

# THE MESSENGER



"... How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things!" Romans 10:15

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Evangelist and Editor:  
Dempsey Collins

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## Comments on Matthew 16:13-20

*by Luther W. Martin*  
*Conclusion*

The later part of this verse deals with two possible subjects: (1) That the powers of the Hadean world cannot conquer, prevail against, over-power or over-come His church. Or, (2) That the powers of the Hadean world will not be able to prevent Christ's resurrection. And this second view, agrees with Acts 2:24: "And God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power."

It is true that Daniel and other Old Testament Prophets foretold the establishment of Christ's church, His kingdom, and that it would never be destroyed. But this passage under study, is dealing with the Divinity of Christ, and the resurrection of Christ, and stating that "the powers of the Hadean world are not strong enough to prevent Christ's triumph over death and the grave. Thus, by their failing to retain Christ in the tomb, the church would indeed be established.

**Verse 19** - "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you shall loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

The word "keys" denotes the privilege, prerogative or authority to unlock or open something that has previously been unopened. So, Peter is given the privilege of "unlocking" or releasing salvation and remission of sins to the world. He is granted the opportunity of proclaiming Christ's soul-saving gospel for the very first time to the Jews on Pentecost, and later for the first time to Gentiles at the household of Cornelius. (Acts 10<sup>th</sup> Chapter)

Even in this modern day, we sometimes give the "Key to the City" to some visiting dignitary. Although this ceremony is a rather hollow thing, nevertheless, it is a symbolism that goes back to antiquity, wherein Kings granted "keys" to their trusted stewards and court officials. Various privileges accompanied the "giving of the keys".

Next, comes the subject of "binding and loosing", permitting or prohibiting. The way that many translations are worded, leaves the impression that Heaven gave Peter *carte blanche* or unrestricted authority, upon this occasion. As if Heaven were saying: "Peter, whatever you bind, God will subsequently ratify and also bind." Such an idea puts God in direct conflict with His Son, when Christ announced that He, Christ, possessed *ALL authority*, both in heaven and earth. (See Matt. 28:18.)

Therefore, instead of granting the Apostle the right of determining what should or should not "be bound", as the King James and other versions state: in reality, Heaven was commanding Peter to subsequently teach and bind, that which Heaven had already bound. I copy from the Nestle-Marshall Text: "*and whatever thou bindest on the earth, shall be, having been bound in the heavens, and whatever thou loosest on the earth, shall be, having been loosed in the heavens.*"

Thus, in harmony with Christ's having full (all) authority in these matters, Peter is assigned the task (yet a privilege) of carrying out Christ's instruction . . . i.e., what Christ had bound.

**Verse 20** - "Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ." Christ frequently directed His disciples NOT to make known His real identify. See Matt. 8:4; 9:30; and 12:16.

### **Conclusion**

The confession of Christ's Divinity, serves as the bed-rock foundation of His church. "If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved" (Rom. 10:9). ". . .No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (I Cor. 12:3) ". . . That every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:11).

The preceding passages establish that indeed the church of Christ is founded upon His Divinity, for no person can be added to His church without first obeying the commands to believe in Christ as God's Son; repent of one's past sins; confess Christ before mankind (Matt. 10:32); and be baptized into Christ, for the remission of one's past sins (Acts 2:38). Certainly, Christ's Divinity is the foundation of His church.

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**News and Notes:** Tuesday Bible Studies – 11 a.m. Old Testament and 7 p.m. Romans

Remember to check the prayer list for those with ongoing spiritual weaknesses and physical illnesses.

"...Pray for one another...The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." James 5:16