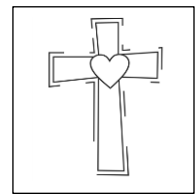


Perley Lutheran Parish  
August 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2020  
Lectionary 21



Welcome and Announcements

- Joint council meeting this past week to discuss re-opening and continued live-streaming of services. Watch your mailbox as details will be mailed out next week regarding what our expectations are and how we will implement them.
- Tragic loss of two of my dear classmates – spent much of my week being in community with the Moorhead Class of 1984 so ask that you keep them in your thoughts as they all try to find peace in the pain.
- M State starts this week so I will be putting in some extra hours there so if you need me don't hesitate to call but know that I might need to call you back.
- We continue to monitor the COVID crisis and watch for implementation of our Re-Opening Plan
- Continue to send in your offerings. Keep in touch – if you need something please reach out and invite friends to watch!

Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, +one God, whose steadfast love is everlasting, whose faithfulness endures from generation, to generation. Amen

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin

Reconciling God,

**We confess that we do not trust your abundance, and we deny your presence in our lives. We place our hope in ourselves and rely on our own efforts. We fail to believe that you provide enough for all. We abuse your good creation for our own benefit. We fear difference and do not welcome others as you have welcomed us. We sin in thought, word, and deed. By your grace, forgive us; and in your Spirit, lead us; so that we may live and serve you in newness in life. Amen**

Beloved of God, by the radical abundance of divine mercy we have peace with God through +Christ Jesus, through whom we have obtained grace upon grace. Our sins are forgiven. Let us live now in hope. For hope does not disappoint, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit.

Prayer of the Day

**O God, with all your faithful followers of every age, we praise you, the rock of our life. Be our strong foundation and form us into the body of your Son, that we may gladly minister to all the world, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

Psalm 138 (Read Responsively)

I give you thanks, O LORD, with my whole heart; before the gods I sing your praise; **I bow down toward your holy temple and give thanks to your name for your steadfast love and your faithfulness; for you have exalted your name and your word above everything.** On the day I called, you answered me, you increased my strength of soul. **All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O LORD, for they have heard the words of your mouth.** They shall sing of the ways of the LORD, for great is the glory of the LORD. **For though the LORD is high, he regards the lowly; but the haughty he perceives from far away.** Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve me against the wrath of my enemies; you stretch out your hand, and your right hand delivers me. **The LORD will fulfill his purpose for me; your steadfast love, O LORD, endures forever. Do not forsake the work of your hands.**

### First Reading Isaiah 51:1-6

Listen to me, you that pursue righteousness, you that seek the LORD. Look to the rock from which you were hewn, and to the quarry from which you were dug. Look to Abraham your father and to Sarah who bore you; for he was but one when I called him, but I blessed him and made him many. For the LORD will comfort Zion; he will comfort all her waste places, and will make her wilderness like Eden, her desert like the garden of the LORD; joy and gladness will be found in her, thanksgiving and the voice of song. Listen to me, my people, and give heed to me, my nation; for a teaching will go out from me, and my justice for a light to the peoples. I will bring near my deliverance swiftly, my salvation has gone out and my arms will rule the peoples; the coastlands wait for me, and for my arm they hope. Lift up your eyes to the heavens, and look at the earth beneath; for the heavens will vanish like smoke, the earth will wear out like a garment, and those who live on it will die like gnats; but my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended.

### Holy Gospel according to Matthew 16:13-20, **Glory to you O Lord**

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, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

The Gospel of our Lord, **Praise to you, O Christ**

### Children's Message

It's back to school time again! Some of you are probably feeling excited. Some of you may be a little sad that summer is over. You may feel nervous or a little scared about going back to school because of all the new things that you will have to face. You will have new teachers, some new friends, and some of you may even be going to a new school.

On the first day of school, the teacher will probably ask some questions to see how much you already know. When the teacher asks a question to which you know the answer, you might wave your hand excitedly in the air and say, "I know! I know!" It is a great feeling when you know the answer, isn't it? It sure helps to take away those "Back to School Jitters."

In our Bible lesson today, the disciples are going "back to school." Can you guess who their teacher is? Right! Jesus is their teacher. Jesus often took his disciples aside to teach them important lessons about the Kingdom of God. This was one of those days. Jesus began his lesson that day by asking his disciples a question.

"Who do men say that I am?" Jesus asked.

I imagine that one of the disciples raised his hand and said, "I know! I know! Some people say that you are John the Baptist."

Then another of the disciples raised his hand and said, "I know! I know! Some people say you are Elijah."

A third disciple raised his hand and said, "Some people say that you are Jeremiah or one of the other prophets."

"Very good," Jesus said, "that is what other people are saying, but who do you say that I am?"

You know, I think that Peter was so excited that he forgot to raise his hand. I think he just called out to Jesus, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Jesus said, "You are right, Peter. You didn't learn that from listening to other people. It was taught to you by my Father in heaven."

The lesson that the disciples learned that day is just as important today as it was then. Many people in our world today still do not know who Jesus is. You and I need to be ready with the answer, "He is the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Dear Father, when people are searching for the answer to the question, "Who is Jesus?" help us to be ready with the answer. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

### **Message**

Grace and peace to you from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen

Our Gospel has us now in the region of Caesarea Philippi (see zaw ree ah fill a pie). The farthest point north of Jerusalem, a region that is under the stronghold of the Romans, and another place of great diversity – but this time the diversity comes in regards to religion. We've got Egyptians, and Greeks, and Romans and Canaanites – all having their places of worship but all within this same region. We also need to put into context the timing of our story – this is taking place just before we find Jesus heading toward Jerusalem and of course his destiny. It is here that Jesus asks the disciples the million dollar question of the day, "Who do you say I am?"

Jesus wants to know what they are hearing – what the people are saying and thinking - so he asks the disciples what they know. Of course, there isn't just one theory out there. We have one theory floating around that Jesus is John the Baptist. Sure, John has already been beheaded – we know the story of the wicked wife who demands that John's head be taken - but there is this belief that John's spirit has moved on to continue God's work in Jesus. Then there are those that think that Jesus is Elijah. We don't talk a lot about Elijah, but it was promised that Elijah WAS going to return when Messiah returned. There are also many similarities between Elijah and Jesus as well. Jesus raises the son of the widow of Nain. Elijah raised the widow of Zarephath. Jesus feeds thousands by multiplying the fish and loaves. Elijah multiplies flour and oil. These parallels have merit to many – he must be Elijah, right? But wait, others remember that God has promised to raise up prophets like Moses so perhaps Jesus is actually the prophet Jeremiah. Jesus know that there are rumors and assumptions and theories going around out there but he wants the disciples to not only tell him what others are thinking – he actually wants them to tell him who THEY think he is too.

"But who do YOU say I am?" he asks them. You know the rumors you guys, but who do YOU believe I am? And there is silence – well except for Peter. Peter answers Jesus saying "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." Peter had been walking beside Jesus now for three years and inspired by the Holy Spirit, Peter has finally understood and now reveals that he know who Jesus really is – the Messiah, the one that Israel has been waiting and waiting for. Peter looked beyond what the public was saying and thinking – their understanding and acceptance with just putting Jesus into that category or label of leaders who had come before. He also looked beyond Jesus just saying he is the Son of Man and actually called him the "Son of the Living God". We hear Peter confessing that Jesus was God's own Son, which of course he was, but now Peter has also called him the Christ, the Messiah. Peter looked at Jesus' coming as the fulfillment of God's promises – he recognized that Jesus was their Savior. As much as I'm sure it would've felt good for Peter to declare and

brag about this understanding of who Jesus was – it wasn't done to change public opinion or prove others as being confused. No, Peter confessed as gift – a gift of God's loving grace.

Jesus answers him "Blessed are you Simon, son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you but my Father in Heaven."

It's important to think about the differences in those who were out there speculating – those that followed general popular opinions, John and Elijah and Jeremiah theories – and the confession of Peter in regards to who Jesus truly was. Along with Peter proclaiming that Jesus – the Messiah – had come, he was committing himself to continue to follow him, to be his disciple. Those that speculated – well they missed out. Their indecision and made up beliefs cost them nothing and really didn't affect their lives much but that sure wasn't going to be the case for Peter. This moment changed Peter's life forever – it cost him everything and changed his life completely.

How about today? We can follow the example and speculate who Jesus might be. We can keep an open mind to possibilities and worship God, sing his praises, listen to sermons, pray, pray and pray all the while hesitating, waiting and watching to see if we really should commit – wanting to keep our options open. Without a confession – a proclamation that Jesus Christ is Lord, and the commitment that comes with being his disciple, there is really no motivation or commitment of our time, of our talents or our treasure to Him – let alone our lives if we don't claim Him.

If we are like Peter – his brothers and sisters in Christ – we too receive the realization that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God – our Lord and our Savior. We also allow ourselves to be open to the ever-changing possibilities in our lives through our confession and our commitment – our sharing of those gifts of talents and treasures. That commitment to love our God, to serve our neighbors and to ultimately experience the abundant life that is ours through and because of Him.

Let's continue on with the last part of our Gospel now. Jesus here's the proclamation by Peter and he names him "I tell you that you are Peter." If you didn't catch it – earlier in this passage his name was Simon and now his name is Peter. There are also times in the scriptures where we will hear him called Simon Peter – all of those names are pertaining to this one person – who Jesus now is calling Peter. The name Peter means stone, a pebble and we hear Jesus going one step further and saying he is a rock. "I will build my church" on you essentially. We know the story – the difference between building on sand or rock. We all know how important it is to build on a firm and solid foundation. Jesus however isn't saying he's going to build the church on Peter – the man. Jesus is however saying that Jesus' church – our church – will be built on the confession of that man. The confession of each of us too. The confession that Christ is the Son of the living God.

But wait, our Gospel ends a bit odd if you ask me. We are hearing all about this amazing confession. Peter proclaiming that Jesus is the Messiah. All have heard the great news and Jesus' call for us to commit and begin the building of the church and yet.... The passage ends with the following "Then he (Jesus) sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah. Hooray – you have finally got it – you understand who I am but don't you tell anybody!!

If you think about it there are probably more than one reason for Jesus to ask them to hold off. First, they haven't even made it to where they NEED to be to fulfill what God has planned. And what about all the crazy and false things that have been going around about who Jesus is and what he's been doing. Jesus wanted them to wait – wait until all people were able to recognize Jesus as the Messiah. The anointed Savior of mankind. They were to remain quiet, even though they finally were recognizing Jesus and their roles, they would wait. And they could do that because they believed in their hearts that Jesus was THEIR rock, their foundation and a solid place to build their lives.

So who do you say that God is? If he is your Lord and Savior then you too can commit your life to him and offer up your gifts – your time, your talents and your treasures too. No one can give you the answer – only you can answer the question of who you say that God is. Only you can chose to skip the crowds and the distractions who are telling you to do this and believe that. Only you can confess that you have accepted Jesus as the Lord and Savior and only you can be blessed and exulted as a Child of God and receiver of a life everlasting. Only you can say you know our God! Amen.

Hymn of the Day: My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less

My hope is built on nothing less than Jesus' blood and righteousness:

No merit of my own I claim, but wholly lean on Jesus' name.

On Christ, the solid rock I stand, All other ground is sinking sand, All other ground is sinking sand.

When he shall come with trumpet sound, O may I then in him be found,

Clothed in his righteousness alone, Redeemed to stand before the throne!

On Christ, the solid rock I stand, All other ground is sinking sand, All other ground is sinking sand.

Apostles Creed

***I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.***

***I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian/catholic Church, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and the life everlasting. Amen***

Prayers of the people (Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**)

Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

Lord our rock, you are our foundation in Jesus Christ, your Son, whom we confess as the Living God. Prepare your church for its mission in bearing witness to Christ, both here at home and through the world. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

You call forth praises from the far reaches of the universe to the smallest of creatures. Join our songs to theirs that a spirit of praise and thanksgiving will arouse us to cherish this wondrous home you have given to us.

Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

All the kings of the earth shall praise you, O Lord. Direct the leaders of countries, legislators and magistrates, mayors and councils, to walk in your ways. Help leaders regard those in need with mercy and fulfill your loving purposes in the governance of peoples. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

Though we walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve us, deliver us, and fulfill your purpose for us. According to your steadfast love, grant healing and wholeness to those who are mourning – I raise up the families of my two classmates who were killed this week Lord and ask that you keep your presence known as they deal with this tremendous loss, We ask that you continue to send healing to those dealing with illness and recovery. We lift up those within our congregation and those that have reached out to us for prayers, like Alana and Jeff, like Kirk and Brent, like Amanda and Derick and all of those that we now name in our own hearts. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer**

In you, steadfast love and faithfulness meet, and righteousness and peace live together. Protecting God, we have created divisions you will not own. In places of conflict – be it from safe practices because of COVID or from racial disparity. God of mercy, your grace is poured out for all. Inspire authorities, politicians and all of us to act with compassion. Teach us to overcome fear with hope, meet hate with love, and welcome one another as we would welcome you. Lord in your mercy. **Hear our prayer.**

In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from you, we offer these prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### Words of Institution

##### Lord's Prayer

Our father who art in heaven hallowed be Thy name

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven

Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen

#### Meal

##### Blessing

Neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus.

God, the creator, +Jesus the Christ, and the Holy Spirit, the comforter, bless you and keep you in eternal love. Amen

##### Sending Hymn: Blest Are They

Blest are they who show mercy; mercy shall be theirs.

Blest are they, the pure of heart they shall see God!

Rejoice and be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you.

Rejoice and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!

Blest are they who seek peace; they are the children of God.

Blest are they who suffer in faith; the glory of God is theirs.

Rejoice and be glad! Blessed are you, holy are you.

Rejoice and be glad! Yours is the kingdom of God!

##### Dismissal

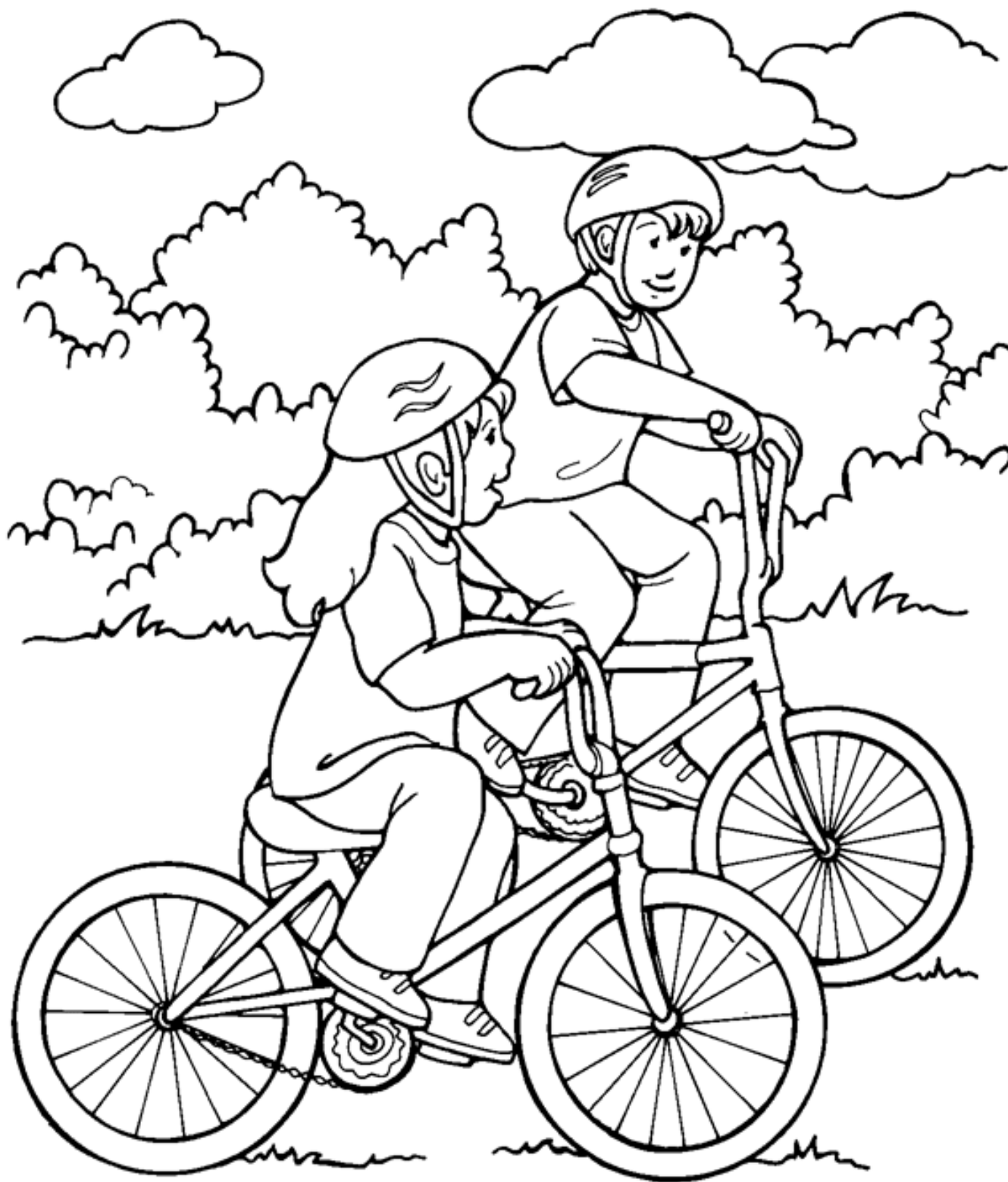
Go in peace. Christ is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

#### Mark Your Calendars:

Sunday – August 30<sup>th</sup> - Outdoor Worship at Nora – 9AM. Please bring a chair

Sunday – September 6<sup>th</sup> – Outdoor Worship at Nora – 9 AM. Please bring a chair

## Can Tell My Friends About Jesus

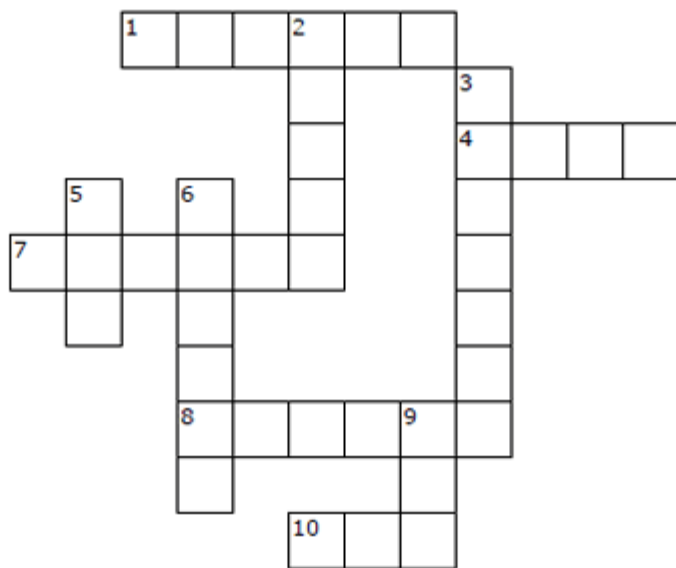




# Peter's Confession of Christ

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Matthew 16:15 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 16:13-20 (NIV)



## ACROSS

1. Persons; men, women, and children; human beings
4. A large stone that sticks up out of the ground or the sea
7. A male parent
8. The Messiah, as foretold by the prophets
10. An adult male human being

## DOWN

2. The name that Jesus called Simon
3. A persons who speaks for God
5. To speak
6. The whole body of believers in Christ
9. A male child in relation to his parents

PETER	FATHER	PEOPLE	SON	CHRIST
PROPHET	ROCK	MAN	CHURCH	SAY



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Based on Matthew 16:13-20 (NIV)



I W H Q O X N F C T Z V D L M  
P V V P O E U A Z F U I B O M  
E R Y G V M S T S P S Y D R N  
O X O A R J R H B M E G O O M  
P P E P G E D E L G N T S C S  
L H I I H E L R B I S P E K E  
E K F R S E Y I K A V U V R U  
U T E S W I T J J O P I M O W  
M H E Y O E Q S E A A T N P I  
T L C T S A J I Z R H J I G M  
B A H Y P R P J S I E K O S L  
X P R J N T F E J A D M A H T  
I L I B U H D J L A J P I X N  
J J S Y L A J G A T E S T A T  
G L T E H U I S A C H U R C H

CHRIST  
BLESSED  
LIVING  
JOHN

EARTH  
KINGDOM  
ROCK  
HEAVEN

SON  
CHURCH  
FATHER  
PETER

PROPHETS  
GATES  
HADES  
KEYS

PEOPLE  
BAPTIST  
ELIJAH  
JEREMIAH

# Peter's Confession of Christ

"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"

Matthew 16:15 (NIV)

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.



1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
B	Q	S	T	R	N	P	M	W	Y	L	Z	C	D	H	G	K	E	O	J	F	V	U	I	X	A

- 7-5-19-7-15-18-4-3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 15-18-26-22-18-6 \_\_\_\_\_
- 17-18-10-3 \_\_\_\_\_
- 5-19-13-17 \_\_\_\_\_
- 17-24-6-16-14-19-8 \_\_\_\_\_
- 11-24-22-24-6-16 \_\_\_\_\_
- 13-15-5-24-3-4 \_\_\_\_\_
- 13-15-23-5-13-15 \_\_\_\_\_
- 7-18-19-7-11-18 \_\_\_\_\_
- 1-11-18-3-3-18-14 \_\_\_\_\_

ROCK	BLESSED	LIVING	HEAVEN	KINGDOM
PROPHETS	CHURCH	PEOPLE	CHRIST	KEYS