

Visions and Revelations:
Message 18 — The Apostle Peter (6, Part 3)

After hearing and considering the word that was spoken, a group of brothers and sisters were inspired by some of the verses that were shared. We felt that it was helpful to reconsider these verses again to dig deeper into the burden of the message and to discover how rich it could be to us. We compiled these verses into six sections, one for each day of the week until the next message, in hopes that many other saints could spend a bit of time every day to reconsider the burden of our brother in a new light. If anyone considers some of these verses or questions and feels enriched by them, we ask you to please leave a comment on the Church in Cleveland site under the message to share your thoughts! Thanks! Grace and peace be to all the saints!

Note: These six sections are not comprehensive of the content of the message! This is just designed to be a help to get into a portion throughout the days.

DAY 1

2 Corinthians 11:30, 12:9

If I must boast, I will boast in the things which concern my infirmity...And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.

Video timestamp: 6:00 - 8:27

With the door opened, God is no longer merely *with* man, but He is also *in* man. There is no more distance between God and man. One of the things that results from this is that "this all-possessing, all-sufficient, and all-abundant God has become the bountiful supply to be united with the saved ones."

What does it mean that we, the saved ones, are united with God? It means that everything of Him belongs to us. Even though we may be terrible, we are not poor, because we possess His overcoming life within us. And this does not mean that we overcome all the time, no. We still experience defeat in our daily walk—sometimes small defeats that cause us to stumble, other times devastating ones that seem to knock us over. But the preciousness of being a Christian is not that we overcome all the time. Instead, it is that we are *defeated* all the time, yet we always have the ability to stand back up, to come back, to walk with Christ. When we give a testimony of our Christian life, it's possible we would have to speak of our failures every month, every week, every day. Yet we're still here, speaking of our walk with our Lord Jesus Christ. We can continue because of His all-possessing, all-sufficient, and all-abundant life supply overcoming within us.

Thank You, Lord, for Your overcoming life. Thank You for Your grace that is all sufficient and for Your strength made perfect in our weaknesses. Thank You for an open door, that we can be united with You.

DAY 2

Ephesians 2:5

Even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)

Acts 16:25-31

But at midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them. Suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken; and immediately all the doors were opened and everyone's chains were loosed.

And the keeper of the prison, awaking from sleep and seeing the prison doors open, supposing the prisoners had fled, drew his sword and was about to kill himself. But Paul called with a loud voice, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." Then he called for a light, ran in, and fell down trembling before Paul and Silas. And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Video timestamp: 8:50 - 14:49

The Lord Jesus died for our sins, was resurrected, ascended into heaven, and opened the door of salvation to all who will believe. Today, the Lord would still like to open many doors through us by the Spirit. The same Spirit that enabled the early believers to preach the gospel with such vitality and creativity is the same Spirit that desires to work in us today!

Sometimes we may think the Gospel is just talking to random strangers or our friends about Jesus using the bible or a gospel tract. However, the Gospel can be much much more! Using social media, a text or phone call to a friend can open the door for the gospel to come out. A well designed website, a YouTube video, taking a walk to meet your neighbors, can all be avenues from which the gospel can go forth! Hosting a BBQ at your home, meeting a friend or stranger at the coffee shop can all open doors for the gospel. In the book of Acts the Apostle Paul used Greek culture and religion in Athens to share the Gospel and while he was before the Jews, he cited Old Testament prophecies. Paul could even boldly declare, "I have become all things to all men in order that I might save some." Brothers and sisters, the way, the method should come easily, being creative should be very natural, because the Spirit within us yearns for the gospel to outflow from us! May we take a few minutes this week to be before the Lord and consider those on our hearts who do not yet know the Lord.

DAY 3

Matthew 16:19

I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you bind on earth shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall have been loosed in heaven."

Matthew 12:29

Or how can one enter a strong man's house and plunder his goods, unless he first binds the strong man? And then he will plunder his house.

2 Corinthians 4:7

But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, so that the surpassing greatness of the power will be of God and not from ourselves;

2 Tim 2:20-21

Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor. Therefore, if anyone cleanses himself from these things, he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work

Video timestamp: 17:17 - 21:43

The door of heaven is already open, so people can be saved and God can be with man. Yet, the Lord talks not just about the keys of the kingdom but also this matter of binding and loosing. The Lord was the first to bind and loose. Through His work on the cross, the Lord has bound the strong man Satan, plundering his house, vessels which used to be the Lord's. As a Christian, you are a vessel. For what? A vessel to contain Christ. Yet, we were vessels in Satan's household, and while we were there, our vessels are filled with so many things other than Christ. Whether degrees, finances, riches, wealth, a good life, a proper life, or a life that is very fallen, whatever it is, if your vessel is full, it leaves no room for Christ. When the Lord died for you, and you received Him as your Savior, you are cleansed! He brings us out of the household of Satan. Now we can be filled with Christ instead! Yet, because we were so saturated, now we must be emptied of all the worldly things so that there is more room in our vessel for Christ.

Consider, is there room in your vessel for more of Christ, or are you already "full" with other things? What things or habits in your life may be filling your vessel with things other than Christ? Consider how you interact with your phone, or the news, or your work. Pray that the Lord would empty us of those things that leave no room for Him, and deliver us from the sources of such filling. May He bind the enemy and loosen us to be free to gain Him and contain Him!

DAY 4

Ephesians 4:8

*Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, **He led captivity captive**, And gave gifts to men."*

Video timestamp: 21:43 - 26:10

When Christ ascended into heaven, He "led captivity captive." This means that we, who were once in the captivity of the world, are now captives of the Lord! We are no longer under the power of Satan, but we belong to the living God. Even though Christ has already captured us for Himself when He ascended, we're often hesitant to tell the Lord that we are His captives. We tend to be attracted by the things of the world and slowly crawl back into Satan's Kingdom. It may be the attractiveness of a well paying job or the ideal of living the perfect life. We lose sight of what God has revealed to us and how He desires for us to live a life pleasing to Him. We are a vessel made to contain Christ! So I pray we can tell the Lord, "Lord, I am willing to be your captive! I belong to you!" Consider your life and who you are captive to. Are you a captive to this world we live in? Or are you captive to the Lord our Savior!

DAY 5

Ephesians 4:8

*Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, And gave **gifts to men.**"*

Ephesians 4:11-12

And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

Video timestamp: 26:10 - 30:34

When we tell the Lord, “I am your captive,” the result is that he makes us into a gift. We become a person so valuable to the church as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, and much more. Don’t think these gifts come about from our abilities, but rather, how captive are we to the Lord? When we have this “I belong to the Lord” mentality, we become such a blessing to the church. Everything we do is with Christ and the church in view. How we spend our time is with Christ and the church in view. Our entire lives become centered on Christ and His church. Why are there apostles? Why does the prophet prophesy? Why do evangelists preach the gospel? Why do shepherds and teachers shepherd and teach? For the building up of the church. We become gifts that the Lord uses to build up His body here on earth. Let us ask ourselves these questions: Do I have the mentality that I am a captive of Christ? Am I a gift to the church for it’s building up? How is God using me to accomplish His will? How *can* God use me to accomplish His will? It all starts with the realization that we are vessels of Christ and that we belong to Christ and Christ alone.

DAY 6

Matthew 16:16–19

Simon Peter answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” And Jesus said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And 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.

WOW, we’ve gone through a lot! Reflect on all the different phrases we have touched on in this passage (this is not comprehensive!):

You are the Christ, the Son of the living God: This was a revelation from God the Father. Peter had heard and seen many things of Christ but, in this moment with revelation, all those things were made alive in him.

Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you: There can be revelations that are attractive and “right” but hold no value. A revelation that is valuable is one from God the Father

My Father who is in heaven: The Father’s revelation to Peter was Christ. The Father’s revelation is Christ and Christ alone.

I also say to you: This indicates that besides the revelation given by the Father, there must also be the revelation given by Christ.

You are Peter: This rock (Peter, petros) matches the foundational rock (Christ, petra) on which the church is built. We also are being changed from a common stone (lithos) to a specific stone that has value (Petros).

I will: This indicates that the Lord Jesus Christ is not only the one who created, who upholds, and who is appointed heir (Heb. 1:2-3), but also the one who operates everything in God's work. Furthermore, this "I will" is unconditional, meaning that He will accomplish His building no matter what.

Build: Though it seems like God is doing a lot of different things, He is in fact after only one thing. He is building His church.

My church: Christ desires to obtain "stones" like the "rock" to build His church; this builded Church completely belongs to Him and not to any particular "stone."

The gates of Hades: Hades is the place Satan rules. There are many gates, continually sending out all kinds of things from Hades and taking captives into the power of Hades.

Shall not prevail against it: As the Lord continues to build in us and among us, a builded church is produced that cannot be overcome by the gates of Hades.

I will: The Lord Himself is the One who desired to open the door and provide the keys

Give you the keys: By the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, Peter, being united with the Lord, became the one who held the keys to the door. He opened the Overall door. When Paul arrived at Troas to preach the gospel, he said that "a door was opened to me by the Lord." Today, we can have many open doors.

Of the kingdom of heaven: The kingdom of heaven is the realm of God's government in the vitality of His life. Christ is the firstborn and prototype of the reality of the kingdom of heaven. Through Him, the heavens rule. The reality of the kingdom of heaven is where Christ's life rules. The reality of the kingdom of heaven is the church today.

And whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven: Through the work of the cross, the Lord has bound the strong man (Satan), plundering his house—vessels which used to be the Lord's. Those He leads as captives are given to the church as gifts. This "binding and loosing" is also given to the church.