

w/b 1st April 2018

Who Do You Say I Am? Matthew 16:13-26

Launch: What is the greatest practical invention that has benefited mankind in your opinion?

Passage: Matthew 16:13-28

Introduction

Jesus, in this passage, waited until He got to Caesarea Phillipi, and then began to ask as to their understanding concerning His teaching so far. Caesarea Phillipi, in the time of Jesus, was a center of idol worship. Close by Caesarea Phillipi was a hill with a deep cavern, which was said to be the birthplace of the god Pan; Panias was the name of the town before the Romans took over. Now it is called Banias. Thompson, in his book "The Land and the Book", describes fourteen temples in the neighborhood devoted to pagan gods. Herod the Great built a great temple of white marble to the godhood of Julius Caesar here at Caesarea Phillipi.

- 1) Considering the level of religiosity that was at Caesarea Phillipi, what kind of discovery was Jesus hoping to find in those that had listened to Him?
- 2) Why was Jesus so concerned about peoples perception, and the disciples, of just who He was?
- 3) Who do you believe Jesus to be? Share with the group the process that led you to this discovery.
- 4) From this passage, what was the thing that led Peter to his personal discovery?
- 5) Do you think it is possible to discover who Jesus really is, apart from the Father revealing it? Why or why not? See John 6:44)
- 6) In verse 18 we have a play on words in the text. In Greek *Peter* is *Petros* and a *rock* is *petra*. Peter's Aramaic name was *Kephas*, which is the Aramaic word for a *rock*. *Petros* was commonly used for a stone, while *Petra* was the word used for an immovable rock. In the light of this and in your opinion, what do you think the phrase "on this rock" means.
- 7) Verse 18 is the first time that the word Church is used. What is meant by the word 'Church?' and what can we learn about it from this verse?
- 8) Verse 21 tells us "from that time on Jesus began to explain" about the cross and where He was headed. Why do you think Jesus waited until that time to talk about the cross?
- 9) Imagine yourself as Peter in the scene from verses 13-26. What thoughts and questions would run through your mind at Jesus' affirmation and rebuke?
- 10) Looking at verse 23, Jesus refers to "things of men." How would you define this phrase in our present day?
- 11) One of the hard things that many Christians go through is a family member or close friend that tries to dissuade us from taking a self-sacrificing lifestyle too far. How have you been urged to chart an easier course in life?
- 12) What does it mean in a practical sense to lose our lives so that we can save it? (verse 25)
- 13) What one area of your life would you like prayer for as a result of this study?

Study taken from groupbiblestudy.com. Small editorial changes made.