

Christ as Messiah

Matt 16:13-23

SS Lesson for 07/27/2008

Devotional Scripture: Luke 2:25-32

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Introduction

Overview and Approach to Lesson

The outline of the lesson came from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator. It examines the fact of **Jesus as the Messiah**. The **study's aim** is to affirm that Jesus is indeed the Messiah. The **study's application** is to understand Jesus' role as promised Messiah and Founder of the Church.

Lesson Introduction and Background

From the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

Sometimes we confuse what we do with who we are. When asked, “Who are you?” a woman might say, “I’m a mother” or “I’m a wife.” She might say, “I’m an accountant” or “I’m a Sunday school teacher.” She hasn’t described the essence of herself, but she has described herself relationally and vocationally. Some people today would describe Jesus as a prophet or miracle worker. Some might say he was a teacher or a preacher. He filled all of those functions, but they don’t describe his essence. We don’t want to confuse what he did with who he is, although the two are related (that is, what he did proves who he is). To Jesus’ question “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered correctly. But each person must answer that question for himself or herself. This lesson will help us to “get it right.” Eternity is at stake! Who do people say Jesus is? The answers vary. That has always been true. And an answer will be heavily influenced by a person’s other beliefs. For example, Enlightenment thinkers of the eighteenth century, having discounted miracles, primarily saw Jesus as a commonsense teacher of morality. Some theologians today whose main concern is social justice see in Christ a great liberator of the economic poor, rather than primarily the “poor in spirit.” People tend to make Jesus fit their cultural expectations. The people of the first century ad were no different. It is not that the preceding understandings are totally incorrect. Getting the right answer regarding Jesus’ person and work must include an emphasis on what he actually did. The divine revelation we have in the Bible is our starting point in that regard. Our focus on this divine disclosure will help keep us from reducing Jesus to fit our own cultural mold. The events in today’s lesson take place in the regions of Caesarea Philippi. That city was located in the northeast region of Palestine. The Caesarea part of the name was to honor Caesar, the Roman emperor. The Philippi part of the name refers to Herod Philip II. Pagan influence is evident in the fact that the city contained a temple for Pan, a Greek nature deity. The area’s massive rock cliffs may help suggest the imagery for Matthew 16:18 in today’s text. We should be careful not to confuse Caesarea Philippi with the other Caesarea mentioned several times in Acts. As Jesus and his disciples traveled to the area of Caesarea Philippi in today’s lesson, we find Jesus in the third year of his public ministry. Jesus already had performed many miracles and provoked much opposition. It’s time for people—or at least the disciples—to come to a conclusion on an important question: Who is Jesus?

From the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

Credentials are essential for persons applying for positions or seeking recognition. For example, a person applying for a job must submit a resume. Prospective employers and other organizations seek evidence that those who wish to join their ranks are who they claim to be or can do what they say they can. Regrettably, some cannot make good on these claims. Some fail to meet standards, and others are outright impostors. Credentials can be misleading, inadequate, or falsified. The Jewish world of Jesus’ day was looking for its Messiah. The subjugation by Rome provided fertile soil for messianic movements led by charismatic individuals, each with his own claim to authority. Jesus, the true Messiah, entered this charged atmosphere and established His own claims. After presenting His credentials, He asked the Twelve to reach a decision about Him. As this lesson reveals, owning Him as Messiah brings with it some far-reaching implications.

Major Theme Analysis

(Scriptural Text from the New King James Version; cross-references from the NIV)

Identification of the Messiah (Matt 16:13-17)

13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"

14 So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"

16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

Identification according to worldly understanding (13-14)

Worldly understanding thinks the things of God are foolishness (1 Cor 2:14)

14 The man without the Spirit does not accept the things that come from the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned.

Worldly understanding seeks answers through human ideas (Acts 17:16-21)

16 While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was greatly distressed to see that the city was full of idols. 17 So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the God-fearing Greeks, as well as in the marketplace day by day with those who happened to be there. 18 A group of Epicurean and Stoic philosophers began to dispute with him. Some of them asked, "What is this babbling trying to say?" Others remarked, "He seems to be advocating foreign gods." They said this because Paul was preaching the good news about Jesus and the resurrection. 19 Then they took him and brought him to a meeting of the Areopagus, where they said to him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? 20 You are bringing some strange ideas to our ears, and we want to know what they mean." 21 (All the Athenians and the foreigners who lived there spent their time doing nothing but talking about and listening to the latest ideas.)

Worldly understanding uses human wisdom, which God frustrates and destroys (1 Cor 1:16-21)

17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. 18 For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God. 19 For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate." 20 Where is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is the philosopher of this age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? 21 For since in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom did not know him, God was pleased through the foolishness of what was preached to save those who believe.

Worldly understanding is being veiled by Satan (2 Cor 4:3-4)

3 And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. 4 The god of this age has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God.

Identification according to God's revelation (15-17)

God reveals Himself to man (Matt 16:17)

17 Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by man, but by my Father in heaven.

God reveals His hidden things to His children (Matt 11:25-26)

25 At that time Jesus said, "I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. 26 Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.

God reveals through teaching those who listen to Him (John 6:45)

45 It is written in the Prophets: 'They will all be taught by God.' Everyone who listens to the Father and learns from him comes to me.

God reveals through the words and teachings of Jesus (John 17:6-8)

6 "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. 7 Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. 8 For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me.

God reveals through His Holy Spirit (Eph 1:17-18)

17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. 18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints

God reveals through understanding given by Jesus (1 John 5:20)

20 We know also that the Son of God has come and has given us understanding, so that we may know him who is true. And we are in him who is true—even in his Son Jesus Christ. He is the true God and eternal life.

Proclamation by the Messiah (Matt 16:18-20)

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

20 Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.

Commentary on Matt 16:18 (from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary)

The proper interpretation of this verse has been the subject of much discussion throughout church history. The main issue is to determine to what or to whom this rock refers. Is the rock Jesus himself? When we consider this idea, we recall that Jesus refers to himself as the capstone in Matthew 21:42 (compare 1 Corinthians 10:4; 1 Peter 2:4–8). However, the imagery in the text before us would be rather odd if Jesus were referring to himself as both the foundation (rock) of the church and the church's builder (I will build) in the same sentence. We also need to realize that the Bible is flexible in its imagery, depending on what needs to be stressed in various contexts. For instance, Jesus is the builder here, while Paul is "an expert builder" in 1 Corinthians 3:10, with Jesus as the foundation in 1 Corinthians 3:11. But in Ephesians 2:19, 20, God's household is "built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ himself as the chief cornerstone" (compare Revelation 21:14). This flexibility in figurative language means that the context will determine how words and phrases are to be understood. The context does not seem to require the reader to see Jesus himself as the rock in this particular case. Is Peter himself the rock? The word Peter is Greek for "rock" or "stone"; in the Aramaic language, the same word is Cephas, which we see at John 1:42; 1 Corinthians 1:12; 3:22; 9:5; etc. Those who think Peter himself to be the rock thus see Jesus using a play on words between Peter's name and this rock. This reading seems natural enough, but it has some difficulties. First, there is Peter's mixed historical record. His failings make some think that he is too unreliable to have the church built on him (v. 23, below; also Matthew 14:31; 26:69–75; Galatians 2:11).

Furthermore, Peter's name in the Greek (which is Petros) naturally is masculine in gender while the word for rock (which is petra) is feminine; thus there is a mismatch in the gender of the two words. Some students also see a mismatch in the sizes of a smaller stone (petros) and a larger rock (petra) in the Greek language. Is Peter's confession the rock? The Bible tells us that confession of Jesus as Savior and Lord is vital to the growth of the church (Matthew 10:32; Romans 10:9; 1 John 4:15; etc.). After denying the Lord before the crucifixion, Peter himself "re-confessed" Christ many times (John 21:15-17; Acts 2:14-40; 4:8-12; etc.). As he did, he was building the church. This leads many students to believe that Peter's confession is the rock upon which Jesus builds his church. In response, those who think that Peter himself is the rock point out that the play on words between his name and rock is unmistakable, despite the fact that one word is masculine and the other is feminine. They also note that any supposed difference in size between a smaller stone (petros) and a larger rock (petra) in the Greek language becomes meaningless when Peter's Aramaic name Cephas is considered; that word is used for both a proper name and a rock without such a distinction. Before concluding our lengthy discussion of this verse, we point out that this is the first time Matthew uses the word church in his Gospel. Jesus himself is the one who inaugurates this community of God's people. They are to be committed to him and submit to his rule. The church is not an innovation created by his disciples after his death.

Stability and power of the Church (18)

The Church has stability because Jesus and His eternal power and presence is the chief rock or cornerstone (Eph 2:19-20)

19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

The Church has stability because Jesus is the only foundation (1 Cor 3:11).

11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

The Church has stability because it is made up of God's field of working members (1 Cor 3:9)

9 For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, God's building.

The Church has the power to reveal God's manifold wisdom (Eph 3:10-11)

10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, 11 according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Church has power because Jesus will present it to God as holy and blameless (Eph 5:27)

27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.

The Church has power because Jesus is its head (Col 1:16-18)

16 For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17 He is before all things, and in him all things hold together. 18 And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.

The keys of empowerment of the Church (19-20)

The Church is empowered because its Head has the keys to the house of David (Isa 22:22)

22 I will place on his shoulder the key to the house of David; what he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

The Church is empowered because its Head has the keys of death and Hades (Rev 1:18)

18 I am the Living One; I was dead, and behold I am alive for ever and ever! And I hold the keys of death and Hades.

The Church is empowered because its Head can shut things that no one can open (Rev 3:7)

7 "To the angel of the church in Philadelphia write: These are the words of him who is holy and true, who holds the key of David. What he opens no one can shut, and what he shuts no one can open.

The Church is empowered because when it is assembled, the power of Jesus is present (1 Cor 5:4)

4 When you are assembled in the name of our Lord Jesus and I am with you in spirit, and the power of our Lord Jesus is present,

The Church is empowered because those who reject the man of God rejects God (1 Thess 4:8)

8 Therefore, he who rejects this instruction does not reject man but God, who gives you his Holy Spirit.

Misunderstanding about the Messiah (Matt 16:21-23)

21 From that time Jesus began to show to His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, and suffer many things from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.

22 Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Far be it from You, Lord; this shall not happen to You!"

23 But He turned and said to Peter, "Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

Misunderstanding about Jesus' suffering (21)

Jesus suffered because it was written in Scriptures (Mark 9:12)

12 Jesus replied, "To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restores all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected?"

Jesus suffered death for everyone (Heb 2:9)

9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and honor because he suffered death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone.

Jesus suffered to be a sympathetic help (Heb 2:18)

18 Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted.

Jesus suffered to teach obedience (Heb 5:8)

8 Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered

Jesus suffered to leave us an example (1 Peter 2:21)

21 To this you were called, because Christ suffered for you, leaving you an example, that you should follow in his steps.

Misunderstanding about Jesus death and resurrection (21)

We must believe because even a centurion believed that Jesus died as the Son of God (Mark 15:39)

39 And when the centurion, who stood there in front of Jesus, heard his cry and saw how he died, he said, "Surely this man was the Son of God!"

We must believe Jesus died and rose again and will bring the dead in Christ with Him when He returns (1 Thess 4:14)

14 We believe that Jesus died and rose again and so we believe that God will bring with Jesus those who have fallen asleep in him.

We must believe that Jesus died and rose again because it is the gospel (Luke 24:45-47)

46 He told them, "This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

We must believe that Jesus died and rose again because there were many witnesses (Acts 10:39-40)

39 "We are witnesses of everything he did in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. They killed him by hanging him on a tree, 40 but God raised him from the dead on the third day and caused him to be seen.

We must believe that Jesus died and rose again because the Scriptures tells us so (1 Cor 15:3-4)

3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures

Misunderstanding about the things of God (22-23)

About the indwelling Holy Spirit (1 Cor 2:10-12)

10 but God has revealed it to us by his Spirit. The Spirit searches all things, even the deep things of God. 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the man's spirit within him? In the same way no one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God. 12 We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.

About the inner strength by faith (Eph 3:16-19)

16 I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, 18 may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, 19 and to know this love that surpasses knowledge-that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

About being established in faith (Col 1:22-23)

22 But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation- 23 if you continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the hope held out in the gospel. This is the gospel that you heard and that has been proclaimed to every creature under heaven, and of which I, Paul, have become a servant.

About being established in the truth (2 Peter 1:12)

12 So I will always remind you of these things, even though you know them and are firmly established in the truth you now have.

About the foundation of Jesus Christ (1 Cor 3:11)

11 For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ.

About watching our lives and doctrine closely (1 Tim 4:16)

16 Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers.

Conclusion and Other Thoughts

Concluding Thoughts from the NIV Standard Lesson Commentary

In today's world, people look for security in many places. They place their hope in democratic freedom, finances, military security, etc. In effect, these things become false messiahs. But today's lesson makes clear that God has provided only one true Savior: Jesus the Christ. Combined with Peter's confession (Matt 16:16), the link of Jesus to Abraham and David in Matthew 1:1 identifies Jesus as the promised Messiah who has come to "save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). This messianic hope began with God's promise to Abraham that through his seed "all peoples on earth will be blessed" (Genesis 12:3; 17:4; 22:18). God maintained his faithfulness to this promise through Jacob (Genesis 28:14), then through David (2 Samuel 7:12, 16), and then ultimately through Jesus (Galatians 3:8, 16). The Christ is the Greek equivalent of the Jewish title Messiah (compare John 1:41; 4:25). Both mean "the anointed one." Many psalms and prophecies point to Messiah's arrival and reign (see Psalms 2:7; 110; Isaiah 11; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 9:9). In so doing, they point to Jesus. In a certain sense, Jesus is the obedient Son of God whom God wanted Israel to be, but never was because of sin (see Exodus 4:22; Jeremiah 31:9). In a more profound sense, Jesus is the only eternally preexistent Son of God; that is something that has never been true for either Old Testament Israel as a whole or any other human being individually. There are other clear indications of Jesus' deity recorded in Matthew. For example, Matthew has already identified Jesus as "Immanuel"—which means, "God with us" (Matthew 1:23). Jesus teaches on his own authority (5:17–20; 21:23–27; 28:18–20; etc.). It is he who will judge humanity (7:21–23). When Jesus forgives sin, he is accused of blasphemy because the Jewish leaders rightly understand that this is the prerogative of God alone (9:2–6). Jesus' enemies recognize clearly who Jesus claims to be (26:63–65). The demonic spirits also testify that Jesus is God's Son (8:29). Only the actual, divine Son of God can live the sinless life that the perfect sacrifice required to redeem humankind (Hebrews 10:11–14).

Concluding Thoughts from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

People were speculating about Jesus' true identity. Peter confessed that Jesus was truly the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus praised Peter and alluded to the church that He would build. When Jesus later spoke of impending suffering and death, Peter rebuked Him and was sternly rebuked in turn. Nothing must distract Jesus from His mission of redemption. The revelation of Jesus as Christ to His disciples was a milestone in His ministry. Jesus was many things. He was a teacher, a healer, and an exemplary servant. But most important, He was the Christ! Christ as Messiah is an interesting study. The Apostle Matthew wrote of Christ as the Son of David and the Son of Abraham (Matt. 1:1), who represented the nation from which the Messiah was to come. In the book of Genesis, God said to Abram, "I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: and I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed" (12:2-3). The Prophet Isaiah wrote about the divine child, the Messiah. He spoke not only of His birth but also of His death. Regarding His birth he wrote, "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isa. 9:6). Holy Scripture is very clear and descriptive concerning the coming Messiah. He is referred to in Isaiah 7:14 as "Immanuel," meaning God with us. We read, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." The sign spoken of here is to the house of David. It is God's promise, which could not go unfulfilled. The Messiah would be born of the nation Israel. He would be born among them.

God would choose a Jewish virgin to bring His Son into the world. Regarding the fulfillment of the prophecy of the Messiah's birth, the Apostle Matthew recorded the message received by Joseph from the angel of the Lord. He said to Joseph, "Thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins" (Matt. 1:20-21). Not only does the Bible tell us of the birth of Christ as Messiah; it also tells of Christ as the suffering Messiah. The Prophet Isaiah wrote of the vicarious sacrifice of Christ, "But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed" (Isa. 53:5). Christ was identified as Messiah by His disciples. Before Peter's pronouncement in the Scripture text, Andrew went and found "his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ" (John 1:41).

Practical Points from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

1. The question all people must answer is: Who is Jesus? (Matt. 16:13)
2. In the face of much confusion, we must clearly proclaim Jesus as God the Son (vs. 14-16)
3. Our job is to proclaim Christ; only God can bring understanding and faith (vs. 17)
4. As long as we, the church, are doing God's work in God's way, we cannot fail (vs. 18-19)
5. Jesus' death makes no sense to those who are focused on the here and now (vs. 20-22)
6. When our minds are on the things of this world, the devil can easily deceive us (vs. 23)

Heart of the Lesson from the Bible Expositor and Illuminator

In John 2 we learn that Jesus did many miracles in Jerusalem during the Passover Feast. A large number of people believed in Him as a result. However, "Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, . . . he knew what was in man" (vs. 24-25). Now that the cross was drawing near, Jesus wanted to make certain that His own disciples would not turn away as many other "believers" had.

The people confused (Matt. 16:13-14)

The general feeling among the Jews was that Jesus was someone special, for He could do miracles. But not all agreed He was the Messiah. Many speculated that He was one of the prophets (maybe even John the Baptist) come back to life. The bottom line is that they found it hard to believe that a humble, "uneducated" rustic from Nazareth was their Messiah. Thus, even if Jesus had wanted to establish an earthly kingdom at that time, the people were too confused to make loyal followers. For their faith to survive the coming turmoil and the Lord's crucifixion, they would have had to have a firm understanding of who Jesus was.

The disciples correct (Matt. 16:15-17)

Jesus wanted there to be a clear contrast between the bewilderment of the multitudes and the understanding of the Twelve. When He asked the apostles what they believed, He expected a different answer. Peter, the recognized leader of the disciples and usually the first to speak, immediately affirmed their belief that Jesus was the true Messiah of Israel. This was the central point that they were not to turn away from. Jesus' response is enlightening. He had spent over three years teaching, training, and doing many signs and wonders to shape His disciples' thinking. He did not, however, say that Peter's discernment had come because of what he had seen and heard. Rather, it came because the Father had done an internal work in his heart. This is a difference we often see: two people see and hear the same things and have the same experiences, but one turns to the Lord, and the other trusts in himself.

Peter commissioned (Matt. 16:18-20)

Only after He confirmed Peter and the disciples' unwavering belief in His identity did Jesus move on to give Peter "the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. 2:20). This metaphor emphasizes that all of Christendom is rooted in the teachings of Christ and the apostles—no teaching is valid that runs contrary to theirs. All of the apostles' teaching, however, centered on the fact that Jesus was the Messiah

who had been prophesied in the Scriptures. If this fact was so important, you might ask, why did Jesus not want His disciples to tell anyone? The main reason at that time probably related to the fact that He was going toward Jerusalem and wanted to spend the majority of His time with the Twelve.

Peter corrected (Matt. 16:21-23)

After the ringing statement of faith Peter had made, we might think he understood Jesus' mission. However, Peter apparently still thought of his Messiah as a political rather than a spiritual deliverer. Thus, when Jesus spelled out what was necessary for the Messiah to do—be killed and rise again—Peter was beside himself. The misguided rebuke he gave Jesus was abruptly turned back on him. Sadly, even the Lord's most loyal supporters can think that they know better than their Master. May we submit to His ways always.