And later on that the Lord called him his fisher, to be a fisher of men. But that one [00:25:01] was the one that the second psalm spoke of. Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. So we have him as the son of man, we have him as the Messiah, and we have him as the son of God. The full truth as to the dignity and the humanity of the Lord Jesus.

And that's the full truth of his person. And that we must accept.

And if we don't accept that, we have nothing.

Oh, how precious it is.

And we do accept it. Thank God.

And I trust that everyone here tonight has accepted that precious truth as to the person of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then the Lord goes on and says to Peter, he says in the 17th verse, Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon by Jonah.

The flesh and blood is not revealed unto thee but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, I'm going to add something [00:26:01] to this, Peter, besides what I've said to you there, that thou art Peter.

And upon this rock I will build my church.

And the gates of hell or of Hades shall not prevail against it. Is the Lord saying here that he was going to build a church on Peter? No. You remember when the Lord called Peter in the first chapter

of John, he says, Thou art Simon.

And the word Simon means healing. The word Simon is the same as Simeon, one of Jacob's sons in the Old Testament.

And it means healing.

Your name is healing, Peter, but I'm going to give you another name. Thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation a stone.

And Cephas is the same as Peter. And here he's called Peter and his name generally, not of Simon Cephas, but of Simon Peter, but it's the same word.

[00:27:01] And Peter, thou art Peter.

You're Peter, you're a stone. But upon this rock, on this statement which you've made, Peter, as to the truth of my person, I'm going to build my church.

I know there are those who say that we believe mistakenly, and maybe many that have followed this teaching are honestly mistaken, but it's a mistake all the same. A person can be mistaken and be honestly mistaken and yet be very mistaken.

And as we read the word of God, we don't find that there's any justification for the belief that the Lord built the church on Peter. And if we turn to Peter's first epistle, we find that Peter himself didn't believe that.

Because he says there that we are living stones and that the chief cornerstone is the Lord Jesus Christ.

And we have built up a spiritual house. [00:28:03] And Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. So Peter knew that he was a living stone in this house, in this spiritual house that God is building. And that the foundation stone is the Lord Jesus and is the truth as to the person of Christ. And that's the church that God is building today. And every human born again soul is a living stone in that church.

This isn't a question of denominations. This isn't a question of all the divisions that have come into Christendom. This is a question of whether we have living faith in the Lord Jesus as our Savior.

And if we have that, we belong to the church that is built upon this foundation stone, the Lord Jesus Christ.

And no matter what denomination you might belong to, if you're not resting on that foundation, you have nothing.

So how important it is to be rested upon this foundation, [00:29:02] to be a living stone that is built upon the rock foundation. That's why I asked Calvin to give out that hymn, On Christ, the solid rock I stand, all other ground is sinking sand.

Now after Christ, he says the Son of the living God, and the Lord says, On this rock, I will build my church.

Notice that the Lord says, I will build, not I have built.

You know, there is a teaching that's known as covenant theology.

And this teaching is that the church existed from Abel down. But every soul that was saved from the beginning of time, right down, is in the church.

Well, it's a wrong thought.

God had saved souls in the Old Testament. We noticed in our study this morning, we saw Abel and Enoch and Noah mentioned, and we have that list in Hebrews 11.

[00:30:02] And we have all of those wordings that we have, that we read about in the Old Testament. Men and women of faith who believed on the Lord, and many, many that are not mentioned, many of them, who truly believed on the Lord as the one who was coming, but they weren't in the church. Before God called out Israel, there were individual believers, such as Enoch and Noah and Abraham.

After God called out Israel, there were members of the nation of Israel, those who believed, and there were many other members of the nation of Israel who didn't believe. Some of them were sons of Demian, et cetera, wicked men, even though they belonged to the nation of Israel.

A man said to me once when I was talking to him about the Lord, he says, do you mean to say, he says that according to the Bible, all those dreamy Jews are going to be in heaven? I said, my dear friend, that's got nothing to do with it. I said, those Jews in the Old Testament who believed in the Lord, they looked on to one [00:31:01] who was coming, and those Jews in the Old Testament who didn't believe in the Lord will be lost, just the same as people today who don't believe in the Lord will be lost. And the Jews today, if they want to be saved, they must take the Lord Jesus as their Savior, just the same as we must take him as our Savior, because we just come in in the one way, and it's not a question of what nationality anybody belongs to, but whether they have seen themselves as lost sinners and have taken the Lord Jesus Christ as their Savior.

The church was still future, because the church could not be built until the head was in heaven, and the head could not be in heaven until he died on the cross. The Lord came down from heaven and became a man that he might die on Calvary's cross for you and me. You see why he had to become a man? He had to become a man in order to die. He could have become an angel, and that would have been a great humiliation for the Lord of Glory to have become an angel.

[00:32:02] But angels don't die, so he couldn't have died if he'd become an angel.

He could have been a servant of God, but not an angel.

So he passed his angels by and he takes a place lower than angels.

We are a lower order of beings to the angels. They are a higher order in God's creation than we

human beings are.

And he becomes lower than the angels for the suffering of death, that he might die. He wasn't subject to death, but he was capable of dying because he was a real man. That's why he became a man. And having died and being raised up again, he's now seated at the Father's right hand in heaven, and he's there as the head of his church. He's there as many other things also.

He's there as our advocate and as our great high priest. He's there as the second man and the last Adam. But for the purposes that we have here tonight, he's there as the head of the church.

And as taking his place there, [00:33:01] he sent the Holy Spirit down to form the church.

And the church is being formed from the day it came to Cofftown, and this work is going to continue until the last one is saved, and then the Lord will come, as we were reminded yesterday afternoon, Friday afternoon, at the graveside of our dear brother there, that the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first, and we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. What a glorious victory! What a triumph!

You know, death was an enemy.

In the Old Testament, it was a thing that they didn't know very much about. They looked upon it as it was going out into a kind of darkness.

They didn't, didn't, nothing had been fully revealed about it.

It tells us in the, in the epistle, Paul's epistle to Timothy, the first chapter, it says that life [00:34:01] and incorruptibility have been brought to life through the gospel.

It's only through the gospel that the full truth of what comes after death is brought out.

And it's very plain in scripture, what is being brought out, that when we leave, when the believer leaves this scene, it's absent from the body until he is in the air.

The believers are consciously now in the Lord's presence.

Maybe they don't know whether they're in the body or out of the body, because Paul didn't know when he was caught up, whether he was in the body or out of the body. I think the other believers knew that he was dead and that Paul, Paul was gone, but he didn't himself know. He wasn't conscious of it. It shows that they're, they're consciously in the Lord's presence, rejoicing in his presence. But we know that the final triumph comes when the Lord will descend from heaven with a shout and the dead will be raised and the living changed.

And that might take place at any moment. Then the church will be complete. I will build my church for the Lord's church. He's still building it.

[00:35:02] But you know, one day the last living stone is going to be added to the building.

It could be, it could be that there's still one soul waiting that the Lord wants to save before he comes. But the last one is going to be added. The last one is going to be saved.

And if there's one here tonight that's not saved, beloved friends, may you see to it that you put your trust in the Lord and that you, that you might be able to say, on Christ, the solid one I stand, that you're a living stone in God's house.

Then the Lord says to Peter, I'll give thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven. Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven. This is a passage that's been greatly misunderstood because people have read into this as if the Lord said, I'll give thee the keys of heaven. The Lord doesn't say that Peter is giving him the keys of heaven. And they represent Peter with a great big key opening the door of heaven. [00:36:02] And you've got to keep in with Peter, you know. And if you keep in with Peter, you'll, he'll open the door and let you in. And if you're not keeping in with Peter, well then you won't get in because he's the one that's got the keys. He doesn't say that. Scripture doesn't say that the Lord gave Peter the keys of heaven because he gave him the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

You say, well what's the difference? The kingdom of heaven is the profession of Christianity here on earth.

It's the spirit profession on earth.

And Peter used the keys because the Lord gave him keys. I believe that this gives us all the key keys. The Lord called Peter to be the first one to officially preach the gospel to the Jews on the day of Pentecost.

The very Jews that crucified the Lord.

Peter uses the keys.

He opens the door.

He preaches the gospel to them. And when they say, what shall we do? He says, repent and be baptized every one of you [00:37:01] in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sin and you'll receive the gifts of the Holy Ghost. Peter was using the keys.

And then again, the Lord sent him in the 10th chapter of Acts to be the first one to preach to the Gentiles. So he uses the key there also. And he opens the door to the Gentiles. And Cornelius and his household come in.

But you know, once you've used the key to open the door and the door's wide open, you don't need to keep on using the keys because once God opens this door, but you close it again.

He gave Peter the keys to open the door and Peter opened the door to Jews and Gentiles.

And since then, Jews and Gentiles have been coming in. Peter had a special ministry to the converted Jews.

And although he was the one to open the door to the Gentiles, God gave Paul the work to continue the ministry among the Gentiles.

He was made especially the apostle of the Gentiles. And so, when it says that he, whatever he binds on earth will bound in heaven. And whatever he leases on earth is leased in heaven. [00:38:02] That's what Peter did administratively.

By these people being baptized, they were forgiving their sins. Peter, as you're aware, was asking for the Lord publicly before these people and letting them know on God's behalf that God was forgiving them. This power was later on in the 18th chapter given to the local assembly in connection with the administration of the Lord's blessing there on earth. Then we go on and I just want to point out in closing that the Lord from that time, it says, began to show that he must suffer.

He began to make it plain. He made it plain to them that he has to go to the cross to suffer.

It says there in verse 21. When the apostles didn't take it in, even though they were the Lord's twelve apostles, they didn't feel that they could take in the thought that the Lord has to go to the cross.

And when the Lord said this, Peter, in his love to the Lord, [00:39:02] didn't want the Lord to suffer. You know, sometimes our love for those that we love, because we don't want to see them suffer, might hinder something that the Lord wants them to do. Now, it was God's will from eternity that the Lord Jesus should suffer on the cross.

But when the Lord says, I'm going to suffer and be rejected and suffer, Peter says, oh no, Lord.

No, that's not, we can't let you do that.

Be far from me, Lord.

What did the Lord say to Peter? Get thee behind me, Satan. Does that mean the Lord was calling Peter Satan?

I don't think so. But I believe that when the Lord said that, he saw in Peter's words the temptation of Satan.

He turned him aside and he says, get thee behind me, Satan. This is not the will of God for me.

[00:40:01] The Lord saw in that a temptation of Satan. And Peter, really, in a certain sense, without realizing it, he became an instrument for Satan to seek again to tempt the Lord, to turn him aside from the path. Now, Satan is for things that be of men.

So today, we've got to be very careful, you know, not to allow our love for our loved ones to desire for them a path. The desire to turn them aside from a path that might be of suffering is what God's will for them. There have been loved ones who have tried to dissuade people from going to serve the Lord, say, on a mission field where they know that they're going to suffer. And just because they know they're going to suffer, they try to turn them aside. I read about a preacher once who delivered a very eloquent message.

Uh... Uh... Uh... Peter, putting before the people that he was preaching to, the need of a certain field [00:41:02] in a foreign land where they needed a missionary. And he gave a most forward appeal.

And when he got home at night, his daughter came up to him and she says, Father, she says, I'm the answer to your message tonight.

He says, What do you mean? She says, The Lord has laid it on my heart that he wants me to go out and serve him on that field.

Oh, no, he says. Not you.

No. I didn't mean that for you.

And the father brought such pressure to bear on his daughter that even though she felt that this was God's will for her, that he wouldn't let her go. And the story goes that within 12 months the Lord took that girl home to be with himself.

And the father realized the big mistake he'd made was that it was God's will for that girl to go and make even the suffer in that land. And because of his love for her, he allowed his love for his daughter to blind him to what was the will of God. Now that's something that we see here with Peter. [00:42:01] His love for the Lord led him to want the Lord not to have to suffer.

And it was God's will that the Lord should suffer to save our precious souls. So that's why the Lord says, Get thee behind me, faith. And it just shows that Peter with all of his love for the Lord could be mistaken and was mistaken in this sense. So you learn lessons from these things, beloved, that the Lord would teach us. And no doubt Peter learned a precious lesson. And the Lord had to say in verse 24, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. And that's what we have to do. We all have to trust the tonight. If there's anyone saved here that he will be willing to do that, beloved friends, that you'll be willing to take up your cross. What does it mean to take up our cross?

It means not to be ashamed to let people see that we belong to the Lord. Even though it might be suffering that we're His, [00:43:01] that we belong to Him.

We're those that He's redeemed in His precious blood and that we're not ashamed that others should know that we live in our daily life that the Lord Jesus is the one that we follow, that He's the one that we seek to serve. May the Lord bless His word to each one of our souls.