**Matthew Sermon XI**

**Who Do You Say I Am?**

Matthew 11:28-30 Who is Jesus calling?

Come to me all you who are weary and burdened. (Q: Are you weary and burdened outside of Christ?) I will give you rest. (the peace that passes understanding). Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble of heart, and you will find rest for your souls.

For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Q: Is that your experience? Has Jesus’ yoke been easy?

It is only easy if we take it upon ourselves. If we fight against the yoke of Jesus, the yoke will not be easy, and the burden will not be light. Have you been fighting?

Solution: Take the yoke. Go where Jesus wants you to go. Let him lead you.

This is what we are looking for: people willing to take on Jesus’ yoke.

Jesus is greater than the temple

Jesus is greater than David

Jesus is the Lord of the Sabbath

Jesus is greater than Solomon (v. 42)

Today: Greater than Moses and greater than Elijah.

Stop making excuses and submit to the Son of Man, the Lord of the Sabbath, the one greater than David, the one greater than the temple. Let us submit ourselves to the one who yoke is easy and whose burden is light. Let us submit to Jesus.

Note: We are skipping the scene where Jesus renounces worship according to tradition, not the Scriptures in Matthew 15:1-20. We covered this in Mark.

We are also skipping the story of the Canaanite/Syro-Phoenecian in Matthew 15:21-28. The women heard this lesson. As an outcast, pagan woman, because of her faith, she was able to change Jesus’ mind. In Matthew the people with the greatest faith are the Roman centurion and the pagan Canaanite woman.

Matthew 16:13-20 Peter confesses Christ.

Matthew 16:13 The background.

At the end of his Galilean ministry (which began in Matthew 4:12), Jesus is in Caesarea Philippi—at the northernmost extreme of Israel proper. It was a very pagan city. There was a temple to Zeus there with a cave where Pan was worshipped. It was called the Gates of Pan or of Hell/Hades.

Pan was a horned “god” after whom we get the idea of Satan having horns.

This is literally a turning point in Jesus’ ministry. This is the end of Jesus’ public ministry in Galilee. From here, Jesus resolutely, if slowly, sets out for Jerusalem where he will be arrested and executed. We saw in Matthew 12:14 that the Pharisees have already decided to kill him. The story is moving inexorably toward its final, tragic end.

Matthew 16:13-15 Who do you say I am?

Isn’t that the ultimate question for all of us? Who do you say Jesus is?

And is your life consistent with that confession?

The people proposed:

John the Baptist raised from the dead.

Elijah (Malachi 4:5)

Jeremiah (the prophet who was to come)

A good man

A social revolutionary

A great reformer and friend of social justice

God had already answered the question correctly in Matthew 3:17 ( This is my Son, whom I love), and also by demons in Matthew 8:29 (What do you want with us Son of God?) But no human had given a correct answer so far, at least in Matthew.

But who do YOU say Jesus is? This is the moment of truth.

We have seen John the Baptist doubting.

We have seen Pharisees sarcastically demanding a sign.

We have seen unrepentant towns like Chorazin, Bethsaida and Capernaum

We have seen his mother and brothers telling him to come home.

None of that matters. Who do you say Jesus is?

Just so you know, the apostles have not totally “gotten” it yet either (as we saw in Mark 8:21 “Do you still not understand?”), and as we will see, even now they do not completely get who Jesus is.

Peter: You are the Messiah/The Christ—the Son of the living God.

This is the theme of Matthew: Jesus the Messiah, revealed through fulfillment of the Old Testament.

Amen!!! They get it!!!

(We say no kidding because we have seen SO MANY messianic prophecies fulfilled:

Matthew 1:22-23 virgin birth fulfills Isaiah 7:14

Matthew 2:5-6 Birth in Bethlehem fulfills Micah 5:2

Matthew 2:15 Out of Egypt I called my son. Fulfills Hosea 11:1.

Matthew 2:23 He will be called a Nazarene fulfills Isaiah 11:1-2, Jer 23:5

Matthew 4:14-16 Jesus, despite being born in Bethlehem Ephrathah, is from Zebulun/Naphtali, in Galilee, fulfilling Isaiah 9:1-6

Matthew 5:17 Jesus fulfills the Law and the Prophets

Matthew 8:17 Jesus fulfills Isaiah 53:4 by healing many.

Matthew 10:34-35 Jesus fulfills Micah 7:6 when families divide over the gospel.

Matthew 11:2-6 John the Baptist prepares the way for the Messiah/Jesus fulfilling Mal 3:1 as the voice crying in the desert, make straight the way for the Lord. And John the Baptist is the The Elijah to come, fulfilling Malachi 4:5.

Matthew 12:17-21 The Messiah a humble and gentle servant. Fulfilling Isaiah 42:2

The apostles are finally getting it… Or are they?

Do you get it? Do you get who Jesus is—the one about whom and for whom the entire Old Testament was written.

v. 18-19 But before we do that, did Jesus declare Peter the first pope here?

You are Peter (male, pebble, petros)

And on this rock (female, giant boulder petra) I will build my church.

[side note: In Aramaic, the language Jesus was speaking in, the word would probably be *kepa* (Cephas) for both uses of the word rock]

Is the “rock” here Peter or is it his confession of Jesus as Son of God and Messiah?

Most likely it is the confession, not Peter that the church will be built upon.

The gates of Hades (imagine Jesus turning around and pointing at the Grotto of Pan) will not overcome the church. (Daniel 2:44 “In the time of those (Roman) kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, not will it be left to another people. It will crush all those kingdoms (Babylon, Persia, Greece, Rome) and bring them to an end, but it will itself endure forever!!!

Pagan religion will not overcome the Church.

Daniel 7:26 “Then the sovereignty, power and greatness of all the kingdoms under heaven will be handed over to the holy people of the Most High (the Church). His kingdom will be an everlasting kingdom, and all rulers will worship

and obey him.”

That’s what we are talking about.

We are citizens of an all-powerful, everlasting kingdom of God, and Jesus is our king!!!

Matthew 16:19. Jesus did not make Peter (or anyone else pope). There is one mediator between God and man!!! Jesus Christ.

1. But Jesus gave Peter the “keys” (a reference to his role at Pentecost, as the first to preach a gospel sermon, opening up the kingdom of God? Maybe)

And Jesus gave authority to Peter (and the other apostles?) on earth. “What you bind on earth…. Binding and loosing refers to permitting and forbidding the doing of something.

In matters not already specifically spoken to in the Bible, Peter had authority to lead the church and make decisions, and God gives the stamp of approval to that.

Leaders in God’s church do have delegated authority in matters not specifically prescribed in the Bible (organization, church discipline, etc.) Hebrews 13:17 Submit to your leaders and their authority….

Matthew 16:21-28 Now you get it. OK, so now it is time for me to go to Jerusalem.

16:21 From that time on… Here the public ministry has ended and Jesus only works with his disciples.

Matthew 16:21 From that time on… From that time on, Jesus and the apostles made their way to Jerusalem. The die was cast. The plot was running its course.

And the course was leading to death.

v. 22 Peter: Never, Lord!!! Great irony here! You are Lord, but you had better listen to me! I do not give you permission for my Christianity to include suffering!

Q: Are you like this? Are you trying to tell God what he ought to be doing?

If you do not get that following Jesus involves suffering, they you do not get Jesus.

If you are following Jesus, you are going from Caesarea Philippi to Jerusalem—from the world to the cross, from the farthest point away from God to Jerusalem.

Jesus: Get behind me Satan! (again, remember the gate of Hades which was probably right behind Jesus as he gave these comments)

v. 24 If you are following me, then you are following me to a cross.

v. 25 Are you still trying to save your old, worldly life, or are you willing to lose that old life?

v. 26 If you hold onto the world, you can get a tiny part of it, but you will lose your soul.

v. 27 Why? Because Jesus is going to come back and a judgment day is coming.

v. 28 Jesus is talking about the Day of Pentecost. The kingdom is coming. Some of you (all except Judas) will not taste death before you see the Kingdom come.

Matthew 17:1-9 The disciples need a boost of faith here as they travel to Jerusalem—to suffering and death. God meets this need.

Jesus takes his inner circle—Peter, James and John.

Jesus is transfigured

Parallel to Moses, who also went up on a mountain and who, when he returned from the mountain, his face was glowing. (Exodus 34:29-35)

Again, the fact that Jesus is fulfilling the Law and the Prophets is in view here, with Moses representing the Law and Elijah representing the prophets.

Moses and Elijah, both of whom met with God on a mountain.

Jesus is the new Moses. He is greater than Moses.

Peter is always ready to make a fool of himself. Let’s make three booths (like the tabernacles in the Feast of Tabernacles)

God intervenes. Who is Jesus? “This is my Son.”

Question: Who is Jesus?

Answer: he is the Messiah, the Son of God.

Do you believe this?

Get up. Don’t be afraid. Listen to and obey him.