

Eternal pre-existence          Virgin birth    thought today absolute purity,          but a little more general

Matt 16:13-18 When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 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.

**I. The importance of Jesus' question**          That's why Jesus often drew attention to this issue.

- A. The question of “who Jesus of Nazareth is” is a very important one & **is clearly addressed in scripture**
- B. The question of “who you believe that Jesus of Nazareth is” **determines your eternal destiny.**
  - 1. In Jn 1:9-10 Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth (*remains stays*) not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. 10 If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:
  - 2. Rom 10:9 That if thou shalt confess (*acknowledge*) with thy mouth (*verbally*) the Lord Jesus (*lit Jesus as Lord*), and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.
  - 3. This is why I am taking time to cover each of the 7 truths concerning the person & work of Christ.

**II. The profoundness of Peter's answer**          **Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God**

- A. Profound = Having intellectual depth and insight; characterized by an extreme degree of power, force and importance; all encompassing.
  - 1. **Jesus expressed agreement with it**
  - 2. **Jesus explained the source of it:** flesh & blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven
  - 3. **Jesus expounded the importance of it**
    - a. This truth would be the unshakable foundation upon which Christ would build His church
- B. From this text **Roman Catholic doctrine erroneously teaches that Peter is the rock upon which the church was built** and that Peter was the first pope. Also teach that Roman Catholicism traces back to Peter.
  - 1. **The meaning of the words:**
    - a. Peter = Petros (pet'-ros); a (piece of) rock; or a (small) stone
    - b. Rock = petra (pet'-ra); a cliff or ledge; a (mass of) rock (literally or figuratively).
  - 2. **The meaning of the text:** The “rock” the church is built upon here is the confession of Peter “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God”. The church is built upon the person of Christ.
  - 3. **Peter's understanding and inspired rendering of the text** (Christ is the Rock).

1 Pet 2:5-8 Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. 6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7 Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which

be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,  
8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence...

- a. Peter never claimed to be the head of the church, nor did he claim the authority or position the pope is purported to have.
- C. **According to Roman Catholic doctrine** the pope is “the vicar of Christ upon the earth” and “infallible in matters of church doctrine.”
1. Vicar = one serving as a substitute or agent.
    - a. A singular leader claiming that type of absolute authority is a very dangerous & often part of definition of a cult.
  2. No human in scripture ever claimed or displayed that position or authority
    - a. In fact Peter was correctly rebuked by Paul for an error with regard to doctrine (Gal 2:11-14).
  3. Roman Catholic teaching is built upon the Bible AND church tradition, the pope is actually given higher authority than scripture.
- **This does not mean that no Catholics are saved;** but that
- embracing Roman Catholic teaching moves one away from the faith once delivered to the saints
  - God’s ultimate aim is to move a true believer out of Catholicism
  - True Christians must reject any movement to “unite the church under Rome or the pope”
- D. **Witnessing to Catholics**

**III. The consequence of your response.      Where do you stand**

- A. **Do you believe** that He is the Christ
- B. **Have you made** Him Lord of your life
- C. **Do you love** & serve Him with the depths of your soul

➤ Notice:            the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. if its built upon Christ