

THE GOSPEL OF Matthew Chapter 16

<https://youtu.be/P3YjukFYC7I?si=pAZiGL0mTb-rSJQU> Kevin Lemons, For God So Loved the World

Introduction:

Luke 3:23 states that Jesus began His ministry when He was about 30 years old, immediately after His baptism by John the Baptist and His time of testing, in the wilderness. This would place the events of Jesus' ministry between 26-31 A.D.

In Matthew 16, we see a wicked and hypocritical generation, who seeks after a sign from Jesus the Messiah, we learn to beware of the leaven of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and what the keys to the kingdom are. The question is answered, "Who do you say Jesus is?" We find out what it takes to follow after Jesus, and we discover the value of our souls, and what manner of persons we ought to be as disciples of Jesus the Christ.



Outline of Matthew 16 New International Version

- A. Warnings against the Sadducees and the Pharisees/ Debate Over a Sign from Heaven - Matthew 16:1-4
- B. The Yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees Matthew 16:5-12
- C. Revelation of the Person of the King - Matthew 16:13-17
- D. Revelation of the Church - Matthew 16:18-20
- E. Revelation of Jesus' Death - Matthew 16:21-23
- F. The Cost For Following Jesus/The Prophecy of His Second Coming Matthew 16:24-28

A. Warnings against the Sadducees and the Pharisees.

(Matthew 16:1-4) Debate Over a Sign from Heaven.

16:1 "The Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested Him by asking Him to show them a sign from heaven.

2 He replied, "When evening comes, you say, 'It will be fair weather, for the sky is red,'

3 and in the morning, 'Today it will be stormy, for the sky is red and overcast.' You know how to interpret the appearance of the sky, but you cannot interpret the signs of the times.

4 A wicked and adulterous generation looks for a sign, but none will be given it, except the sign of Jonah." Jesus then left them and went away.

1. Who were the Pharisees and Sadducees? The Sadducees and Pharisees were long-standing enemies of each other, and the fact that they came together against Jesus shows they regarded Him as a serious threat. Who were these groups of people and why were they questioning Jesus?

The Sadducees	The Pharisees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Belonged to the privileged minority and had the power of the law on their side. • Ruled in the Temple. • Recognized the authority of the five books of Moses only. • Did not believe in the resurrection. (Acts 23:8 as well as in Matthew, Mark, and Luke.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Represented the working-class and had the power of the people on their side. • Ruled in the synagogues. • Recognized all the writings of the Old Testament, plus oral tradition. • Believed in the resurrection.



- The Pharisees held strictly to the smallest points of the oral law (being traditions developed and handed down to Israelites for generations), in an effort to follow the Torah law,(five Books of Moses). The Sadducees believed only the written words of the Torah, the five Books of Moses.
- The **Pharisees** believed in angels and the resurrection of the dead; the **Sadducees** did not believe in angels nor a resurrection. (Apostle Paul used this division in Acts 23:6-9, while on trial for preaching the Gospel. Paul picked the right issue. He immediately gained the **Pharisees** as an ally, and he let *them* argue it out with the **Sadducees**. The **Pharisees** looked for and longed for the Messiah; the **Sadducees** did not.
- **Act 23:6.** “But when Paul perceived that the one part were Sadducees, and the other Pharisees, he cried out in the council, ‘ *Men and brethren, I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee: of the hope and resurrection of the dead I am called in question.*’
Act 23:7-And when he had so said, there arose a dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees: and the multitude was divided.
Act 23:8 For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither Angel, nor spirit: but the Pharisees confess both.
Act 23:9 And there arose a great cry: and the scribes *that were of the Pharisees'* part arose, and strove, saying, We find no evil in this man: but if a spirit or an angel hath spoken to him, let us not fight against God.”

- **The Pharisees** were not a political party and were prepared to live under any government that would leave them alone to practice their religion the way they wanted to; the **Sadducees** were aristocrats and collaborated with the Romans to keep their wealth and power. The **Pharisees** looked for and longed for the Messiah; the **Sadducees** did not.

2. Why did the Pharisees and Sadducees Demand a Sign from Heaven?

After all the miracles Jesus had performed, why did the Pharisees and Sadducees demand a sign (Matthew 16:1)? **“This is a test!”** The Greek word is: *πειράζω* (*peirazó* -- To try or test one's faith, virtue, character, by enticement to sin; therefore to tempt). So we see, they ganged up upon Jesus.

- Although Jesus, had not yet openly claimed to be the Messiah, He had done a series of powerful signs which ought to have pointed to the prophetic word of John the Baptist where he states, **“I baptize with water, but there stands among you One whom you do not know, and He is the One who comes after me...”**. **John 1:26-27**
- Yet, even while John the Baptist was in prison, he asked about Jesus, **“Are you the One who is to come or should we expect someone else?” (Matt. 11:4-5 NIV)**. **“Jesus replied, “Go back and report to John what you hear and see: 5 The blind receive sight, the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is proclaimed to the poor.**

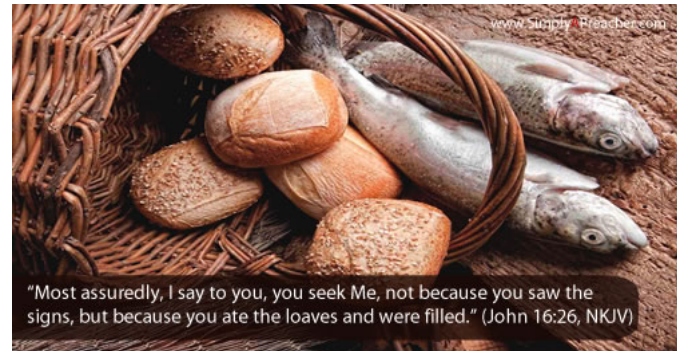
3. Why was there so much unbelief, about Jesus?

The request for a sign stemmed from skepticism and a desire to disprove Jesus, rather than a sincere search to know Jesus the Messiah. They wanted a sign that was undeniably divine and impressive, like Elijah calling down fire or Moses parting the Red Sea.

4. Are people today still looking for a sign?

We are living in increasingly world view and secular times, and, unfortunately, those who do not believe in the truth of Scripture often seem to have the loudest voices in the public domain. Skeptics are becoming bolder and more vocal, and their influence is seen in education, entertainment, the court system, and government. The bottom line is this; we live in a fallen world, and the average person has no thoughts about Jesus.

Some people seek after signs and wonders because they hope to get something for themselves. After Jesus fed the multitudes, a large crowd followed Him to the other side of Galilee. Jesus saw their true motivation, however, and rebuked it: (John 6:26). The crowd's desire was not to know Christ or even to see more miracles; it was simply to fill their stomachs again. Today, some people are looking for a sign to receive His blessings of power, finances, material things, to see what Jesus will do for them.



4. The only sign Jesus will give is the "sign of Jonah" (Matthew 16:4).

What is the sign from the book of Jonah, that Jesus had in mind?

The story of Jonah is well-known. Jesus stated that just as Jonah was three days in the belly of the great fish, Jesus will be in the "heart of the earth." Jonah is a prophetic sign for Jesus' own death, burial, and resurrection.

Matthew 12:40 NIV. 40 "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

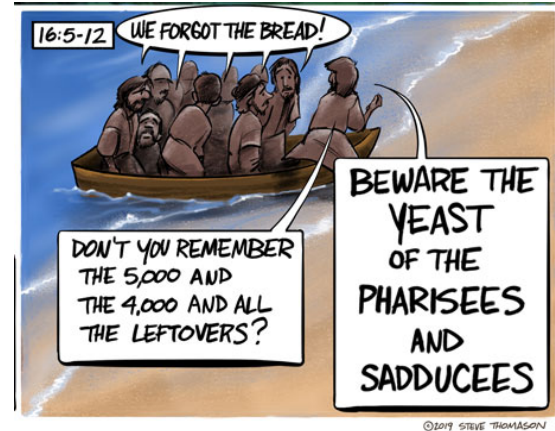


B. Matthew 16:5-12 NIV The Yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.

5 "When they went across the lake, the disciples forgot to take bread.
 6 **"Be careful,"** Jesus said to them. **'Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.'** 7 They discussed this among themselves and said, "It is because we didn't bring any bread." 8 Aware of their discussion, Jesus asked, **'You of little faith, why are you talking among yourselves about having no bread? 9 Do you still not understand? Don't you remember the five loaves for the five thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? 10 Or the seven loaves for the four thousand, and how many basketfuls you gathered? 11 How is it you don't understand that I was not talking to you about bread? But be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees.'**

12 Then they understood that He was *not* telling them to guard against the yeast used in bread, but against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees.”

Now Jesus is about to make a powerful statement about the religious leaders. It happened right after He left the Pharisees and Sadducees and entered the boat with His disciples. Following the feeding of the 4,000, there were several baskets of bread left. Well, the disciples forgot to bring the leftover bread and so they were discussing amongst themselves what they would eat.



“Jesus said to them. ‘**Be on your guard against the yeast (leaven) of the Pharisees and Sadducees.**’ Those words seem so unrelated to their discussion. The disciples were concerned about bread for eating. What was Jesus talking about? What was their understanding about leaven at that time? In rabbinical writings, leaven was considered a sign of sin and corruption.

In the Mishnah, the book of Jewish oral traditions, it associated the absence of leaven with redemption as seen in the history of the Israelites’ escape from Egypt.

To commemorate the LORD’s deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt, God instructed them to celebrate a week of feasting following the Passover Day (This was called the “Feast of Unleavened Bread.”) During that time the Israelites were commanded to remove all leaven (symbolic for sin) from their houses and eat no bread that contained leaven (Exodus 12:15; 13:6–7). Also one of the elements used when we come to the communion table is Unleavened Bread, representing Jesus’ body that was without sin. Jesus warned the disciples “... **Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy.**” (Luke 12:1)

God will reveal to you if you have leaven in YOUR home. We all do. We need to constantly keep our hearts clean.

Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts:

And see if there be any wicked way in me, Psalm 139



Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? 1 Corinthians 3

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C. Revelation of the Person of the King - Matthew 16:13-17

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.”**

"Son of Man" versus "Son of God"?

“The common understanding is that “Son of God” implies Jesus’ deity, which it does, and that “Son of Man” implies His humanity, which it does too. He was a human being, (experiencing all the physical, passionate, and emotional characteristics of a man). He is also the Son of God, in that He has always existed as the Eternally Begotten One, who comes forth from the Father forever.” (John Piper).



Who do people say the Son of Man is? The people acknowledged Jesus was a righteous man like John and Elijah, or one of the prophets, but Simon’s answer was very different. No one expected, **“You are the Messiah, the Son of the Living God!”** This truth was revealed to Simon by Jesus’ Heavenly Father, something totally unexpected. Peter’s confession was not generated in his mind or from something he heard or discussed with others; his words were clear revelation from Jesus’ Heavenly Father.

Who is Jesus?

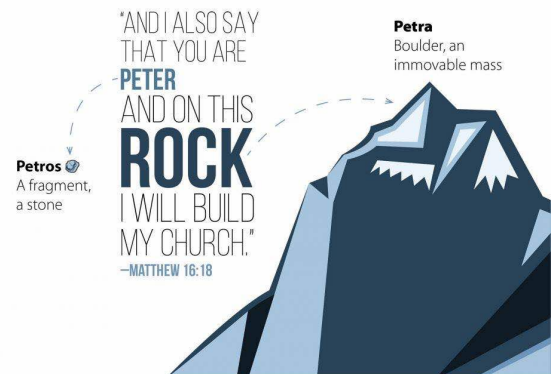
It was, in effect, the apostles’ final examination, consisting of but one question, the ultimate question that every human being must face: **Who is Jesus Christ?** Every person, throughout eternity is forced to answer that question, whether now or in the Day of Judgement.

D. Revelation of the Church - Matthew 16:18-20 NIV

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. 20** Then He ordered His disciples not to tell anyone that He was the Messiah.

“This Rock”: These Jewish men, familiar with Old Testament Scripture, recognized the rock as a symbol of God. **“He is the Rock, His work is perfect” (Deut. 32:4). “The Lord is my rock, and my fortress” (Ps. 18:2). “For who is God save the Lord? Or who is a rock save our God?”(Ps. 18:31).**

But let’s investigate the Greek words that Jesus spoke. **“Thou art petros [a stone], and upon this rock [petra—a large rock] I will build my church.”** Jesus had given Simon the new name of Peter (Matt. 16:18) which means “a stone, a fragment.” However, Jesus is “Petra” a large Cornerstone, immovable mass, the Rock. Anyone who believes in Jesus Christ and confesses Him as the Son of God and Savior, is a **“living stone”** (1 Peter 2:5).



Jesus Christ is the foundation, a **Rock** on which the church is built. The Old Testament prophets said so (Ps. 118:22; Isa. 28:16). Jesus Himself said this,

(Matt. 21:42) Jesus said to them, **“Have you never read in the Scriptures: ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone. This is what the Lord has done and it is wonderful in our eyes?’”**

Peter and the other apostles were witnesses in (Acts 4:8,10–11). **“Then Peter was filled with the Holy Spirit and said to them...Let it be known to all of you and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified and whom God raised from the dead...This Jesus is the stone rejected by you builders, which has become the cornerstone.”**

The Church is founded on **Jesus Christ**; The Church is built, empowered, and preserved through **Jesus’ works and the revelation from God the Father.**

Keys to the Kingdom-Was Peter the only one who received the keys?

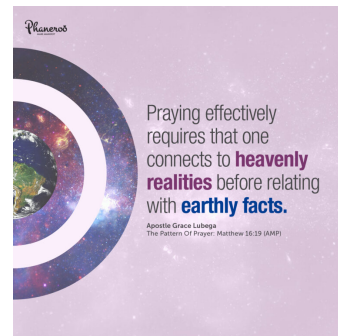
19 "And that's not all. You will have complete and free access to God's kingdom, keys to open any and every door: no more barriers between heaven and earth, earth and heaven. A yes on earth is yes in heaven. A no on earth is no in heaven."

Matthew 16:19 Message Bible

The same gift, keys to the kingdom, a guarantee is repeated in Matthew 18:18 in reference to all Jesus' disciples, not just Peter. In (Matthew 16:19), the singular pronoun "you" is written 3 times. However it becomes the plural "you" in Matthew 18:18 (three times). Matt.18:1 NIV "**At that time the disciples came to Jesus..., 18:18 Truly I tell you, Whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven.**"



Praying effectively and knowing the Word of God is required for one to use the keys of Heaven. One must connect to God's Perfect Plan, before relating it to man's earthly plan. Heaven is the starting point. What you bind on earth is already bound in heaven and what you loose on the earth is already loosed in heaven. The will of God is done on earth as it is in Heaven. (Matthew 6:10).



E. Revelation of Jesus' Death - Matthew 16:21-23

21 From that time on Jesus began to explain to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that He must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

22 Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to You!"

23 Jesus turned and said to Peter, "**Get behind Me, satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.**"

Now that the disciples have learned to acknowledge Jesus to be the Messiah, He is able to instruct them in the nature of His true mission, His suffering and death, but in the third day, He will be raised again. **But what is Peter doing?** Peter received a word of inspiration from God the Father and then quickly entertained and spoke a word of deception from satan. The words were spoken to the same person into the same mind, but the source was very different.

Most of our words, ideas, and images are either from God, or from satan. There are no neutral ideas; words are either inspired by God (from heaven) or deceptions delivered by satan. **Do not hesitate to tell satan, "You get behind me"!**



F. The Cost For Following Jesus/The Prophecy of the Second Coming Matthew 16:24-28

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, **“Whoever wants to be My disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow Me.**

25 **For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for Me will find it.**

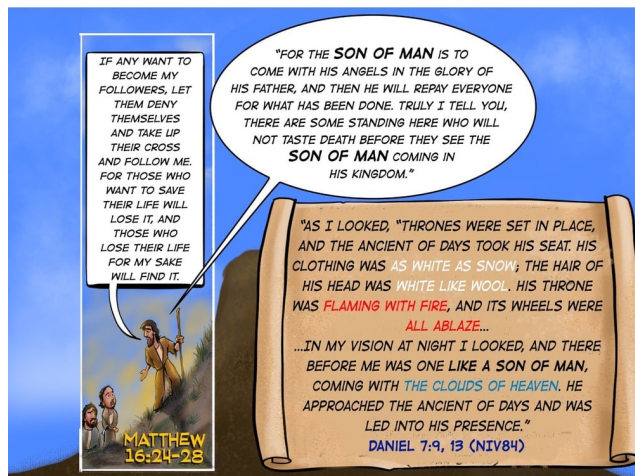
26 **What good will it be for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul?**

27 **For the Son of Man is going to come in His Father’s glory with His angels, and then He will reward each person according to what they have done.**

28 **“Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the Son of Man coming in his kingdom.”**

Many of us willingly call ourselves disciples, but have we really delved into what **Jesus** meant by it? To a person in the first century, the cross meant one thing and one thing only; death by crucifixion. Carrying a cross was to face the most painful and humiliating means of death, human beings could face.

Today, more than two thousand years later, Christians view the cross as a cherished symbol of atonement, forgiveness, grace, and love. But in Jesus’ day the cross represented a torturous death.



The Romans forced convicted criminals to carry their own crosses to the place of crucifixion. **John 19:17 NASB. “They took Jesus, therefore, and He went out, carrying His own cross, to the *place* called the Place of a Skull, which in Hebrew is called, Golgotha.”** Bearing a cross meant one was about to die, and that one would face ridicule and disgrace along the way.

Therefore, Jesus’ command to **“Take up your cross and follow Me,”** is a call to self-humiliation, self-denial, and self-sacrifice. One must be willing to die to self, in order to follow Jesus. Dying to self means an absolute surrender to God. **Luke 14:27 NASB “Whoever does not carry his own cross and come after Me cannot be My disciple.”**

The disciples experienced self-denial, following the ascension of Jesus. The twelve disciples (apostles) boldly preached the Gospel of Jesus Christ. They faced a lifetime of hardship, persecution, and eventually died a martyr's death. They were able to sustain such unwavering faith because they were witnesses of the miracles, teachings, death, and resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah.

(Bibleinfo.com, How the Disciples Died? Books by Jerry-Blount)

Are you willing to take up your cross and follow Jesus? Consider these questions:

- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means moving away to another state, leaving your family to prepare for ministry?
- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means losing a portion of your salary or your job, to follow God's plan or because of your witness for Jesus?
- Are you willing to follow Jesus if it means losing your life?

In some places of the world, such as Africa, China, Middle East, these consequences are a reality. Hundreds of Christians are bravely being martyred for their faith. Notice the phrasing of my questions: **"Are you willing?"** Following Jesus doesn't necessarily mean all these things will happen to you, but a disciple of Christ must be willing to suffer loss.

Jesus is coming again! He is coming for His disciples. Those followers who have refused to deny self, and those who have given their souls to the things of the world, may find themselves left behind and face the seat of judgement .

16:25 "For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for Me will find it."

Those disciples who have denied self, take up their cross in the world, and followed Jesus, will receive recompense, a reward for their deeds. Jesus promises to return with the glory of His Father and His angels. **Recompense is compensation for 'anything given, done, or suffered; for services rendered, loyalty shown, or sacrifices made'**. God sees and knows. There is nothing we give up or surrender to Jesus that is not rewarded, in kind and in full.

References:

Anthony J. Saldarini, "Pharisees," ABD, 5:289-303.

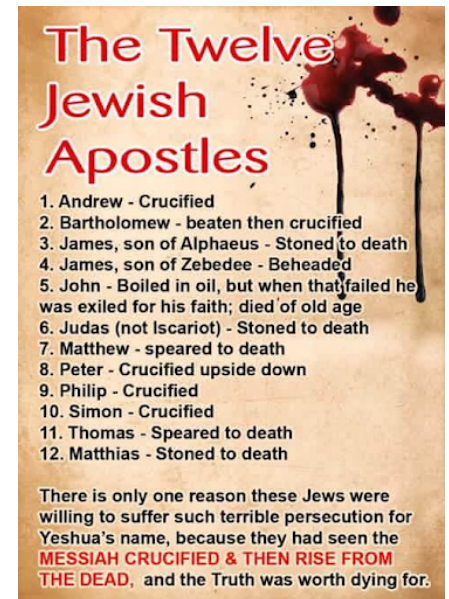
Gary G. Porton, "Sadducees," ABD, 5:892-95.

Chart 3-3 is drawn from Gregory R. Knight, "The Pharisees and the Sadducees: Their Respective Outlooks on Jewish Law," (1993): 925-48.

Lesson 16-Testing of Jesus, Matthew 16. https://assets.speakcdn.com/assets/2412/matthew_lesson_16.

Got Questions: What did Jesus mean when He said, "Take up your cross and follow Me"?

Posted by, Nate Archer. The Authority of Scripture, February 28, 2014



But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. 1John 1:7-10**