

Why Christians Differ Doctrinally - Part XXI.

Catholics and Protestants

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[0 : 00] Chapter 16, I want to make some introductory comments in connection with the theme that we have been following for the past several months.

We have but two messages remaining in this series, and then we'll be into new material. But we began at the first of the year in considering the theme, Why is it that Christians differ doctrinally? And we are doing this in response to questions that are often raised as to why are there so many different denominations? After all, we read the same scriptures, and how is it that Christians can disagree on so many things?

What's the basis for the disagreement? And we have been attempting to address that issue largely by singling out that specific area of difference that represents a greater disparity than perhaps anything else in Christendom.

And it simply boils down to this, the differences or the distinctions between historic, traditional Roman Catholic positions and traditional, historic, Protestant positions.

[1 : 19] The reason that I have selected these is because, as I just said, they probably represent the greater difference out of all of the differences that exist.

Granted, you have differences between Presbyterians and Methodists and Church of God and Brethren, etc. But I have singled this out, the Roman Catholic and the Protestants, simply because the difference is the greatest, it's the easiest to comprehend and appreciate.

And it is probably responsible for the division that exists among Christians, these two areas, more than anything else.

And these two areas I'm referring to has to do with John chapter 6 and the establishment in the Roman Catholic system of the Eucharist, as opposed to the way traditional Protestants view this as the Lord's Supper.

And we noted as we compared the idea of a metaphor with the literal language, and when Christ was speaking, except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you.

[2 : 41] We do not take that literally. We take it figuratively. It is a metaphor. Christ said, My blood is drink indeed, my body is meat indeed, or my flesh is meat indeed.

He meant that metaphorically speaking, in the same way that he refers to himself as a door of the sheepfold, in the same way that he refers to himself as the light of the world, in the same way that he refers to himself as the water of life, in the same way in which he refers to himself as the way, the truth, and the life.

All of these are metaphors. Our Roman Catholic friends do not take it as figurative. They take it as literal. And if it is literal, then you have to literally partake of the flesh and blood of Christ.

How can that possibly be? How can you do that? They believe, and I might add, they believe this very sincerely. With them, this is an earnest matter of faith.

They believe that when the priest, who is the only one, by the way, authorized to conduct the Mass, when the priest consecrates the elements, prays over the elements, mystically, mystically, the cup of wine becomes the literal blood of Christ.

[4 : 12] And the wafer becomes the literal body of Christ. Hence, when the faithful come forward, as is often the case when they serve communion, and the priest takes the wafer and places it on the tongue of the communicant, he says, receive the body of Christ.

And they mean that. And it is taken that way, quite literally. The figurative expression, and taking it metaphorically, means, when Christ said, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his

blood, you have no life in you.

And we believe that he meant, figuratively speaking, life. He did not mean literal, physical life. He meant spiritual life. You have no life in you. And when he said, you partake of the body and blood of Christ, of himself, what that means is, Christ was saying, you must become a partaker of me.

So that, I am in you, and you are in me. And this expression is used a number of times by our Lord, not only in, in John 6, but in John 10, and in John 14, and John 16, and John 17, about me in you, and I in, you in me, and I in you.

It is, it is partaking of Christ. St. Augustine said it so well, fourth century theologian, when he said, to believe is to drink and eat.

[5 : 59] You receive Christ, not through the mouth, but you receive Christ by faith, as an act of your will. That is how Christ becomes in you.

He becomes in you because you receive him unto yourself as an act of the will. That is called justification by faith, or believing on the Lord Jesus Christ.

And the Roman Catholic friends who see this differently continue with their practice, but we simply believe that they are misguided, that they are wrong.

However, they've been doing this for centuries. I suspect that not a one of them will change because of what I've said here on Sunday mornings. It's going to continue right on that way. But, it all depends on how you interpret the scriptures.

They've got chapter and verse to point to, and they say, here it is, right here in black and white, except you eat the flesh of the Son of Man. We say, yes, but the Bible is filled with figurative language as well as literal language.

[7 : 04] And we are not to take everything literally. You know, this is a common objection that is often leveled against evangelicals. I don't know how many times I've heard this, and every time I hear it, it makes me want to scream.

Oh, you're one of those people who takes everything in the Bible literally. I have never met such a person. I don't know anybody that does that. Of course, you don't take everything in the Bible literally, but you do approach the Bible from a literal standpoint.

And do you realize that even the use of figurative language is built upon the literal? If you don't understand the literal, you'll never understand the figurative because all figurative language is based upon a literal understanding.

That becomes the platform or the basis from which the figurative functions. And if you don't understand literal language and what it means, you'll never be able to understand the figure.

When Christ said, I am the door of a sheepfold, that's a figurative expression. But if you don't know what a real literal door is, you'll never be able to make sense of what he means when he says he's the door of a sheepfold.

[8 : 16] When he said, I am the water of life, and he who drinks of the water that I give him shall never thirst again, he's talking about spiritual water. That ought to be obvious because even believers who have trusted and put their faith in Jesus Christ still get thirsty physically, but he satisfies with an incredible satisfaction spiritually.

But if you don't know what real, literal water is, you'll not be able to understand the expression, he who drinks of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst.

So it is all built upon the literal. Most of the time, the literal is the correct understanding. Most of the time, the Bible speaks in a very straightforward way, saying what it means, meaning what it says. But for the sake of emphasis, for the sake of literary expression and variety, figurative language is often employed, and it makes for much more interesting reading.

And if you really want to get a good dose of figurative language, read the Psalms, read the poetical books. They are just filled with figurative language.

[9 : 34] Beautiful, beautiful poetic expressions. Well, we have treated this in Matthew, in John's Gospel, chapter 6, and we have pointed out that the only way that you can interpret that literally is the way our Roman Catholic friends do.

And that requires an official priesthood who is able to conduct this so-called transubstantiation of the elements into the body and blood of Christ.

So that creates a very significant and strategic dependency on the priesthood. Without the priest, there is no Eucharist and there is no serving.

Without the priest, there is no consecration. Without the priest administering this sacrament, there is no hope for you. This is why the official Roman Catholic position is, if you are not a member of the Roman Catholic Church in good standing, there is no salvation for you.

Now, you will talk to a lot of your Catholic friends today who don't believe that. But that is the official position of Rome. And there is no question about it.

[11 : 00] And if you want to get it from the horse's mouth, as it were, ask a priest. Don't ask the average Catholic because a lot of average Catholics are as ignorant of Catholic doctrine as Protestants are ignorant of Protestant doctrine.

So if you want to know, ask a priest and he will tell you. And even then, he may be a renegade priest because there are those in the Catholic Church who are actually out of step with the official position of the church.

Just like in Protestant churches, there are ministers who are out of step with their denominational headquarters and their positions. And they are generally regarded as lone rangers or renegades or apostate or heretics or something else.

But every denomination has them. And Catholics have their liberals and their conservatives and Protestants have their liberals and their conservatives and Jews have their liberals and their conservatives.

It is that way across the board. So now, this morning, I should like for you to turn, if you haven't already, to Matthew chapter 16 and we will look at the other side of the coin.

[12 : 11] This is a two-sided thing, the John 6 and the Matthew 16. And these two areas, more than any other, are responsible for the great disparity that exists in Christendom between Roman Catholics and between Protestants.

And you need to understand, both groups hold their position with great earnestness and sincerity and each believes that they are right and the others are wrong.

And that's what you would expect because if you don't believe, if you don't believe that what you believe and what you are teaching is right, and why in the world are you teaching it? Heaven forbid that you should not be convinced of whatever it is that you are teaching.

So here in Matthew chapter 16, a very controversial passage and one where our interpretations part company. This took place in Caesarea Philippi.

Begin reading in verse 13. Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he began asking his disciples, saying, who do people say that the Son of Man is?

[13 : 22] And you must understand, he is referring to himself here in the third person. He could have as easily said, who are people saying that I am?

But he frequently referred to himself as the Son of Man. Matter of fact, he uses that designation referring to himself more than any other combined in all of the Gospels.

the Son of Man, the Son of Man, the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which is lost.

And here, he is referring to himself in the third person, asking his disciples, who do people say that the Son of Man is?

And they said, some say John the Baptist. Now, I must ask you at this point in time, where is John the Baptist? He's dead.

He has already been beheaded by Herod. By the time we come to Matthew 16, John is dead and buried.

[14 : 27] Some believed that Jesus was John the Baptist resurrected from the dead. Of course, we know that wasn't the case, but some of the Jews believed that.

Others think you are Elijah. Well, where was Elijah? Elijah was dead. How long had he been dead? Well, over a thousand years, maybe twelve hundred years.

But, Jesus had a demeanor about him, a preaching style about him, a way of conducting himself that was reminiscent of Elijah.

It was a take-no-prisoners kind of thing. And he spoke words that were not very well received by the religious establishment. In fact, he was constantly in conflict with them.

So, in many ways, he fit the mold of Elijah and of John the Baptist. But, of course, we know he was neither of them. And others say Jeremiah.

[15 : 38] Of course, Jeremiah had been dead for five hundred years, but their view of resurrection, et cetera, would allow for that even though it was erroneous.

Or one of the prophets. And he said to them, verse 15, but who do you say that I... Now, here he is, so far as we know, the only ones present are the twelve apostles.

So, this little meeting is taking place between Jesus and the twelve apostles. and they're all standing around discussing this, answering the question that he is asked.

Whom do people say that I, the Son of Man, am? And then, Simon Peter answered, verse 16, and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Now, not only was Peter giving the right answer, but you've got to understand how incredibly important and significant this is. Because everything that Jesus is going to say and do is dependent upon his identity.

[16 : 53] Who is this one? His person created a kind of watershed where everyone was on one side or the other.

There weren't too many fence straddlers regarding the identity of this one. If he was in fact not the Messiah, not the one promised by Moses and the prophets, he is an imposter, you discount everything he says, you pay him no mind, you just simply dismiss him.

There is no other alternative if he is not who he claimed to be. On the other hand, if he is, then he immediately receives a carte blanche from everyone.

He is given, he is entitled to you giving him a blank check with your name signed at the bottom and he can fill it out for whatever he wants because he is entitled to that.

If he is the Messiah, if he is the Son of God, then the only proper response for you and for me and for everybody else is on your knees before him.

[18 : 23] And that's one day where everyone will be and every knee will bow and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

They're not doing that now. They didn't do it here either in the Gospels. We know they crucified him. So absolutely everything hinges upon this enormous announcement.

Thou art the Messiah, the Son of the living God. To call one the Son of God meant that he was deity.

He is of the same caliber, the same character, the same nature, the same makeup as deity. He is deity. It was just a stupendous claim for anyone who appeared to be just a human being to make.

But he made it. And they understood that that's what he was saying. Because they charged him with blasphemy. How is it that you, being a man, make yourself to be God?

[19 : 40] That is precisely what he was doing. But he didn't make himself to be God. He was God. He is God. Very bitter pill for them to swallow. Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.

And that is just monumental. This issue, this issue and this issue alone was the only thing that mattered from the time Jesus was introduced to Israel as their Messiah.

This is what it's all about. Right here. Is he or isn't he? the popular view among Jews ever since this time is he is not the Messiah.

We are still waiting for the Messiah. The Jews are waiting for the first coming of the Messiah. Our conviction is they've already missed the first coming.

We're waiting for the second coming. And whereas Israel did not receive him the first time around, they will this time. The second time their eyes will be opened.

[20 : 53] So all throughout the Gospels and throughout the book of Acts absolutely everything hinges on this one thing. Who is this one?

Jesus of Nazareth. Who is he really? Is he the Son of God? Because everything falls on one side or the other depending on how you answer that.

So Peter gives this monumental answer. And Jesus answered and said to him, Blessed are you Simon Barjona because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, which is another way of saying you didn't figure this out on your own.

This isn't human wisdom that gave you this answer, but my Father who is in heaven. now comes the conflict, the next verse.

How is this to be rendered? Jesus addressing Peter says, and I also say to you that you are Peter. It's Petros in the Greek, and it means a rock or a stone.

[22 : 11] I've often wondered if Peter would be nicknamed Rocky if he were around today. It's entirely possible. And I'm not so sure how he came by that nickname.

Well, the name Peter, the given name, means that. But he had a head like a rock too. It was sometimes very difficult to penetrate, even for God.

Remember the vision let down from heaven three times in Acts chapter 10 and Cornelius and he was told to go to the house of Cornelius and Peter said, nope, nothing doing, I'm not going. Can you imagine telling God you're not going to do something? And God says the second time the sheet was let down again and Peter said, nope, I'm still not going. He was a real hardhead. He was really into what he believed was right and nobody was going to change his mind. And he saw this as a kind of apostasy. [23 : 13] He wasn't going to have anything to do with that. So Peter had a real learning disability. But I'll tell you, he was also the kind of guy that when once he got a hold of the truth, you'll never shake it out of him.

Tradition tells us that when he had opportunity to recant his profession of faith in Christ or face crucifixion, he never considered recanting, and he never considered himself worthy to be crucified in the manner that Christ was.

He requested to be crucified upside down. Now, I don't know if that's true or not, but it is a stubborn tradition. I wouldn't be a bit surprised.

That is a rebuilt, renewed, re-energized Peter. This was an entirely different man after the resurrection.

Before the resurrection, at the crucifixion, Peter rebuked an innocent little maid when she accused him of being a follower of Jesus, and he denied him three times and swore that he even knew him, never saw him before, don't know that man from Adam.

[24 : 33] He was cowardly, and he shrunk back from his testimony. And after the resurrection, and his seeing with his own eyes the risen Lord, Peter developed a backbone that was incredible.

And he stood before the Sanhedrin in this large religious body and read them out in Acts 2 and 3, and it is just an amazing account that is given.

So here, Peter as the spokesman, and by the way, this needs to be mentioned too, because I think sometimes Protestants in wanting to discount the Roman Catholic version, take liberties that he ought not to take.

I think the scriptures make it very, very clear that of the 12 apostles, there were three who constituted the inner circle.

I have no alternative but to say these were the closest of the 12 to our Lord. they were Peter and James and John.

[25 : 38] And those three are mentioned as having experienced a number of things with Christ all by themselves. Now, we don't know where the other nine were, but they weren't there.

When Jesus was transfigured on the Mount of Transfiguration, Peter, James, and John were there. When he healed Jairus' daughter, the only disciples that were there, all the others were put out, as well as the family members and neighbors, and Peter, James, and John were the only ones there. This is found throughout the Gospels another time, a number of times. And of the three, there is one apostle who surfaces out of the three who constituted the inner circle, and I think we could safely call him his right-hand man.

that was Peter. No question about it. Peter enjoyed a position and honor that none of the others did. We may wonder why it is or how it is that Christ centered on that, and we aren't told. But as you read the record and go through the Gospels, it becomes very, very apparent that Peter has a position of primacy, and he is given that position here, officially.

[26 : 59] If you will look at the text, I say unto you that you are Peter, and here is where the language gets very, very difficult. Insofar as the Roman Catholic position would have it, the way they would like this to be interpreted, if not read, is this.

I say unto you that you are Peter, and upon you I will build my church. that's the way they take it. That isn't the way that it reads, neither in the English nor in the Greek.

But it is a curious expression and a curious usage of words that is just not what we would consider ordinary. It would have been very obvious, and I think removed from all argument, if it read that way.

And I say unto you that you are Peter, and upon you I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not overpower it. End of argument, over and out, that would be ironclad, but it doesn't read that way.

Now, that's the way our Roman Catholic brethren interpret it. And this provides for them a platform for the papacy, because they believe that Peter was commissioned as the first pope, the first holy

father.

[28 : 27] And that there has been a string of successors after Peter, even to this present day, and he today is Pope Benedict, the 16th.

Pope Benedict is a direct successor to Peter. Peter. We simply disagree. There is no biblical basis for establishing a papacy at all.

There is no question that Christ is honoring Peter here with a special kind of commission, but what he is saying is the word Peter, by the way, means a stone or a rock, rock.

But the word upon this rock in the Greek, and perhaps I should take the time to show you this on the overhead, but I hadn't planned to, this rock is a formidable rock.

Now, I don't know, I don't know if this was the exact background or not, but this is what tradition says. When we were in 1990, when we were in Caesarea Philippi, this is at the northern extreme of the Sea of Galilee, there is a large, well, I wouldn't call it a mountain, it's more like a hill, but it is very large, and it is solid rock, and tradition tells us, and sometimes tradition is dependable, and sometimes it isn't, but you can't put a whole lot of stock in it, but this was the location, Caesarea Philippi, and we were told by our guide that tradition says this is where Peter and Christ were, and this is where Peter made this great confession, and if that were so, then just behind, no further than from where I am to where the clock is back there on the wall, there is this large abutment that is just like a huge ledge, just protruding right out of the earth, and it is very formable, and very large, and it is all solid rock, and many scholars are of the opinion that this rock-like substance is what Christ was referring to when he says upon this rock, but he is doing this metaphorically, and he is using the word rock, upon this rock I will build my church, and the term rock is synonymous with Peter's startling, and significantly true, confession.

[31 : 22] You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God. That's the rock. That's the confession. That's the statement that makes all the difference in the world.

that is a truism that cannot and should not be ignored. It is the confession, the truth of the confession that Peter made.

Everything hinges upon that. It would have been so simple. Had he meant Peter was the rock upon which it was built, he could have just very easily said, I say unto you that you are Peter the rock, and upon you, I will build my church.

But it doesn't say that. The church is built upon the confession that Jesus is the Messiah. Now I want to deal just a few moments with the word church, because it is customarily believed, and I think understandably so, but I don't agree, although this was a position that I held for several years, that the church that Christ is speaking of here is the church that exists today.

We are the church, we are part of the church, and we are that to which Christ was referring when he said he would build the church, and we're it, or at least part of it.

[32 : 53] And it's very easy to understand how people could hold that position. I certainly had no problem in holding it for about 15 years as a Christian, and then I heard something that really threw a monkey wrench into that, because when you read the text, it says, upon this rock, and I take that that is Peter's confession, that truth, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.

I think that simply means that nothing will be able to subjugate it, or stand against it, or defeat it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

Now, keys, that's a metaphor. What is a key ordinarily used for? A key is a symbol of authority. One who has the key has the basis for opening, unlocking something that would otherwise be closed.

So, when you have the key, and you use the key, you open and make available something that otherwise would not be. We refer to the keeper of the keys as a person with authority.

[34 : 29] They have the power to open, and they have the power to close with that key. But significantly enough, and this too would have made it so much plainer, if Jesus would have simply said, I will build my church, and I say unto you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and I will give unto you the keys of the church.

But it doesn't say that. It doesn't say the keys of the church. It says the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And immediately many spring up and say, same thing.

No, it isn't. Our Lord did not use these different terms to confound or confuse us.

He used them because of the accuracy they set forth. What is the kingdom of heaven?

I will give unto you the keys of the kingdom of heaven. And you know how this is traditionally interpreted among Protestants as well as it is among Catholics. And that is St.

[35 : 43] Peter is up in heaven at the pearly gates. And you see this bearded old guy wearing this white robe and he's got this sash around him and on the sash he's got this ring of keys and you report in at the pearly gates and St.

Peter comes out to meet you and says well now who are you and you give him your name and he whips out his list and he say oh yeah yeah yeah here you and if he says I'm sorry your name isn't here never heard of you then you've got to go someplace else and of course there are all kinds of jokes and stories about St.

Peter and the pearly gates and that is all stuff and nonsense there's not a scrap of biblical evidence that would lead us to believe that Peter is the keeper of the pearly gates and that he decides who gets in and who doesn't when you report in to him that is all just the stuff of so many jokes and stories it has no validity at all but this is the way people take it and it's been that way for centuries when Jesus says upon this rock I will build my church the tendency is to think that the church is the church is the church and of course well that's the Roman Catholic church and Christ is going to build the Roman Catholic church upon Peter the first pope well the issue is complicated by verse 19 and the keys of the kingdom of heaven and it is further complicated by the fact that the church as is often interpreted which usually means the

Roman Catholic church or even if you're going to take it as incorporating the body of Christ and Protestants and Catholics if you take the traditional position that didn't even exist until Acts chapter 2 we don't believe it came into existence then but that's the standard line Acts chapter 2 is the beginning of the church the day of Pentecost that's the party line when Christ uses the word church here it is used only one other time in the gospels and it has to do with a disciplinary situation where someone is to in order to be reconciled is supposed to tell their problem to the church and in both cases in both usages of this and you may have a translation that renders it this word is ecclesia from which we get the word ecclesiastic and ecclesiastes and it has to do with things regarding the church but the word ecclesia is a compound

Greek word ek means out of it is akin to the word exit and exodus which is out of and kaleo which means the call in the Greek and you put the ek and the kaleo together and it comes out ekleko eklecia is the way it is usually translated and it simply means a called out group or a called out assembly or a called out number for what for anything for any kind of specific purpose in Acts chapter 19 there is an interesting expression that is given there I'm just going to have you turn to that one if you would please Acts 19 because it describes actually what is a mob as an assembly and the word in the

[40 : 04] Greek of course is ecclesia and we read in verse 29 of Acts 19 the city this is Ephesus was filled with the confusion and they rushed with one accord into the theater dragging along Gaius and Aristarchus Paul's traveling companions from Macedonia and when Paul wanted to go into the assembly see that word assembly that's the word ecclesia do you realize that it could be called church and it would still be linguistically accurate but it wouldn't have the idea of a church as we think of a church this is an assembly what this was was a raucous mob that was assembled together and they are referred to as an assembly another word could be congregation another word could be simply a group an assembly or an ecclesia is a group called out for some specific purpose that's what a church is a group of called out ones what is our specific purpose our specific purpose as called out ones to this assembly is to focus upon spiritual things and examine the scriptures and honor the person of

Jesus Christ that's what we are called out to do that's what all churches are called out to do and the word that is used in Matthew 16 that is translated church is a called out assembly now who all could qualify for that most anybody most anybody there is in Judaism today a thing called a minion an M-I-N-Y-A-N a minion is the is the required number of adult Jewish males that you need in order to form a synagogue you need ten adult Jewish males and you've got the nucleus of forming a synagogue that's called a minion you know what else it could accurately be called a church now they wouldn't call it a church but technically that's what it is it is a called out assembly a minion is a church is a called out assembly most

Jews would say well that's a Gentile that's a goyim term we're not a church we're a same thing when you're talking about the specifics of language and what the word requires and what the word means that's exactly what it means and what Christ is talking about here is the kingdom that he has

come to establish is going to be built upon and based upon promises that God had made to Abraham many many years ago and are going to be fulfilled in Abraham's seed that through Abraham and his seed all nations of the earth are going to be blessed and when Christ came on the scene preaching the kingdom of heaven is at hand John the Baptist preached the kingdom of heaven is at hand going to heaven he wasn't talking about dying and going to heaven he was saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand meaning that the rule and reign of God in heaven is going to come to earth that's the meaning of thy kingdom come thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven that has never been realized never not even close anybody who thinks this is the kingdom of heaven really ought to wake up and read the newspaper this is not it the kingdom of heaven has never come into existence the closest it ever came was being at hand at hand which means it is near it is near what determined whether or not that would be realized one word

Israel Israel the kingdom of heaven has to come into existence through the nation of Israel the chosen people of God and they are not being very cooperative cooperative they weren't cooperative when Christ came and presented himself as the king their response was we will not have this man to reign over us crucify him and they crucified their king even after the death burial and resurrection of Christ God's tender mercies were still extended to an unbelieving Israel and they were given another opportunity in the message that

[45 : 38] Peter preached in Acts chapter 2 and Peter's message to Israel when he stood and addressed that ecclesiastical body and those thousands of people Peter's message was very very clear and it was simply this through our father Abraham God promised a Messiah redeemer who when he came would make everything right God promised that he would send a deliverer and now Israel I want you to know God has done his part he sent a deliverer do you know what your part is your part is to receive him and embrace him and own him as your Messiah but we know he came into his own and his own received him not do you realize what that did that brought the whole concept of the establishment of the kingdom of heaven come to earth that brought that whole concept to a screeching halt it stopped right there why should it stop because

Israel was not on line well who cares about that why doesn't God just bypass Israel leave these stubborn Jews in their ignorance and go on with the kingdom for those who want it because he's committed to Abraham and the Jew and they are unconditional commitments and God cannot go back on his word despite Israel's unbelief rebellion and rejection God still God still has to make good on his word no matter how uncooperative man is that's what he's committed to doing so this is the kingdom this is the called out assembly that Christ is referring to and one day and you realize it has never been built Peter has the keys to the kingdom and some suggest that he used them and I'm not prepared to dispute this some suggest that he used the keys and he opened the door to Israel in Acts 2 and then again in Acts 3 what happened Israel did not walk through they held back and then Peter used the key again reluctantly when he went to the house of Cornelius and opened the way for the Gentiles because Cornelius was not a Jew Peter has already used those keys the kingdom however is now held in abeyance it is waiting for the second coming and listen the beauty of it all is this when Jesus Christ returns again Israel will embrace him they will look upon him whom they pierced and they will mourn as one mourns for an only son they will receive him as their Messiah he will rise and he will fight for his people as in the day of old then this kingdom will be established and guess what Peter will be right there in place barely I say unto you who have followed me in the regeneration when the son of man comes up sits on his throne you also will sit on the twelve thrones of Israel judging the twelve tribes that has never happened this promise that Christ made to Peter here has never been fulfilled it will be but it hasn't been this is not the kingdom this is a messianic or a Jewish assembly that is not to be confused with the body of Christ that exists today that is an entirely different thing so you can see the great disparity that exists between the way Roman Catholics take this their position is the church is built upon Peter and that Peter speaks with the authority of Christ as the vicar of Christ they believe that the present Pope is the same as Christ on this earth he speaks in his stead and in order to support their doctrine and their position they had to arrive at a doctrine of papal infallibility and this didn't come about until I think sometime in the 1800s but it it was simply a pronouncement from the Vatican and from the College of Cardinals and from the Holy See it was simply a pronouncement that the Pope when he speaks ex cathedra from the chair of Peter when he speaks official doctrine he is infallible that means he can say no wrong that means every position that he takes when he extends a papal bull

or a treatise that is binding upon the faithful that comes with the authority of

[51 : 25] God himself and woe be unto you if you disobey it as a Roman Catholic because you are then out of step with you are out of step with God as far as they are concerned and the present day Pope enjoys this same position he speaks with the infallible authority of God himself so they believe and they're very serious about that and when you stop and think about it really is probably the only consistent position that they can take because if you have someone in position who does not speak with the authority of God then you're going to take everything he says with a grain of salt aren't you isn't that the way you take what I say I should hope so I do not speak with the authority of God and anybody who thinks

I do is grossly mistaken I don't speak with the authority of God my sole authority comes from the scriptures and I don't always get that right so that's why you've got to be on your toes and you cannot hand your brain over to anyone or allow anyone else to be responsible for your spiritual status or your eternal destiny you are in charge of you you are your own priest priest you do not need a priest hood you are your own priest you know what that does that individualizes salvation and it individualizes responsibility so that you do not need to come to God through a priest through a church through any ecclesiastical organization you come to God directly yourself because you are accountable for you and you go to

God directly you are your own priest that is called the priesthood of the believer so you need no go between there is one God and one mediator between God and men the man Christ Jesus we go directly to him now these differences that exist between Catholic and Protestants go back probably 1800 years and it isn't likely that they are going to change they remain in focus we have we have a number of people here in the congregation who are fully familiar with Roman Catholic theology because they were born and reared in the Roman Catholic Church and have since left that and honesty compels me to say there are lots of people in our Catholic churches over the city of Springfield who were born and raised

Protestant and who have since become Roman Catholic it works both ways and in both instances I'm sure that everybody thought they were doing the right thing they were taking the right position I'm not finished but I quit so we've got four minutes for questions and comments anybody Beth I'm just trying to figure out why in verse 18 you know a promise where I will go my church why not I mean why couldn't that be the kingdom of Neviton first the same thing as the next verse why could verse 18 not be the same thing as verse 19 if you will that he's just talking to Peter and giving him a promise of what will be when the kingdom you mean the binding and loosing no when he says upon this rock I will build my church why does that not mean when the kingdom of heaven is established upon earth well I think it does

I think it does and he is here he is here using this using church as synonymous with the kingdom of heaven this is the Jewish this is the Jewish constituency no I'm taking the position that the rock is Peter's confession the truth the truth that Peter has stated thou art the Christ the son of the living God that's the stuff that the church is built upon that not only the Jewish church but the Gentile or the body of Christ church is built upon that truth that is the watershed truth well Christ is referred to as a rock throughout scripture in 1st Corinthians 10 and that rock which followed them was Christ and there again is another metaphor by the way why could that not be another way of

[56 : 43] Christ saying when the kingdom of heaven is established on earth you're going to be my number one right hand man you're going to be my I think that is exactly what it means I think that's exactly what it what it portrays because Peter is along with the other eleven they're going to be fulfilling that position they never have fulfilled it but they will and I'm just saying that the church that he is speaking of in verse 18 is not to be confused with the church which is the body of Christ we are the parenthetical church now as it were we are the mystery we are not revealed at all in the old testament but the kingdom certainly is Ron the way I understood that Jesus said thou art Peter and pointed his finger at Peter then he said and upon this rock pointed back to himself and upon this rock

I will build my church and you think he was referring to himself or pointing to himself it would be nice if we had a video of that could remove all doubt the language is ambiguous it's just not as clear cut as we would like it whether you take a Roman Catholic or Protestant position neither position is as clear as we would like it to be it just isn't but do you know what that does that drives you to study if everything was as clear as we would like it to be on the surface then you could read your Bible just like a novel you read it once you got everything you know the butler did it and all the rest of it there's

no reason to go back to it to appeal to it but the Bible I think has a deliberate ambiguity in a number of places because that requires us to search and compare and search and compare and study and study and study I still read the Bible and occasionally come across a verse that I swear wasn't even there before where did that come from

I don't remember that I've read this before I've read it a number of times before but that's just the nature of the word of God Betty if the Roman Catholics believe that Peter was the first pope yes how did they get around the fact that he later denied Christ three times well he wasn't pope when he did that and not only that but you know this I'll tell you this the Roman Catholic the Roman Catholic church is an incredible intricate combination of things that they have put together that is just amazing and it has just grown over the years now they have a they have a celibate priesthood you know and that's a big item among Roman Catholics because a lot of them are of the opinion well if the Vatican wasn't so stupid and so stubborn and would let these priests get married we wouldn't have the shortage of priests that we do but when you call a man when you call a normal man with normal hormones and all of that good stuff to a life of celibacy and that he's supposed to get his enjoyment just out of serving God you're going to whittle down the field considerably and there are lots of there are lots of highly placed Roman

Catholics who are stumping for an ability of priests to marry in the Greek Orthodox they can you know they do but they've been holding very steadfastly and another thing as a celibate and unmarried then you've got a problem with Peter because Peter had a mother-in-law and it is really hard to have a mother-in-law without being married who would want one I'm just kidding ladies just kidding but you see my point and here is supposedly the very first pope who wouldn't even be qualified to be a priest because he's married but I'll tell you they have ingenious ways of overlooking those things and I want to tell you something this isn't just for Roman Catholics it's for Protestants too we have an incredible uncanny ability to be able to justify just about anything we want to and claim that God was behind it and it's scary and this is why we've got to keep coming back to scripture and it's just got to this is folks this is the only anchor we've got it's the only thing and forever his word is settled in heaven and if you'll stand

I'll have a word of prayer and we'll dismiss father we know that there is so very much that we don't know about all of these things we've been speaking of but we do know that Jesus is the Christ the son of the living God and we do know that life is dispatched only from him and that we must be a partaker of him and when we exercise with our will our trust and our confidence place it all in Christ instead of on ourselves or an institution you wonderfully forgive us and you save us you make us your child and you change our destiny and you change our presence in a way that nothing else ever could thank you for being the wonderful wonderful God that you are thank you for the privilege of meeting together with believers who love you and and and threshing out these things and discovering things we didn't know and reversing ourselves on some things that we thought we knew thank you for truth and for you being the depository of it in

[62 : 58] Christ's name amen amen