

**I will build my church
Only God can reveal God
Revelation comes entirely from God**

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.”

I want to zero in on vs. 16-17

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.”

Introduction

- Last week Jesus asked the question. This week Peter gives the answer — and Jesus explains where the answer came from.
- Peter did not merely win a Bible quiz.
- Something had been UNVEILED.
- The Father revealed the Son.

ONLY GOD CAN REVEAL GOD

This sermon is about spiritual sight
How God opens the heart to see Jesus, and what can obstruct that sight.

I. The Father must unveil the true identity of the Son

A. Unpack Peter’s confession

1. “You are the Messiah”
 - a. Greek: Christos — Anointed One.
 - b. Hebrew background: Mashiach — Messiah.

- 1.) Kings were anointed.
- 2.) Priests were anointed.
- 3.) Prophetic ministry could be described in anointing language.

Peter is confessing Jesus as God's promised and appointed King and Deliverer.

2. "The Son of the living God"
 - a. Not one more dead idol.
 - b. Not one more regional deity.
 - c. The Son uniquely related to the LIVING GOD.

B. Unpack "revealed"

1. Greek: apokalyptō
 - a. To uncover
 - b. To unveil
 - c. To disclose
 - d. To make known what was hidden

Revelation is not God creating truth.

Revelation is when God enables us to see truth that is already true.

Something that is already there is revealed.

The veil is lifted.

Psalm 119:18-19

¹⁸ Open my eyes that I may see
wonderful things in your law.

¹⁹ I am a stranger on earth;
do not hide your commands from me.

Acts 26:17-18

¹⁷ I will rescue you from your own people and from the Gentiles. I am sending you to them ¹⁸ to open their eyes and turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.'

Ephesians 1:18

I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you

C. "Flesh and blood"

1. A Semitic way of describing ordinary human capacity.

2. Jesus is saying: Peter, you did not arrive here merely because you are smarter than everyone else.

Matthew 11:27

“No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.”

Straw Man

- Scripture never despises reason.
- Christianity makes historical claims and invites examination.
- But Jesus says the decisive recognition of His identity is ultimately a gracious unveiling by the Father.

Illustration

1. Curtain on a stage: The set exists before the curtain opens. Revelation does not create Christ's identity; it unveils it.
2. Eye surgery: A person can have a beautiful landscape in front of them and still be unable to see it until sight is restored.
3. Puzzle image: All the pieces can be on the table while the picture remains unclear. Then suddenly the image becomes recognizable.
4. Light switch: Turning on the light does not create the furniture; it reveals what was already present.
5. A child recognizing a parent in a crowd: Many faces are visible, but one face becomes personally known and precious.

Application

1. Pray before Bible reading: “Father, reveal Your Son through Your Word.”
2. Pray before preaching: “Holy Spirit, do what explanation alone cannot do.”
3. Remain humble. If you see Christ, grace has been at work.
4. Do not confuse intellectual familiarity with spiritual sight.

I. The Father must unveil the true identity of the Son

II. God reveals Christ through his word by his Spirit

A. Word and Spirit are not competitors.

Luke 24:27, 32

²⁷ **“Beginning with Moses and all the Prophets, he explained to them what was said in all the Scriptures concerning himself.”**

³² **“Were not our hearts burning within us while he talked with us on the road and opened the Scriptures to us?”**

1. They had Scripture.
2. They needed Scripture opened.
3. The result was burning hearts and clearer vision of Christ.

B. The Spirit illuminates the Word He inspired.

1 Corinthians 2:12

“What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us.”

1. Illumination is not permission to invent meanings.
2. The Holy Spirit helps us understand, receive and respond to what God has revealed.

C. Preaching is one of God’s appointed means.

Romans 10:17

“Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ.”

The preacher cannot manufacture revelation.

But the preacher can faithfully open Scripture, exalt Christ and depend on the Holy Spirit.

Good News / Bad News

GOOD NEWS

- You do not need a secret code, elite education or mystical status to know Christ. God has given His Word and His Spirit.

BAD NEWS

- If we continually neglect Scripture, resist conviction and refuse truth, we should not be surprised when spiritual clarity diminishes.

Stat

Pew’s latest Religious Landscape Study reports that among young U.S. adults, formal religious education in childhood is much less common than among older generations. Biblical literacy cannot be assumed. The church must teach Scripture clearly, deeply and patiently.

Illustration

1. Emmaus road: Retell the movement from confusion to burning hearts as Jesus opens the Scriptures.

2. Window and sunlight: A clean window does not manufacture light. It allows light to enter clearly. Faithful preaching should be a clean window to the text.
3. Teacher and textbook: The teacher does not rewrite the textbook but helps students understand what is actually there.
4. Seed and rain: The seed carries life; rain creates conditions for growth. Word and Spirit work together without competing.
5. Navigation: A map can be perfectly accurate but useless if never opened. Scripture must be read, understood and followed.

Application

1. Come to church hungry rather than merely present.
2. Bring a Bible. Mark it. Ask questions. Follow cross-references.
3. Parents: teach biblical language at home. Do not outsource all spiritual formation to one hour on Sunday.
4. Pentecostals: love the Spirit enough to love the Book He inspired.

I. The Father must unveil the true identity of the Son

II. God reveals Christ through his word by his Spirit

III. Spiritual hindrances can cloud our view of Christ

A. Sin can make us avoid the light.

John 3:19–21

19 “Light has come into the world, but people loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil...”

1. Sometimes the problem is not lack of evidence.
2. Sometimes the problem is that truth threatens what I do not want to surrender.

B. The cares of this world can choke the Word.

Mark 4:18–19

18 “The worries of this life, the deceitfulness of wealth and the desires for other things come in and choke the word, making it unfruitful.”

1. Anxiety
2. Busyness
3. Money
4. Competing desires

C. Distraction can crowd out the one necessary thing.

Luke 10:41–42

41 “Martha, Martha... you are worried and upset about many things, 42 but few things are needed—or indeed only one.”

Martha’s problem was not that everything she was doing was sinful.

Jesus is not confronting obvious sin

Jesus was confronting behaviors and preferences

Good things can become enemies of the best thing.

D. Biblical ignorance weakens discernment.

- A church can be emotionally excited and biblically shallow.
- A church can be biblically informed and spiritually cold.

We need TRUTH ON FIRE.

Straw Man

- The Pharisees were religiously active.
- Martha was serving.
- Activity can coexist with distraction, pride and missed revelation.

Illustration

1. Dirty windshield: The road has not disappeared; accumulated grime has reduced visibility.
2. Radio static: The station may be broadcasting clearly while interference makes reception difficult.
3. Phone notifications: Constant alerts train the mind toward interruption. Ask whether spiritual attention has been fragmented the same way.
4. Overgrown window: Vines can slowly cover a window until the room grows dim. Hindrances often accumulate gradually.
5. Cataract: Vision can decline slowly enough that a person adapts to diminished clarity without realizing how much has been lost.

Application

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to name the hindrance — not just “help me,” but “show me what is obstructing my sight.”
2. Repent quickly from known sin.
3. Create margin for Scripture, silence, prayer and worship.
4. Identify one distraction you will deliberately reduce this week.
5. If biblical ignorance is the issue, begin a disciplined reading and study plan rather than merely feeling guilty.

I. The Father must unveil the true identity of the Son

II. God reveals Christ through his word by his Spirit

III. Spiritual hindrances can cloud our view of Christ

IV. Divine revelation should destroy spiritual pride

A. Peter's revelation was a gift.

1. Jesus does not say: "Peter, you are brilliant."
2. Jesus says: "My Father revealed this to you."

B. True revelation produces humility.

James 4:6

"God opposes the proud but shows favor to the humble."

Psalms 119:18

"Open my eyes that I may see wonderful things in your law."

1. Pride says: I already know.
2. Humility says: Teach me again.
3. Pride uses knowledge to elevate self.
4. Revelation uses knowledge to exalt Christ.

St. Augustine

Augustine possessed one of the greatest intellects in Christian history, but intellect alone could not deliver him from the desires that held him captive. Reflecting on the period immediately preceding his conversion, Augustine wrote, "I no longer desired to be more certain of You, but more steadfast in You." His struggle was no longer primarily about whether Christianity was true. He had become convinced of the truth, but he had not yet fully surrendered to it. Truth had reached his mind, but it still had to conquer his will.

—Augustine, *Confessions*, Book VIII, Chapter 1

The modern information environment rewards **instant opinions**.

We can know a headline in seconds and feel qualified to pronounce judgment in minutes.

Spiritual formation moves in the opposite direction.

Humility, listening, Scripture, prayer, correction and patient obedience.

Illustration

1. Gift: No one boasts about earning a gift. Revelation should produce gratitude toward the Giver.

2. Cup already full: A cup convinced it is full cannot receive more. "I already know" is a dangerous posture before an infinite God.
3. Student and master teacher: The best students often become more aware of how much they do not know.
4. Lighthouse: Light is given so the lighthouse can direct attention away from itself toward safe passage. Revelation should point people toward Christ, not toward our spirituality.
5. Augustine: A brilliant mind still needed a surrendered heart.

Revelation / Praise

- The Father reveals the Son.
- God has given us His Word.
- The Holy Spirit illuminates truth and glorifies Christ.
- Saving faith is a work of grace from beginning to end.

Request / Petition

- Father, reveal the Son to us.
- Remove sin, anxiety, busyness, distraction and biblical ignorance that hinder spiritual sight.
- Root spiritual pride out of us.
- Give us teachable hearts.
- Give us faith to receive Your divine plan of salvation in Jesus Christ.

Action Statement

We come humbly to His Word, depend upon His Spirit, remove what obstructs our sight, and respond when He unveils His Son.

- 1. Approach His Word with humility**
- 2. Depend on His Spirit to give us revelation**
- 3. Remove what obstructs our sight.**
- 4. Respond when he unveils His Son**

Conclusion

I. The Father must unveil the true identity of the Son

II. God reveals Christ through his word by his Spirit

III. Spiritual hindrances can cloud our view of Christ

IV. Divine revelation should destroy spiritual pride