
The Keys to the Church, Part I (Upon This Rock)

Keys To The Kingdom

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Sermon: Keys To The Kingdom: The Keys to the Church, Part I (Upon This Rock)

Lesson Text

Matthew 16:16–18 (KJV)¹⁶ And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. ¹⁷ And Jesus answered and said unto him, **Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.** ¹⁸ And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

Matthew 7:24–27 (KJV)²⁴ **Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:** ²⁵ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock. ²⁶ And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: ²⁷ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

Mark 12:10–11 (KJV)¹⁰ **And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:** ¹¹ This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?

Introduction

So far, we've looked at two sets of keys to the kingdom of heaven:

- The Key to Protection (“**the gates of hell shall not prevail**”),
- The Key to Revelation (“**flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee**”)

Let's now study one of the most important keys, the key to the Church: Matthew 16: ¹⁸ **And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church**;

The Church represents several things that we need to explore: the bride of Christ, the body of Christ, and the Purpose, Perfecting, Assembly, and Authority of Christ.

But today's message will look at what Christ calls the foundation of the Church, the Rock!

The question is, “Who or what is the rock?”

Some say it's Peter: Matthew 16: ¹⁸ **And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church**

But Peter never said he was the rock. Peter himself declared that the rock was Jesus.

- 1 Peter 2: ⁴ To whom coming, *as unto* a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, *and* precious,
- Acts 4: ¹¹ This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner. ¹² Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

The Rock was the revelation that Jesus is the Christ; and that is the foundation that the Church is built upon. And when we exercise the key of revelation, we get the keys to the church.

Series and Sermon: Keys To The Kingdom: The Keys to the Church, Part I (Upon This Rock)

(The Rejected Stone, The Foundation Stone, and the Head Corner Stone)

I. The Rejected Stone (Embrace It)

Mark 12: ¹⁰ **And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: ¹¹ This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?**

One of the first things the keys to the Church give us is the power to overcome rejection.

How many of you have dealt with and struggled with rejection?

Rejection from People (marriage, family, relationships, friendships); Rejection from Work, Business, and Career (fired, layoff, not hired, not promoted); Rejection from Ministry, Church, and Calling (leaving, not responding, sabotage)!

Rejection makes us feel dejected, disappointed, and depressed, but with the keys to the church, we don't stay dejected because it's all a part of God's plan.

Isaiah 53: ³ He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were *our* faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

We Overcome Rejection By Embracing The Rock

Mark 12: ¹¹ **This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?**

They may have rejected the stone, but God said it was marvelous. Why? Because he had a plan.

Don't hide from rejection, embrace it because God has a plan, and it is marvelous.

Genesis 50: ²⁰ But as for you, ye thought evil against me; *but* God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as *it is* this day, to save much people alive.

Romans 8: ²⁸ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose.

II. The Foundation Stone (Stand On It)

Matthew 7: ²⁴ **Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: ²⁵ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.**

The next thing the keys to the Church give us is a solid foundation.

We all struggle with the instability of life. Unstable relationships, unstable finances, unstable economy, even unstable ministry and church people.

At the foundation of this instability is the fact that life and people are double minded.

James 1: ⁸ A double minded man *is* unstable in all his ways.

People change their minds, environments change its seasons, economies change their output, presidents change, bosses change, friendships change, marriages change; and we are all doomed to live in this unstable world.

And when your foundation is based on something that is prone to change, anything built on top of it is susceptible to fall.

Matthew 7: ²⁶ And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand: ²⁷ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

We Overcome Instability By Standing On The Rock

Stand on the Word of the Rock: Mark 13: ³¹ Heaven and earth shall pass away: but my words shall not pass away.

Stand on the Promises of the Rock: 2 Corinthians 1: ²⁰ For all the promises of God in him *are* yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.

Stand on the Power of the Rock: Luke 10: ¹⁹ Behold, I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy: and nothing shall by any means hurt you.

III. The Head Corner Stone (Rise With It)

Mark 12: ¹⁰ And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner:

The Keys to the Church gives us Access to the Rock:

- We Overcome Rejection by Embracing The Rock; It's working for your good.
- We Overcome Instability By Standing On The Rock; It shall not pass away.
- We Overcome Failure By Rising With The Rock; It shall become the head.

Rise out of failure: Micah 7: ⁸ Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy: when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the LORD *shall be* a light unto me.

Rise to first: Matthew 19: ³⁰ But many *that are* first shall be last; and the last *shall be* first.

Rise to promotion: Psalm 75: ⁶ For promotion *cometh* neither from the east, nor from the west, nor from the south. ⁷ But God *is* the judge: he putteth down one, and setteth up another.

Rise to become the Head: Deuteronomy 28:13 (KJV)¹³ And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; ...

The Keys to the Church, Part I (Upon This Rock)

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Midweek Study Lesson Plan (Sermon: The Keys to the Church, Part I (Upon This Rock))

Lesson Text

- Matthew 16:13–17, Matthew 13:10–13

Sermon Outline

- I. *The Rejected Stone (Embrace It)***
- II. *The Foundation Stone (Stand On It)***
- III. *The Head Corner Stone (Rise With It)***

Questions: (What was your main takeaway from this message?)

I. Getting to Know “Me”

1. If you were writing your life story, what would be the first sentence?
2. How do you respond when you feel overwhelmed?

II. Into The Bible

1. Answer the following questions according to Hebrews 4:14-16: i) What does it mean that Jesus is our high priest? ii) How does his role as our high priest provide a strong foundation for our faith? iii) What does it mean for us as we come to God with our needs?
2. Read Isaiah 28:16. If God’s plan is perfect, how can we trust his plan when his timing seems slower than what we expect?

III. Life Application

1. Where are you quietly “rejecting” Jesus’ rule (e.g., forgiveness, finances, truth-telling)? What single step will you take this week to make Him the cornerstone in that area?
2. Which one teaching of Jesus will you hear and do this week to build on the rock? Name your first action and how you’ll keep yourself accountable.