

Analysis of Matthew 16:18

Introduction

During the Earthly ministry of Jesus Christ, He has called men from different social group, different intellectual background. Despite their diversity, they were brought together to form a group where unity prevails, because they all abided under the authority of one person: Jesus the Christ. They all stayed at His feet to learn from Him, because He is the greatest teacher, the greatest philosopher and the greatest doctrinaire. As a result, they became His disciples (from Greek μαθητης (*Mathetes*) = *who is learning from a teacher*).

One day the Great Teacher was sitting down with His disciples, making a kind of survey among them on “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” They answered: “Some say that you are John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.” And He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” **Matthew 16:13-16.**

And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. Jesus continued and said: “And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this Rock I will build my Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”

Discussion

I. - Let us see what Jesus said in **Matthew 16:18**: “**κἀγὼ** δέ σοι λέγω ὅτι **σὺ** εἶ Πέτρος, καὶ ἐπὶ ταύτῃ τῇ πέτρᾳ οἰκοδομήσω μου τὴν ἐκκλησίαν, καὶ πύλαι ᾗδου οὐ κατισχύσουσιν αὐτῆς.”

κἀγὼ (*kagō*) Pronoun 1st Person Singular Nominative of κἀγώ. It is a contraction (*crasis*) of καὶ [(*kai*) = and; ἐγώ (*egō*) = I, me] which is translated by *I also; I as well; I likewise; in like manner*. In this particular text it is translated by “*I, in turn.*”

δέ (*de*) Conjunction of antithesis which may be translated by *and, then, now* or *so*. *δέ* never stands as the first word in the sentence, but generally second; and when the words to which it is added cannot be separated, it stands third.

σοι (*soi*) Pronoun 2nd Person Singular Dative σύ = *you or thou when it refers to God*.

λέγω (*legō*) Verb 1st Person Singular Present Active Indicative of λέγω = *to speak, to say*, which can be used in all kinds of oral communication. It differs from λαλέω (*laleō*), in that it always implies (indicates) rational and intelligent speech, and denotes the sentiment.

ὅτι (*hoti*) Conjunction is translated by *that, for, because* and *how*. Here it is used in objective sentences as a particle of explanation = *because of that, as seeing that*.

εἶ (*ei*) Verb 2nd Person Singular Present Active Indicative of εἶμι = *is the ordinary state of existence*.

Πέτρος (*Petros*) Noun Masculine Nominative Singular of Πέτρος = Peter as a piece of rock; a little stone that can be shifting, changing, vacillating. [Note: πέτρα (*petra*) the rock itself, which is Christ. Peter was a piece of a rock, a little stone, that can be here to-day and gone tomorrow. But the πέτρα (*petra*) the Rock will never shift, will never change, will never vacillate. The Rock will subsist for ever, which is Jesus Christ on whom the Church is built.

οἰκοδομήσω (*oikodomēsō*) Verb 1st Person Singular Future Active Indicative οἰκοδομέω (*oikodomeō*) = *build*, which express the idea of build, construct a house up from foundation. οἰκοδομέω (*oikodomeō*) is not remodeling. It is build from nothing. Jesus did not take any of the existing assembly and remodel it to make His own, but started from nothing to an established assembly in each city or each village. The Greek verb is in future, that means this House was not existed before.

The erection of this spiritual house will not be completely finished till the return of Christ from Heaven. Those who, by action, instruction, exhortation, comfort, promote the Christian wisdom of others through the gospel of Jesus Christ and help them to live a correspondent life are regarded as taking part in the erection of that spiritual building, which has Christ as foundation. Each and every one who accepts His gospel [Death, Burial, Resurrection and Apparitions of Christ – (1 Corinthians. 15:3-8)] becomes a living stone in this big construction. – (1 Peter 2:5).

μου (*mou*) Pronoun 1st Person Singular Genitive of Ἐγώ (*egō*) = *of me*

Nominative = *I*. In no instance is this pronoun used in the Greek where no emphasis is intended to be expressed. Where it is used, it could not have been omitted without affecting the sense. This emphasis may be manifest or latent; or it may be the consequence of antithesis.

ἐκκλησίαν Noun Feminine Accusative Singular of **ἐκκλησία** (*ekklēsia*), which is the common term use for a meeting, an assembly. In this sense **ἐκκλησία** (*ekklēsia*) is the synonym of the Hebrew word “**kahal**” both mean “a gathering of citizens called out from their homes into some public place, an assembly to discuss the affairs of a Free State.” The Greek translation of the Old Testament transfers the term to the assembly of the people of Israel that met for a definite purpose (1Ki 8:65), or considered as the representative of the entire nation.

In the N.T. view, the word **ἐκκλησία** (*ekklēsia*) denotes the redeemed community in its two-fold aspect. (1) The entire community of all who are called by and to Christ out of the world. (2) It is also applied to every Church in a city or village where the character of the Church as a whole is repeated. The term **ἐκκλησία** (*ekklēsia*) is a two-fold part: the calling aspect is expressed by the second part (**καλεῖν** (*kalein*)) and out of the whole population is expressed by the first part (**ἐκ** (*ek*)).

In sum, in a Christian perspective, the word **ἐκκλησία** (*ekklēsia*) is defined as any of those who anywhere, in city or village, constitute such a group of believers in Christ and are unified into one body according to regulations prescribed for the body in the Scriptures which is the creed of the body.

The primary purpose of the gathering is to worship the Lord as it used to be done in the very first century on every first day of the week.

Worship here is the Greek word “λατρεῶ” which is a divine service offering to Yahweh and Yahweh alone. It is our duty as God’s people to worship Him.

Latter, in **1 Peter 2:9**, Peter used different expressions that refer to this group of called out:

1. - CHOSEN RACE from Greek γένος ἐκλεκτόν (*génōs éklèktōn*) = A generation of people chosen by God to obtain salvation through Christ.

As you can see this salvation is possible through Christ only. For whoever is not in Christ has no salvation. The only way one can be in Christ is being in His Church, in His group, His people.

2. - A ROYAL PRESTHOOD from Greek βασιλείον ἱεράτευμα (*Bassileov ieratoma*): **βασίλειον** (*basileion*) Adjective Nominative Singular Neuter of *βασίλειος* (*basileos*) = *king's court*: belonging to or destined and suitable for the king.

Yahweh is the King. The Church is His court, His belonging, His kingdom.

As members of the Church, we belong to the King and we are part of the “Royal Family”. What a privilege? We need nothing more than that.

As such, we have the obligation to follow His rules, no matter what. We have no right to do anything, minor or major, that He did not prescribe.

And Peter added **ἱεράτευμα** (*ierateuma*) = *priesthood*, which is the body of priests as composed of persons. As Christians, each and every one of us is a priest. Therefore, we have access to God at any given time and offer to Him sacrifices that are not external but spiritual (*πνευματικά*) ones.

That is exactly what Peter said in **1 Peter 2:5** “you also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.”

3. - A HOLY NATION ἔθνος ἅγιον (*ethnos agion*). **ἔθνος** (*ethnos*) *gentile (s)*.

In the O.T. those who are not of Israel, and in the N.T. those who are neither of Israel nor of the Church. The Church is being composed of those who are called whether Jews or Gentiles. In Christ we are one nation: the nation of God. Peter called it a “Holy Nation.”

4. - A PEOPLE OF *God's OWN POSSESSION* λαὸς εἰς περιποίησιν (*laos eis peripoiesin*). *Λαὸς* (*laos*) = *people, tribe, nation, all those who are of the same stock (race) and language*.

περιποίησις (*peripoiēsis*) = acquiring (to come into possession of) and keeping safe. We are the people of God, which He preserves (our souls), so that we may be partaker of the eternal salvation. Being part of “The Church Jesus Build” is the greatest privilege, because it is the place where we are really safe, the place where we are really protected. Protection is not for our body, but for our soul. It is in this perspective Paul said: “... even though my physical being perishes, my spiritual being will renew day after day.”

Conclusion

My friend (s), it is in this Church I invite you to be part of. You can not do it on your own. You need to be added by Jesus Christ directly according to **Acts 2:47**: “. . . And the Lord added daily the ones being saved on the same place.” The only way that could happen is when you are persuaded of the gospel of Christ in its four-fold namely the death, burial, resurrection of Christ and His apparitions; then repent and be baptized in remission of your sins according to **Act 2:42**: “In deed, the ones who receiving His word are baptized and in that day, about three thousand souls were added.” Now it’s your choice, your decision to either choose the way of life or to remain on the way of death.