

The Wednesday Word, June 22, 2022: Built on the Rock

It is a Biblical fact that the true Church is founded and built upon the Lord Jesus." "Oh, but," says someone, "the Church was built upon Peter, for Jesus said, 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock, I will build My Church' (Matthew 16:18).

Christ's Church built upon Peter? Hardly!

Peter above all? Bah Humbug!

Peter was doubtless a decent man but look at his performance. He was the very opposite of a steady rock. A foundation built on that dear brother would be worse than shaky, it would be quite inept and useless.

Three times in scripture the Holy Spirit records Peter's fallings.

1. He fell in Matthew 16:21-23. Peter would have kept the Lord Jesus from the cross and because of this Jesus called Peter 'Satan' and an offense. That's hardly material to build the church upon.

2. He fell in Matthew 26:74 where we read, "Then began he (Peter) to curse and swear saying, 'I know not the man (Jesus).'"

3 He fell in Galatians 2:11-14. There we read that Paul had to rebuke Peter because he was not 'walking according to the truth of the gospel.'

Yet some people insist that the true church is indeed built on Peter and those of us who disagree are outside of and without salvation.

Apart from that, to hold that Peter is the foundation stone of the Church is to twist Matthew 16:18. For a moment, let's look at the context of Christ's declaration. Jesus and the disciples had come to the district of Caesarea Philippi, (Matthew 16:13) and He asked them, "Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?" Some replied one thing, and some another; but, to bring the matter close to home, Jesus asked His disciples, "But who do you say that I am." Simon Peter immediately and emphatically responded, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God;"

Now see what follows.

Jesus answered and said unto him, 'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: for flesh and blood has not revealed it unto you, but My Father which is in heaven.' The revelation was that Jesus was the Christ, (the anointed, promised one) the Son of the living God.

By the way, in scripture, Jesus is not called God the Son but rather the Son of God. In fact, the expression "son of God" is applied to Christ more than 40 times in the New Testament, but the designation God the Son is nowhere to be discovered.

Don't worry, Christ, of course, was and is the Mighty God, (Isaiah 9:6), God manifest in the flesh (1 Timothy 3:16), the eternal Word made flesh (John 1:14) and the I am (John 8:58). The term, Son of God points, however, to His identity as God in human flesh.

Notice what Jesus said to Peter. He said, you are a Petros, (in the Greek language that means a pebble), and upon this Petra (in the Greek language Petra is a large rock). So, Jesus was saying that upon this large rock He would build His church.

So, what is the rock on which the church is built? It is the revelation that Jesus is the Christ, the anointed, promised one, the God-Man. As the anointed one, He is Prophet, Priest and King. The True Church is built on Jesus, His person, work and offices. He is both God and man, our only saviour and hope.

Scripture does not contradict itself. Listen to what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3:11. "Other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ and in Psalm 18:31 God Himself is identified as the Rock.

Instability and impulsiveness were Peter's great defects. A Church built on him would be no church at all. It would have a very sandy foundation. The true Church, however, is built upon Christ, the Rock of Ages, the God-Man, the Son of the living God.

And that's the Gospel Truth!