

I will build my Church

When Jesus becomes the revelation

Matthew 16:13-19

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. 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."

Intro.

A. We live in a world filled with opinions about Jesus.

1. Everybody seems to have an opinion about Jesus.
 - a. Some believe He was a good man.
 - b. Some believe He was a prophet.
 - c. Some believe He was a teacher.
 - d. Some believe He was a revolutionary.
 - e. Some believe He was merely a religious figure.
2. The problem is not that people have an opinion about Jesus.
 - a. The problem is that eternity depends upon whether our opinion is correct.
3. Jesus Himself brings the question into the conversation.
 - a. "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

B. Jesus is not asking because He lacks information.

1. Jesus already knows what people are saying.
2. He is creating an opportunity for His disciples to examine what they believe.
3. Jesus is moving them from **public opinion to personal conviction**.

C. The question is still being asked.

1. Jesus is still asking humanity:
 - a. Who do you say I am?
2. Jesus is still asking the church:
 - a. Who do you say I am?
3. Jesus is still asking every believer:
 - a. Who do you say I am?

Transition

- The most important revelation God can ever give you is not a revelation about your future.

- The most important revelation God can give you is a revelation of Jesus.

I. **Jesus is the revelation of God on the earth.**

Matthew 16:13

Who do people say the Son of Man is?

A. Unpack the phrase "Son of Man."

1. Jesus is identifying Himself with humanity
2. Son of Man is the most common title Jesus refers to himself as.

1. The Poetic Idiom: Mere Mortality (Numbers, Psalms, Job)

In its earliest chronological roots, the phrase is a Hebrew idiom (*ben-adam*). Because "Adam" means earth or humanity, a "son of man" is simply "**a child of the earth**"—a **mortal human being**.

- **The Usage:** It is used primarily in Hebrew poetry to contrast frail, short-lived humans against the absolute majesty and permanence of God.
- **Example:** In [Psalm 8:4](#), David asks, "*What is mankind that you are mindful of them, a son of man that you care for him?*"

2. The Direct Address: Prophetic Humility (Ezekiel)

During the Babylonian exile, the phrase takes a massive leap in frequency. God addresses the prophet Ezekiel as "son of man" **over 90 times**. [\[1, 2\]](#)

- **The Usage:** Here, it acts as a constant reminder of Ezekiel's lowliness. While Ezekiel is being shown spectacular, terrifying visions of the throne room of God, God calls him "son of man" to remind him: *You are just a fragile mortal; do not forget your place.*
- **Example:** "*He said to me, 'Son of man, stand up on your feet and I will speak to you'*" (Ezekiel 2:1).

3. The Apocalyptic Shift: A Cosmic Ruler (Daniel)

The ultimate turning point happens in the Book of Daniel, written in Aramaic (*bar enash*)

In a supernatural vision, Daniel sees the throne of God (the Ancient of Days) and witnesses a terrifying, magnificent shift:

Daniel 7:13-15

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, **coming with the clouds of heaven**. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. ¹⁴ **He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all nations and peoples of every language worshiped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed.**

- **The Usage:** Daniel sees "**one like a son of man**" arriving on the clouds of heaven. Unlike Ezekiel (who is a helpless mortal before God), this figure approaches God's throne directly and is given **an everlasting kingdom, glory, and absolute dominion over all nations**.
- **The Impact:** Suddenly, "son of man" stops meaning *just* a human. It becomes an apocalyptic, messianic figure who is paradoxically human in appearance but divine in power and status.
- **Example:** *"In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven..."* ([Daniel 7:13](#)).

4. The Supreme Fulfillment: Jesus's Self-Designation (The Gospels)

When Jesus begins His ministry in the New Testament, "Son of Man" becomes His absolute favorite way to refer to Himself—used **over 80 times across the Gospels**.

Jesus masterfully fuses all the previous definitions into one title to express three distinct things:

- **His Earthly Humility:** Echoing the old idioms and Ezekiel, He uses it to highlight His earthly rejection and poverty (*"The Son of Man has no place to lay his head,"* [Luke 9:58](#)).
- **His Purpose in Suffering:** He ties the phrase directly to His impending death and resurrection (*"The Son of Man must suffer many things..."* [Mark 8:31](#)).
- **His Claim to Divine Authority:** Most importantly, He claims the cosmic mantle of Daniel 7. When put on trial before the high priest, Jesus boldly declares: *"You will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Mighty One and coming on the clouds of heaven"* ([Mark 14:62](#)). The religious leaders instantly recognize this as a claim to Daniel's divine ruler and tear their clothes in outrage

- Jesus is therefore communicating something far greater than:
"I am a man."

c. He is communicating:

“I am the promised One who has come from God.”

B. Jesus is God’s self-disclosure.

1. God is invisible.
 - a. We cannot climb high enough to discover Him.
 - b. We cannot reason deeply enough to discover Him.
 - c. We cannot educate ourselves into knowing Him.
2. God must reveal Himself.
3. Jesus is the ultimate revelation of God.

John 14:9

“Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.”

- Jesus doesn’t merely tell us what God is like.
- Jesus shows us what God is like.
- When you look at Jesus:
 - a. You see God’s compassion.
 - b. You see God’s holiness.
 - c. You see God’s authority.
 - d. You see God’s mercy.
 - e. You see God’s power.

Colossians 1:15

“The Son is the image of the invisible God.”

1. God became visible in Jesus.
2. The invisible became visible.
3. The unknowable became knowable.
4. The distant became near.

Illustration 1 — The Photograph

1. A photograph doesn’t contain the entire person.
2. But it reveals something true about the person.
3. Jesus doesn’t merely give us information about God.
4. Jesus reveals God to us.

Illustration 2 — The Interpreter

1. Imagine standing in a room where everyone speaks a language you don't understand.
2. Someone enters who knows both languages.
3. Suddenly what was incomprehensible becomes understandable.
4. Jesus is God's perfect revelation to humanity.

Illustration 3 — Moses and the Glory

1. Moses asked God:
 - a. "Show me your glory."
2. God allowed Moses to experience His presence, but Moses could not see the fullness of God's glory.
3. Generations later, God doesn't merely give Moses another encounter.
4. God comes to earth in Jesus Christ.
5. What Moses longed to see, humanity encountered in Christ.

Illustration 4 — The Sun and the Window

1. You cannot stare directly at the sun for long.
2. But sunlight enters through a window and illuminates the room.
3. Jesus is not a lesser God.
4. He is God made known to us.

Application

Warning!

- Be Very careful so you don't reduce Jesus to something smaller than He is.
1. Jesus is not merely:
 - a. A counselor.
 - b. A teacher.
 - c. A moral example.
 - d. A miracle worker.
 2. He is the revelation of God.

Questions to ask yourself to give Jesus room to reveal himself.

1. What does my life communicate about who I believe Jesus is?
2. Does my prayer life reflect His lordship?
3. Does my obedience reflect His authority?
4. Does my worship reflect His worth?

II. We can see Jesus and still misunderstand Jesus.

Matthew 16:14

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

- A. The people had information about Jesus.
1. They knew His name.
 2. They knew His miracles.
 3. They knew His teaching.
 4. They knew His reputation.
 5. Yet they still didn't know who He truly was.

Information about Jesus is not the same as revelation of Jesus.

1. You can know facts about Jesus without knowing Jesus.
2. You can attend church and still misunderstand Jesus.
3. You can know Bible stories and still miss the Christ of Scripture.

- C. The danger of partial revelation.
1. The people were not saying Jesus was evil.
 2. They were saying Jesus was someone less than who He actually was.
 3. That's the danger.
 4. A Jesus who is merely a prophet cannot save you.
 5. A Jesus who is merely a teacher cannot redeem you.
 6. A Jesus who is merely an example cannot resurrect you.

Illustration 1 — Wrong Diagnosis

1. A doctor can correctly identify many symptoms and still arrive at the wrong diagnosis.
2. Being close to the truth is not the same as knowing the truth.

Illustration 2 — Knowing About an Athlete

1. You can know someone's statistics.
2. You can know where they were born.
3. You can know their career.
4. Yet you don't personally know them.
5. Information is not relationship.

Illustration 3 — Looking at a Map

1. A map can tell you where a destination is.
2. But studying the map is not the same as arriving there.

3. Biblical information should lead us to encounter Christ.

Illustration 4 — The Wrong Key

1. A key can look almost identical to the correct key.
2. But “almost right” won’t open the door.
3. A wrong understanding of Jesus **Will NOT** produce the right relationship with Jesus.

Application

Don’t settle for secondhand revelation.

1. Don’t live on your grandmother’s revelation.
2. Don’t live on your pastor’s revelation.
3. Don’t live on your parents’ revelation.
4. Don’t live on somebody else’s testimony.

Pray – Show me Jesus. Let me see him. Reveal who he is.

Jesus is the revelation of God on the earth.

We can see Jesus and still misunderstand Jesus.

III. God wants us to contemplate the person and work of Jesus.

Revelation comes from contemplation.

A. Christianity begins with Christ.

1. Christianity isn’t primarily about:
 - a. Rules.
 - b. Programs.
 - c. Religious activity.
 - d. Church attendance.
2. Christianity is about Jesus.

B. One of the most fascinating scriptures to me about the revelation of Jesus is John 1.

John 1:29-31

²⁹ The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, “Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world! ³⁰ This is the one I meant when I said, ‘A man who comes after me has surpassed me because he was before me.’ ³¹ I myself did not know him, but the reason I came baptizing with water was that he might be revealed to Israel.”

Paul made Jesus the center of everything.

Philippians 3:8

I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.

1. Paul wanted to know Christ.
2. Not merely know about Him.
3. Know Him.

C. We should think deeply about Jesus.

1. His birth.
2. His sinless life.
3. His compassion.
4. His miracles.
5. His authority.
6. His teaching.
7. His suffering.
8. His death.
9. His resurrection.
10. His ascension.
11. His promised return.

Illustration 1 — A Marriage Relationship

1. You don't maintain a marriage by knowing someone's name.
2. You continually learn their heart.
3. The more you know them, the deeper the relationship becomes.

Illustration 2 — Studying a Masterpiece

1. A casual observer sees a painting.
2. An artist studies the details.
3. The more carefully you look, the more you see.
4. Scripture invites us to look deeply at Christ.

Illustration 3 — The Diamond

1. A diamond can be turned and viewed from multiple angles.
2. Every angle reveals another aspect of its beauty.
3. Jesus is inexhaustible.
4. We will spend eternity discovering His glory.

Illustration 4 — Worship

1. True worship grows from revelation.

2. The more clearly we see Him, the more deeply we worship Him.
3. Revelation produces adoration.

APPLICATION

- Strengthen your contemplation of Christ.
 1. Read the Gospels slowly.
 2. Ask:
 - a. What does this reveal about Jesus?
 - b. What does this reveal about His character?
 - c. What does this reveal about His authority?
 - d. What does this require from me?
 3. Don't just read Scripture for information.
 4. Read Scripture looking for Jesus.

Jesus is the revelation of God on the earth.

We can see Jesus and still misunderstand Jesus.

God wants us to contemplate the person and work of Jesus.

- **Revelation comes from contemplation.**

IV. God reveals his glory through Jesus.

Exodus 33:18

¹² Moses said to the LORD, "You have been telling me, 'Lead these people,' but you have not let me know whom you will send with me. You have said, 'I know you by name and you have found favor with me.' ¹³ If you are pleased with me, teach me your ways so I may know you and continue to find favor with you. Remember that this nation is your people."

¹⁴ The LORD replied, "My Presence will go with you, and I will give you rest."

¹⁵ Then Moses said to him, "If your Presence does not go with us, do not send us up from here. ¹⁶ How will anyone know that you are pleased with me and with your people unless you go with us? What else will distinguish me and your people from all the other people on the face of the earth?"

¹⁷ And the LORD said to Moses, "I will do the very thing you have asked, because I am pleased with you and I know you by name."

Then Moses said, "Now show me your glory."

¹⁹ And the LORD said, "I will cause all my goodness to pass in front of you, and I will proclaim my name, the LORD, in your presence. I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. ²⁰ But," he said, "you cannot see my face, for no one may see me and live."

²¹ Then the LORD said, "There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. ²² When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I

have passed by. ²³ Then I will remove my hand and you will see my back; but my face must not be seen.”

A. Moses wanted to see God.

1. Moses had already experienced miracles.
2. Moses had seen the Red Sea.
3. Moses had seen God’s provision.
4. Moses had experienced God’s presence.
5. Yet he wanted more.

B. There must be a hunger for greater revelation.

1. Never become satisfied with yesterday’s encounter.
2. Never become satisfied with yesterday’s understanding.
3. Never become satisfied with yesterday’s revelation.

C. The Holy Spirit reveals Christ.

John 16:14

He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you.

1. The Holy Spirit does not draw attention away from Jesus.
2. The Holy Spirit reveals Jesus.
3. Spirit-filled Christianity should produce a greater revelation of Christ.

Illustration 1 — Turning Up the Lights

1. The furniture was already in the room.
2. Turning on the light didn’t create the furniture.
3. It revealed what was already there.
4. The Holy Spirit illuminates Christ to us.

Illustration 2 — A Telescope

1. The stars were already there.
2. The telescope doesn’t create them.
3. It allows us to see what was previously beyond our ability to see.
4. Revelation allows us to see Jesus more clearly.

Illustration 3 — The Curtain

1. Something can exist behind a curtain without being visible.
2. When the curtain is pulled back, what existed becomes visible.

3. Revelation is God pulling back the curtain.

Illustration 4 — Sunrise

1. The landscape doesn't become beautiful because the sun creates the mountains.
2. The sunrise allows you to see what was already there.
3. God's glory becomes clearer as He reveals Christ.

Application

- Pray for revelation.

“Father, reveal Jesus to me.”

- Pray for greater faith.

“Father, increase my faith to see and believe Jesus as Messiah.”

- Pray for greater understanding.

“Give me deeper understanding of Christ's identity, His rule and His reign.”

- Pray for transformation.

“Reveal Your character and nature to me and show me Your glory.”

Conclusion

- The greatest thing God can reveal to you is Jesus.
- The more clearly you see Jesus, the more correctly you will live.
- The greater your revelation of Jesus, the greater your faith in Jesus.
- When Jesus becomes greater in your vision, everything else becomes smaller.

Pray

“Father, reveal Your Son to us.

Open our spiritual eyes.

Remove everything that has distorted our view of Jesus.

Let us see Him as He truly is.

Let our faith rise.

Let our worship deepen.

Let our obedience increase.

And let Jesus become greater in us than He has ever been before.

In Jesus' name. Amen.”