



ONE BODY

sermon series: jan 15-feb 19

Discussion Questions

Read John 10:1-18

1. In this passage, Jesus uses two metaphors to describe Himself. What are they (v 7, 9, 11, 14)?
2. What does the gate provide for the sheep (v 9)?
3. What does it mean that Jesus is the gate?
4. What does the good shepherd do for the sheep (v 11)? How do the sheep respond to the shepherd (v 2-5, 14)?
5. What does it mean that Jesus is the good shepherd?
6. According to this passage, how do we know if we are Jesus' sheep?
7. How about you? Are you committed to the truth that there is only one gate (Jesus) that leads to salvation and abundant life?
8. Are you committed to following the voice of Jesus (God's Word)? What are your hang-ups about it? How can we help you?

Read Matthew 16:13-19

9. What does Jesus mean in verses 17-19?
10. Steve argued on Sunday that Jesus is saying that the church will be built on the apostles' confession and teaching about Jesus (the New Testament). Do you agree with that? Do Ephesians 2:19-20 and Revelation 21:14 help support the idea?
11. If the apostles' teaching in the New Testament determines who is in and who is out in the kingdom of heaven, how does that line up with what Jesus said in John 10?

Read Matthew 18:15-20

12. When you see one of your brothers or sisters in Christ sinning, especially when they sin against you, how do you respond? Do you try to do what Jesus lays out here? Why or why not?
13. How do you feel about the last step of putting them out of the church? Do you struggle with that concept? What is the point of it? (Take a look at 1 Corinthians 5:4-7 for two reasons).
14. Steve argued on Sunday that Matthew 18:18-20 is extending a similar authority to the gathered local church that the apostles were given in chapter 16. Do you agree with that? Did 1 Corinthians 5:4 lend support to the idea?
15. Matthew 28:18-20 states that the church has a mission to go make disciples. Jesus doesn't say go make converts, but disciples. That means we have a responsibility to encourage one another, build one another up, and hold each other accountable to confessing Christ and living according to the Bible. One of the ways we do that is by the process we described in Matthew 18. How else do we do that? (Ephesians 4:15, Colossians 3:16, Hebrew 10:24-25, Titus 2:3-5, etc.). Do you think church membership is helpful in that process?
16. How can you be involved in making disciples in our church this week? How can we help you?

For the leaders:

Matthew 16:13-20 and Matthew 18:15-19 are the only two passages in all four gospels that use the word "church". Both passages also have the common phrase "Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." (In Matt 16, it is you singular, in Matt 18 it's you plural). So there is clearly a connection between the two passages.

In Matt 16:18, Jesus says to Peter, "And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell will not overcome it." In Greek, Peter is *petros* and rock is *petra*. Jesus makes a pun on Peter's name (Simon is his given name, Peter is a nickname). The Roman Catholic church has used this passage to justify their doctrine of the papacy. They understand that Jesus is setting Peter up as the first pope, the one who stands in Jesus' place as head of the church. They believe this authority was passed down to successors after Peter, in the other popes. But they add a lot into what Jesus says that can't be supported by this passage or any other part of the New Testament.

Protestants often react by denying that Peter is the rock on which Jesus will build his church. It has often been said that Peter is a pebble, but Jesus is the boulder and He will build His church on Himself. But this isn't justifiable by the passage either and is too much of a reaction.

The clear understanding is that Peter is the rock, and in some sense, Jesus will build His church on Peter. (Every commentary I have looked at agrees with this). The question is, what does that mean? In one sense, Peter has a foundational role in the early church. He was a key leader in Acts. In another sense, though, it is the proper confession of Christ (talking the talk) that brings about the blessing from Jesus. Remember that Jesus asked the question, "who do you (plural) say that I am?" to the group of twelve disciples (v 15). Peter answered on behalf of the group when he said "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (v 16). I understand Jesus' point to be that the church is built on the teachings of the apostles about Jesus (the New Testament) Ephesians 2:19-20 and Revelation 21:14 support the idea that the church is built on the foundation of the apostles.

Jesus then states that Peter (and I would argue the apostles) have authority to act as gatekeepers of God's kingdom, deciding who is in and who is out. Jesus says in v 19, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." The grammar in the greek reads literally "whatever you bind on earth will have already been bound in heaven..." meaning that the decisions of the apostles are based on God's judgement, and not the other way round.

The interesting thing is that after Jesus says He will build His church on the confession of the apostles, He then immediately commands them not to tell anyone He is the Christ. The reason for this becomes clear in the rest of the chapter. Peter, and the disciples can't stomach the idea that Jesus came to die and rise again. It is only after His resurrection that the disciples are given the great commission to go make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:18-20). Though they were

starting to get the idea of who Jesus was, they didn't fully get it yet (Judas was one of the disciples, after all!)

In Matt 18:18-20, this same authority is given to the gathered local church. It is surely true that the local church needs to be very careful with this responsibility, since we are capable of making errors in our judgement.