

Matthew 16:13-20 (ESV)

Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” Simon Peter replied, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus answered him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Then he strictly charged the disciples to tell no one that he was the Christ.

For Reflection and Prayer:

Was there a word, a phrase, image, or feeling that ‘shimmered’ as you listened? Allow it to land in your heart and repeat it. Savor it.

Reflect on what you heard. What effect has it had on you? What meaning does it hold for you? What does the Holy Spirit seem to be conveying to you? Talk it over in your prayer. Perhaps you want to draw or color your prayer or journal the conversation.

Imagine yourself in this scene. What is happening in you and around you? Engage your senses and allow them to flesh out this story for you.

As the time of prayer comes to a close, share some moments of quiet with Jesus, simply resting safely in his presence.

Matthew 16:13-20 (The Message)

When Jesus arrived in the villages of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “What are people saying about who the Son of Man is?”

They replied, “Some think he is John the Baptizer, some say Elijah, some Jeremiah or one of the other prophets.”

He pressed them, “And how about you? Who do you say I am?”

Simon Peter said, “You’re the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus came back, “God bless you, Simon, son of Jonah! You didn’t get that answer out of books or from teachers. My Father in heaven, God himself, let you in on this secret of who I really am. And now I’m going to tell you who you are, really are. You are Peter, a rock. This is the rock on which I will put together my church, a church so expansive with energy that not even the gates of hell will be able to keep it out.

“And that’s not all. You will have complete and free access to God’s kingdom, keys to open any and every door: no more barriers between heaven and earth, earth and heaven. A yes on earth is yes in heaven. A no on earth is no in heaven.”

He swore the disciples to secrecy. He made them promise they would tell no one that he was the Messiah.