"WHO DO YOU SAY JESUS IS?"

Matthew 16:13-20
6/10/2018

INTRODUCTION: Verses 13 - 15

The Question of All Questions:
***Who do you say Jesus is?**

The Scriptures reveal Him to be:

I. The DIVINE MESSIAH (v. 16-17)

II. The CHURCH'S MASTER (v. 18-19)

A. Christ is the FOUNDATION of the Church (v. 18a)
"upon this Rock"

B. Christ is the BUILDER of the Church (v. 18b)
"I will build"

C. Christ is the POSSESSOR of the Church (v. 18c)
"My Church"

D. Christ is the PROTECTOR of the Church (v. 18d)
"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it"

E. Christ is the SOVEREIGN DIRECTOR of the Church (v. 19)
"I will give. . . keys. . ; shall have been bound . . . loosed in heaven"

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V. 13
CAESAREA PHILIPPI
Located 25 miles north of the sea of Galilee at the south western base of Mount Hermon. Augustus Caesar presented the town with the surrounding country to Herod the Great, who built a temple there in honor of the emperor. Herod's son, Philip the Tetrarch, enlarged the town and named it Caesarea Philippi, to distinguish it from the Caesarea on the shores of the Mediterranean.

The city and its architecture all serve as devotion to Pan, the Mythological Ancient Greek god of the shepherds, flocks and forests. The site itself is built into the side of a mountain and much of the original Greek architecture remains. Panias was a violent city where human sacrifices were constantly being made. In the side of the mountain there is a large cave. During rituals the Greeks would offer sacrifices to the gods by dropping human sacrifices into a hole higher up the mountain. If blood came out of the cave at the bottom then the sacrifice had been rejected and another one had to be made. If the water stayed translucent then the gods had accepted the sacrifice.

Today it is called Banyas, this being the Arabic form. From here we have one of the three sources of the Jordan River.

It was in this region, in contrast to the pagan worship of Pan, that Jesus questions His disciples as to His identity. Perhaps as the disciples crossed over into the territory of Herod Philip (*"Philippi")*, they began talking about how this was the tetrarchy of the Roman leader Herod Philip, which naturally led to questions about the importance (or non-importance) of the Caesars and the Herods, and this set the stage for Jesus to be revealed as the *"Christ."*

"The Son of man" - a title showing how Christ humbled Himself in the incarnation in becoming man. A title which also identified Jesus as the Messiah (Dan. 7:13).

"If anyone else asked, 'Whom do men say that I am?' we would think him either mad or arrogant" (Wiersbe, p. 57).

But Jesus, knowing who He really was, quizzed the disciples to see if they recognized His true identity.

V. 14

"They said" - plural; no doubt each of the disciples had input on this questions. It's easy to say what others think. The question that comes up later is *"Who do <u>you</u> say that I am?"* (and only Peter is bold enough to speak up).

"John the Baptist" - Herod Antipas thought this (Mt. 14:2).

No, he could not be John the Baptist, because John prepared the way for Christ and was not worthy even to untie Jesus' shoe.

"Elias" - Elijah, who was to come before the *"Great and dreadful day of the Lord"* (Mal. 4:5)

No, he could not be Elijah, because Elijah (like John did for His first coming) will prepare the way for Jesus' second coming.
Jeremias" - No, He was not Jeremiah, although Jesus (Mt. 23:37) like Jeremiah (Jer. 9:1) wept over the sinful lostness of the nation of Israel.

"Of one of the prophets" - No, Jesus was not a mere man, a mere prophet.

Many today have mistaken notions as to who Jesus is.

--To the Jehovah's Witnesses, He is Michael the Archangel
--To the Mormons, He is the brother of Lucifer
--To the Muslims He was the forerunner of Mohammed
--To the theological liberals, He was a "good man"

"One thing is clear: We can never make a true decision about Jesus Christ by taking a poll of the people" (Wiersbe, p. 57).

People have all kinds of ideas as to who Jesus is!

V. 15

"Who do <u>you</u> say that I am?" -

As far as you are concerned, it doesn't matter what others think of Christ. The question is:
"Who do <u>you</u> say He is?"

Your whole eternity hinges on how you answer that question (Rom. 10:9)

"If ye believe not that I am [He], ye shall die in your sins" (Jn. 8:24)

The eunuch gave the right answer: *"And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the on Son of God."*

The Question of All Questions:
***Who do you say Jesus is?**

The Scriptures reveal Him to be:

I. The DIVINE MESSIAH (v. 16-17)

V. 16

V. 15 - *"Whom say ye"* (plural) - The question was asked to all the disciples, but no one had the conviction to admit that Jesus was the *"Christ"* except Peter (v. 16)

"Thou art the Christ" - the definite article *"the"* points to these facts:

1) There is only one "Christ" (not many - Mt. 24:5)

2) Jesus is the specific One promised in the Old Testament; the word *Christos* when "used without the article has the character of a personal name; without the article, it is a title of the one promised in the Old Testament" (Reinecker, p. 49).

"Christ" - the Messiah, the Anointed One (Is. 61:1; Lk. 4:18; Acts 10:38); the Deliverer

--the One whom the Jews expected to come and deliver them (Zech. 12 - 14)

--the One whom Daniel said would die for the sins of others - Dan. 9:25, 26

From the outset of the disciples following Jesus they recognized Him as the Messiah (Jn. 1:41). Now Jesus for 2 1/2 years has proven it before their eyes and ears. And Peter unashamedly recognizes it.

Jesus is the only One who could and did fulfill the Old Testament promises of Messiah:

Here are some of the O.T. prophecies and their fulfillment in the incarnate person of Jesus Christ:

Prophecy of the Messiah	Prophecy	Fulfillment
Messiah would come at an appointed time	Dan. 9:25-26	Mark 1:15
Messiah would be born in Bethlehem	Micah 5:2	Matt.2:1-6
Messiah would be born of a virgin	Isaiah 7:14	Matt.1:18-25
Messiah would die for the sins of the world	Is.52:13-53:12	Luke 22:37 Acts 8:28-35
Messiah would be hated	Ps.69:4 Is.49:7	Jn.15:24,25
Messiah would be rejected	Psalm 118:22	Mt.21:42
Messiah would be betrayed	Psalm 41:9	Jn.13:18-21
Messiah would be forsaken	Zech.13:7	Mk.14:27
Messiah would be sold	Zech.11:12	Mt.26:15
Messiah would be smitten	Micah 5:1	Mt.27:30
Messiah would be spit upon	Is.50:6	Mk.14:65
Messiah would be nailed	Psalm 22:16	Jn.20:25
Messiah would be forsaken	Psalm 22:1	Mt.27:46
Messiah would be mocked	Psalm 22:7,8	Mt.27:39-44
Messiah would be pierced	Zech.12:10	Jn.19:34,37
Messiah would be raised from the dead	Psalm 16:10	Acts 2:22-27
Messiah would come (again) in judgement	Zech.12-14	Rev.19

"The Son of the living God" - Peter not only confessed Christ's messiahship, but His deity as well!

Just as Jesus' title *"son of man"* (v. 13) identifies Christ as "man", the title *"son of God"* identifies Christ as God! (Jn. 5:18)

V. 17

"Blessed" = extremely fortunate; showered with heavenly, spiritual blessings. (in this case, the blessedness was a spiritual understanding that the Father in Heaven gave to Peter).

"Simon Barjonah" - Simon the Son of Jonah (John). This was Peter's original name before Jesus gave him the name *"Cephas"* which is Aramaic meaning "a stone" (Jn. 1:42).

"Flesh and blood" - no human; no man gave Peter this belief (cp. Gal. 1:16). God the Father opened his spiritual eyes.

Unless God opens one's eyes (Heb. 6:4; 10:32; Eph. 1:18) and heart (Acts 16:14), they will remain blind to spiritual truth.

Hence, the new birth is said not to originate from *"blood nor the will of the flesh"* (Jn 1:13).

"Revealed" - opened up; manifested; uncovered

II. The CHURCH'S MASTER (v. 18-19)

A. Christ is the FOUNDATION of the Church (v. 18a)

"upon this Rock"

V. 18

"Peter (petros). . . rock (petra)" -

Petros = masculine name

Petra = feminine noun

Petros - " a detached stone or boulder (Vine, p. 302), or a stone that might be thrown or easily moved

Petra - "a mass of rock"; bed-rock; a huge foundation (upon which something may be built - Mt. 7:24, 25; 27:51, 60; Mk. 15:46; Lk. 6:48).

Jesus deliberately uses a play on words in the Greek to show that He does not mean (refer to) Peter when He uses the word *"rock"*.

Since the name *"Petros"* means a piece of the rock and not the rock itself, it would make no sense for Jesus to say, *"You are a piece of a rock and upon you I will build My church."*

No one can build anything on a "stone," but you can build on a bedrock!

"This Rock" **- Three Views**

1) **<u>Peter</u>** (Roman Catholic View)

Peter could not be the first Pope for several reasons:

(1) The word pope means "father." Peter would never have violated the command of his Lord Jesus and allowed others to call him "Father." (Mt. 23:9)

(2) Popes received <u>worship</u>; Peter rejected it (Acts 10:26)

(3) Popes cannot be married; Peter was (Mt. 8:14)

(4) Only <u>Peter</u> is said to possess the keys of the kingdom (no successors are ever mentioned) (Mt. 16:19)

(5) The Catholic church was not even in existence till Constantine enforced Christianity as the state religion

(6) Peter warned against ecclesiastical leadership lording it over God's Church (I Pet. 5:3)

(7) Peter never referred to himself as a "pope" but as an *"apostle"* Pet. 1:1) and *"elder"* (I Pet. 5:1) and a *"servant"* of Jesus Christ (II Pet. 1:1).

(8) Peter blundered (cp. Mt. 16:22-23; 26:669-75; Gal. 2:11-14). The RCC says that a Pope never makes a mistake when speaking "ex cathedra," that he is the infallible teacher of doctrine.

The only infallible teacher of truth is the <u>Holy Spirit</u>. It is blasphemous to give such credit to a mere man.

2) Peter's <u>Confession</u>

(i.e. upon this solid testimony that *"You are the Christ the Son of the living God")*

It is true that the boulder of truth that Jesus was the "Christ" was indeed the message the Apostles preached. And it was upon this truth the Church was built.

*Peter on the Day of Pentecost preached *"Christ"* to <u>Jews</u> and the church began (Acts 2:31, 2:38, 3:18).

*Philip preached *"Christ"* to the Samaritans (Acts 8:5).

*Paul preached *"Christ"* to the Jews and Gentiles (Acts 9:20, 22; 17:3; 18:5, 28).

*** **3) Christ**

The words *"thou. . . this"* show that Jesus is pointing (perhaps with His finger).

"You (pointing to Peter) are a piece of a rock, and upon this Rock (pointing to Himself), He says: I will build my Church."

The proof that Christ was referring to Himself when He used the word *"rock"* is because only He (not Peter nor anyone else) is called a *"Rock"* (*petra)* in the Scriptures:

I Cor. 10:4 - *"And did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them; and that Rock was Christ."*

He is the "*<u>rock</u> of offense*" (Rom. 9:33; I Pet. 2:8).

Christ (not Peter) is the foundation upon which the Church is built.

I Cor. 3:11 - *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ"*

I Pet. 2:4, 6 - *"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious. . . Wherefore also it is contained in the Scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded."*

Cp. Isaiah 8:14, 28:16; Psalm 118:22

No one is a "Rock" except *"our God."* **SEE:** Psalm 18:2, 31; 46

Cp. Psalm 28:1, 31:3, 42:9, 661:2, 62:6-7, 71:3, 78:35, 95:1, etc.

If Jesus were saying that He would build His church on (*upon*) Peter, then clearly Peter would have been the greatest one in the kingdom. However, even the disciples did not take this to be the point, or else they would not have disputed among themselves who would be the greatest in the Kingdom (Mt. 20:20-21, 24-28).

B. Christ is the BUILDER of the Church (v. 18b)
"I will build"

"I will build" - the Church is not built by man, but by Christ. We may be His tools, but He is the builder.

"*And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved"* (Acts 2:47)

"I will [future tense] ***build My Church" -*** the Church had not been built yet; but was a work to begin in a future time from when Jesus made this statement.

The Church began at Pentecost (Acts 2), a time which Peter refers to as the *"beginning"* (Acts 11:15).

C. Christ is the <u>POSSESSOR</u> of the Church (v. 18c)
"My Church"

"<u>My</u> Church" - The Church belongs to Jesus Christ

--The Church is called *"the bride, the <u>Lamb's</u> wife"* (Rev. 21:9; cp. Eph. 5)

--The Church is called: *"the church of <u>God</u>"* (Acts 20:28; I Cor. 1:2; 10:32; 11:22; 15:9; II Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:13; I Tim. 3:5)

--The Church is called *"the flock of <u>God</u>"* (I Pet. 5:2)

This church is not "my church" or even "our church"; it is His church.

"***"My <u>church</u>" -*** the church (singular) is a called-out group of believers who will one day assemble in Heaven. Not the local church; but the Church in prospect is what Christ is referring to. The wider spectrum o "the church"; all true regenerate believers, all over the earth from Pentecost till the Rapture.

(this wider, general, greater body of believers is the meaning of the word *eklesia* in the following passages:

Mt. 16:18 - "I will build my Church"
I Cor.12:28 - "God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers..."
I Cor. 15:9 - "I persecuted the Church of God"
Gal. 1:13 - "I persecuted the Church of God"
Eph. 1:22,23 "Gave Him to be head over all things to the Church"
Eph. 3:10 - "Be made known through the Church"
Eph. 3:21 - "Might be glory in the Church"
Eph. 5:23-32 - "...Christ also loved the Church and gave Himself for her..."
Phil. 3:6 - "Concerning zeal, persecuting the Church"
Col. 1:18 - "He is the Head of the Body, the Church..."
Col. 1:24 - "For His body's sake, which is the Church."
Heb. 12:23 "To the general assembly and Churchof the firstborn (ones), which are written in Heaven..."

NOTE: The general (generic) usage of the word "Church" is often described as:
"<u>The</u> Church" (Eph. 3:10, 21)
"The Church <u>of God</u>" (I Cor. 15:9)

D. Christ is the <u>PROTECTOR</u> of the Church (v. 18d)
"The gates of hell shall not prevail against it"

"The <u>gates</u> of Hell" - a reference to where the dignitaries and rulers sat.

"The gates stood for those who held government and administered" (Vine, p. 141).

EX: the "gates" in the Old Testament were places where those in public authority and power sat (Gen. 19:1, 22:17, 24:60; Deut. 21:19, 22:15, 22:24, 25:7; Ruth 4:1, 11; Esther 4:6, 5:13; Ps. 127:5; Prov. 24:7).

The ***"gates of <u>Hell</u>"*** is a reference to the *"principalities...powers...rulers of the darkness of this world... spiritual wickedness in high places"* (Eph. 6:12)

I.e. it is a reference to Satan and his high-ranking powerful spirits.

Satan and his host of demons are not in Hell yet (Mt. 8:29), but are associated with "Hell" because everlasting fire was created for them (Mt. 25:41) and Satan will be trapped there forever one day (Rev. 20:10).

"Shall not prevail against it" - There is no way the hoards of hell can overcome, overpower, have strength against or gain mastery over Christ's regenerate believers!

By Christ's death, He destroyed him who had the power of death (that is, the devil) and He delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. 2:14-15).

"*Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them* (the false prophets)*: because <u>greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world"</u>* (I Jn. 4:4)

"If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8:31)

E. Christ is the <u>SOVEREIGN DIRECTOR</u> of the Church (v. 19)
"<u>I</u> will give. . . keys. . ; shall have been bound . . . loosed in <u>heaven</u>"

"<u>I</u> will give" - Jesus alone has the authority to give such "keys" since He has all authority in Heaven and earth (Mt. 28:18; Rev. 1:18)

"I <u>will</u> give" - future. Jesus gave the keys on the Day of Pentecost.

"Unto thee" - singular (<u>Peter</u> only, not a succession of Popes).

How do Roman Catholic leaders interpret this verse?

Archbishop John F. Whealon says: "This one apostle was made doorkeeper of Heaven. If he opens, we enter. If he closes, we do not enter. His <u>control</u>, then, reaches <u>from earth</u> to Heaven according to this divine promise. . . It makes good sense for us to be friends of Peter if he is our doorkeeper to Heaven." (Columbia, March, 1991, p. 16).

A Roman Catholic once said to a Baptist: "You are in the wrong church; you should belong to the church which has the keys!" The Bible-believing Christian replied, "I don't need the keys. I have the 'Door'!" (Jn. 10:9)

"The keys of the kingdom of Heaven" - the keys to unlock the Gospel of God's kingdom.

The "*keys*" do <u>not</u> suggest that Peter is at the Gates of Heaven and He decides who enters and who does not.

Rather, the keys represent that which unlocks knowledge to people who are spiritually ignorant.

(EX: In Luke 11:52, Jesus said the Pharisees had taken away *"the key of knowledge."* Not only had they failed to enter the kingdom themselves, but they had hindered others from doing so.)

"A key is of great need when a door is locked, but once the door is unlocked, the key loses its importance. . . **After Peter unlocked the mystery of the Gospel to the <u>Jews</u> (Acts 2), <u>Samaritans</u> (Acts 8:14-17) and <u>Gentiles</u> (Acts 110; 11:8-18),** the door was never again locked, so the keys were never again used. After using the keys, Peter himself fades from view (in Acts)" (Vatican Bank, C.E.C., Box 99141, Louisville, KY 40269).

"Shall be bound. . . shall be loosed" - perfect tense, passive voice participles.

Lit. *"shall have been bound (by God). . . shall have been loosed (by God)"*

In other words, Peter was only confirming something that already had been decided in Heaven!

If Peter said that something was "binding" for Christians not to do, it is because God already decided such a prohibition. If Peter said that something could be done (*"loosed"*), it is because God in Heaven already decreed the allowance.

What Jesus is saying is: *"And whatever you bind on earth [forbid to be done], shall have been already bound...in Heaven; and whatever you loose on earth [permit to be done] shall have already been loosed in Heaven."* (Dr. Kenneth S. Wuest, The Expanded Translation; cited by Wiersbe, p. 59)

In order to understand this concept of "binding and loosing" observe how the local church in Matthew 18:18 is given the authority to make decisions regarding church discipline. Such decisions made by the local church would simply be confirmations of what God had already decided in Heaven.

"Jesus did not say that God would obey what they did on earth, but that they should do on earth whatever God had already willed." (Wiersbe, p. 59).

How would Peter know what to "bind" or "loose"? The Word of God which came to him via Christ's teachings while on earth or by direct revelation (Acts 10).

How does a local church make decisions of "binding" and "loosing"? The Word of God, the Bible.

CONCLUSION:

V. 20

The reason for this serious warning is because Jesus did not want the people to make Him King (Jn. 6:15); He had to die on a cross first (Mt. 16:21-28).

PETER

BASIC R.C. BELIEF

Peter went to Rome in 43 A.D., wrote his Epistles from there and was martyred there. His bones were found under the Vatican. This forms the basis for the Pope being is successor to Peter and Head of the Church.

A Roman Catholic in the Shrine Bookstore in Necedah (see 327), Wisconsin told me that one of the proofs he had for the validity of Roman Catholicism is that he saw a faded painting in the catacombs of Naples, and he was told this was an original painting of St. Peter saying Mass (see 184) on his way to Rome, where he ruled as Pope (see 216).

POST VATICAN II

In CATHOLICISM AND FUNDAMENTALISM, page 203, Karl Keating quotes Eusebius Pamphilius as giving the precise date of 42 when the Apostle Peter is sent to Rome. In the previous paragraph (quoted again in THIS ROCK, December 1990), Lactantius was quoted as saying, "When Nero was already reigning Peter came to Rome..." Nero began his reign in 54, so one of the two authoritative ancient writers was at least 12 years off in his calculations. If one history book says Columbus discovered America in 1492, and another says it happened in 1504, at least one of them is wrong.

God never promised to preserve the writings of the Church fathers and historians. The Catholic Encyclopedia (Volume VI, page 136) admits, "Substituting of false documents and tampering with genuine ones was quite a trade in the Middle Ages."

CHRISTIAN COMMENT

Peter was apostle to the Circumcision (Galatians 2:7-8) and the people whom Paul salutes as Christians in Rome (60 A.D.) are all of Gentile name (Romans 16:3-15). At about this same time, Peter wrote his first epistle from Babylon (see 27).

In 52 A.D., 9 years after he was supposed to go to Rome, Peter is in Jerusalem, telling of his experience with the Gentile Cornelius, but not breathing a word about any Gentile ministry in Rome. In Romans 16, Paul greeted 26 Christians in Rome. If Peter were Bishop of Rome, why was he left out? (Romans 16:3-15).

If Peter's being in Rome is so important, why does the scripture point away from any connection of Peter and Rome? Even if there were, there is no scriptural link between Peter in Rome and a Papacy in Rome.

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KEYS OF THE KINGDOM

BASIC R.C. BELIEF

The spiritual jurisdiction of the Church, in virtue of which power sins may be forgiven (see 114), indulgences (see 151) granted and penalties inflicted.

The binding and loosing power (Matthew 16:19; 18:18) is identical to the jurisdiction exercised by the Pope (see 216) as the head of the Church and the priest in the Confessional (see 67).

The "power of the keys" was given to Peter (see 213); the Pope, as successor to Peter, has full power of the keys. All priests participate in this power to a lesser degree.

POST VATICAN II

These same scriptures are cited in Vatican II document Lumen Gentium as basis for the Pope's absolute and the Bishops' relative power over the Church.

CHRISTIAN COMMENT

The Apostles couldn't have understood the above to be the case, as they didn't have any Confessional in the early Church. They proclaimed the

Gospel, which was the power of God to the loosing of the sins for all who believed, and to the binding of the sins of those who rejected (Romans 1:16).

There are two suppositions that must be proved if we are to accept the Roman Catholic position. It must be proved that the keys represented absolute jurisdiction for Peter, and that this jurisdiction passed, by Apostolic Succession (see 21) to other Bishops of Rome. There is no evidence that whatever prerogatives were given to Peter were to be perpetuated in Rome. The Bishop of Rome achieved supremacy because he was in the chief city, and in response to his own ambition. Peter received his ministry directly from the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Peter alone is mentioned as having received keys, there must have been a privilege that was uniquely his. A key is of great need when a door is locked, but once a door is unlocked, the key loses its importance. Peter used the key to open the door to the Church to the Jews (Acts 2) and the Gentiles (Acts 10). The door was never again locked, so the keys were never again used. After using the keys, Peter himself fades from view.

Peter's loss of prominence in the latter part of Acts is God's way of showing that, like all godly men, Peter had a definite ministry, but that he wasn't eternal. As he declined, God raised up others to carry on the task of preaching the Gospel.

Jesus Christ is Giver of ministry gifts in the Church (Ephesians 4:8-13). The office of the Papacy was first bestowed by Imperial decree and is now voted on by men.

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POPE

BASIC R.C. BELIEF

The name given to the Supreme head of the Roman Catholic Church; from papa, father. The pope is often called the Holy Father (Ed-see John 17:11).

Full title: Bishop of Rome, Vicar of Jesus Christ, Successor of the

Prince of the Apostles, Supreme Pontiff of the Universal Church, Patriarch of the West, Primate of Italy, Archbishop and Metropolitan of the Roman Province, Sovereign of the State of the Vatican City, now Gloriously Reigning. For these last 3 words are sometimes substituted "Servant of the Servants of God."

In 533, John II became the first pope to change his name, but the practice did not become general until 1009, when a man named Peter was elected pope and changed his name to Sergius IV. After that it became normal for a pope to take a new name.

From THE ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE POPES-SAINT PETER TO JOHN PAUL II by Michael Walsh, S.J., Chapter I:

"There has been a great debate over (Matthew 16:18) because, was we shall see, this is the crucial text by which the popes attempted to justify their claim to rule over the whole church, and not just over their local community in Rome.

But whatever the interpretation of the facts, the facts themselves are these: in Aramaic, the language Jesus was using, the word `Peter' and the word `rock' are the same: kepha. Until Jesus bestowed it on Simon, kepha was not a personal name, and neither was its Greek equivalent, Petros ... But the name kepha was translated into Greek as Petros. So those who were writing and translating the Gospels and the Acts of the Apostles clearly did not want the significance of the word kepha (meaning rock) to be lost."

Scriptural "proof" for the primacy of the pope is Matthew 16:18-19. In explaining this, Dr. Murray, Maynooth, Ireland, said: "By saying these words, Jesus appointed Peter supreme head of the Church, and gave him full authority to legislate for it; to teach, to inspect and judge; to reject and denounce all false doctrines, and to declare what is the true Faith; to appoint all its clergy and teachers and to arrange their work; in short, the whole church, its officers, its constitution, its work, were entrusted to Peter."

From THE NEW CATHOLIC DICTIONARY, Imprimatur, Cardinal Hayes, New York, page 356: "Fabian, SAINT, POPE (236-250), b. Rome; d. there. A dove descended on his head while he attended the papal election. Considering this a sign from heaven he was elected by acclamation. Little is known of his reign."

From HOW TO FIND THE TRUE CHURCH, page 45, "Peter acted as chief of the apostles, as for instance, at the election of Matthias. . . at the first council, after much discussion Peter gave his opinion to which all

submitted."

From OUR SUNDAY VISITOR, April 18, 1915. "The letters inscribed on the Pope's miter are these: VICARIUS FILII DEI, which is Latin for VICAR OF THE SON OF GOD." (Editor's Note-The numerical value for VICARIUS FILII DEI is 666)

POST VATICAN II

Roman Catholic ecumenists play down fears of papal jurisdiction over Protestants. They are saying that the Pope is a fellow bishop of all bishops in Christendom. Because he comes from the See where Peter and Paul were martyred he has a prominence that he uses to help his fellow bishops.

The Vatican II document LUMEN GENTIUM says, "For the Roman Pontiff, by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ namely, and as pastor of the entire church, has full supreme and universal power over the whole church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered" (Vatican II, edited by Austin Flannery, O.P., page 375).

From INTRODUCING CONTEMPORARY CATHOLICISM by Theo Weston. "Underlying conflict concerning the unfinished and, according to some, one-sided treatment of the papal primacy by Vatican I."

From CURRENT TRENDS IN THEOLOGY by Jesuits Wolf and Schall, page 223, "At the first Vatican Council the Church developed in detail the function of the Pope in the life of the church. But the Council broke up before there was time to balance this announcement of papal prerogatives and papal duties with a definition of the status of the bishops in the church, or to balance the statement on the hierarchy with complimentary statements on the role of the laity in the Church."

During a visit to Des Moines, Iowa (1979), John Paul II was welcomed by a Roman Catholic choir singing, "Joy to the world, the Pope has come" (BAPTIST BULLETIN, DEC. 1979).

(From KEEPERS OF THE KEYS, Wilton Wynn, Random House, New York. 1988, p. 11 - "In the year 236 a farmer named Fabian wandered into Rome and stopped to watch the clergy and people select a pope. A dove landed on Fabian's head, and the assembly instantly acclaimed him pope."

CHRISTIAN COMMENT

In Matthew 16:18, "petra" is used for Rock and means foundation stone; "petros" is used for Peter and means a small stone. See I Peter 2:4-5.

When Jesus first met Peter (John 1:42), He said to him, "Thy name shall be Cephas" (an Aramaic word that Catholic apologists insist can mean rock or stone), but the Holy Spirit defined it by saying "which is by interpretation, a stone (Greek: petros).

If Dr. Murray is correct in his interpretation, why didn't Peter choose Matthias in Acts 1 instead of having to cast lots?

Five witnesses can be summoned to answer the question, "Did you understand that Jesus proclaimed Peter to be the infallible primate in Matthew 16:18-19?" See if these witnesses testify that Peter exerted the two papal prerogatives, primacy and infallibility. (a) Jesus (Matthew 16:23); (b) The Apostles (Luke 22:24; Acts 8:14); (c) James (Acts 15:19); (d) Paul (Galatians 2:11); (e) Peter (I Peter 5:1; II Peter 1:1).

From paper by Hugh Greene, WAS PETER (CEPHAS) THE ROCK?: "The word kepha is derived from two ancient Hebrew (Chaldee-Aramaic) words. The first is keph, meaning a hollow rock. The other is kaphaph, meaning to be bent over, or the hollow palm of one's hand. (Strong's EXHAUSTIVE CONCORDANCE AND DICTIONARY OF THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENTS, Numbers 3710, 3721 in the Hebrew section.)

"Therefore it is obvious that kepha, or Cephas, Peter's new name was never meant to mean or signify a massive, immovable foundation such as a mountain, or BEDROCK. Quite the contrary, Jesus (who used the word kepha in John 1:42) wanted to show the complete difference between Peter and Himself with regards to who He would build His church upon."

Three Catholic publications which enjoyed wide acceptance among pre-Vatican II Roman Catholics were THE FAITH OF MILLIONS by John O'Brien, published by Our Sunday Visitor (designated below as FM); WHAT'S THE TRUTH ABOUT CATHOLICS (WT) by John O'Brien, published by Our Sunday Visitor and THE STORY OF THE POPE (SP), Dell Publications. All three had the official imprimatur of Bishop Noll (O'Brien's books) and Cardinal Spellman. While none is infallible, they are certainly authoritative.

Alex Dunlap, Founder of The Conversion Center, quoted from these three books regarding the number of popes, and about specific names of popes.

Following are his findings:

FM - 261 popes; WT - 262 popes, SP - 258 popes (all through Pius XII)
Pope #5: FM - Evaristus; WT - Anacletus
Pope #137: FM - John XIV; WT - Donus II
Pope #207: FM - Martin V; WT - John XXII, XXIII or XXIV.

Further, Alex cites the removal in 1947 of pope Donus, who had been pope in 973 but was found by the Vatican "never to have existed." This, with the removal of sainthood from popes Felix II, Liberius, Anastasio, Stephen III

and Stephen V constitutes what Alex aptly called "The Confusion of the Popes."

CATHOLIC JOURNALS

The Roman Catholic paper TWIN CIRCLE, July 1, 1979, stated: "It is customary for the pope to speak using the plural form `We' which means `the Holy Spirit and I'.

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