

Visions and Revelations

Message 16: The Apostle Peter (6, Part One)

Note: This is a lightly edited transcript meant to aid saints in personal and small group fellowship and pursuing.

Dear brothers, in these many recent weeks, we have been climbing up a high mountain together. Some of you may feel these messages are too profound, too deep. My answer is: it is very profound, it is very hard. But it's necessary because anyone who desires to follow the Lord must understand the Father's revelation: Christ. Then understand Christ's revelation: Peter is a rock, and also Christ, another rock, is the eternal rock. Eventually, out of the death of Christ, the rock becomes a spiritual rock. With this rock, the Lord declared, "I will build my church. You are Peter, and upon this rock (upon the revelation of seeing Me as Christ), I will build My church." So you got all these very hard terms, and now we come to the last part, the hardest part: the kingdom of heaven.

Before I speak, let me tell you, I am a little bit scared. It's hard. You are remote, you are tired, and you've been locked in your room for so many days, so psychologically you feel frustrated. More than that, you are not able to be together with the brothers to enjoy love feasts, to enjoy sweet fellowship, to enjoy prayer, or to enjoy companionship. Everything is seemingly robbed away from us. And I don't know what to say about our government. It looks like the virus will be in United States even longer now. My advice to you brothers is to take it from the Lord. Maybe we need the Lord to confine us a little bit, so that we can have more time before Christ to read the bible more, sing hymns more, have more personal time before the Lord. Through Zoom, or the phone, we can have more fellowship with the saints. Maybe the Lord can teach us another lesson. However, let me tell you the good news. The good news is we have a couple of weeks on this matter of the kingdom and once it is over, everything will be relaxed. You'll come to salvation and you'll come to how Christ Himself appears and gives you the commitment, with the apostles Paul and John. Especially with the apostle Paul, things will become relatively simple.

So brothers, be patient. Try your best to take in what we are covering in these couple of meetings, the kingdom of heaven. If you consider the verse, Christ's declaration was, "I also say unto you, that you are Peter and on this rock I will build my church." Think about it. On this rock, I will build my church. Then he said, "The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it." We feel that's good enough, but more than that, he said "I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven." Another thing came in called the kingdom of heaven. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever you bind on earth, will be bound in heaven. Whatever you loose in earth will be loosed in heaven." I tell you, it was a simple declaration by Christ, but it was so profound. There is so much content here. This becomes a core of your entire Christian life. Remember, in your Christian life, you should be like a Peter. Maybe I'm not as great as the apostle Peter, but I would like to become a little rock and through revelations be built upon Christ, the spiritual rock.

Then more than that, I will overcome the power of Hades. And even more than that, I will join in with Peter to somewhat have the key of the gospel. If the Lord will send me to Europe, the key should open the gospel in Europe. If the Lord sends me to Inner Mongolia, I will have the key and preach the gospel in Inner Mongolia. I tell you, all of a sudden, you realize, "Wow! My Christian life is surprisingly romantic!" Who am I? A common American, a common Canadian, a common English speaking white or black man. But brother, do you realize that the Lord can tell you, "You are not the apostle Peter, but how I desire to transform you into a useful piece of rock. How I desire to use you as building materials. How I desire that through the building, that there's a victory declared in the local churches that the gates of Hades cannot overcome this builded church." Eventually, many may say we are not Peter, we are way behind Peter, but we can have the keys. None of us who love the Lord, who are with Christ, can ever do what the apostle Peter did, but we can all have part of his operation. If he preached the gospel to the Jews, we can too. If he preached the gospel to Gentiles, we can too. If he opened the door for all the Jews and all the Gentiles overall, then we have the ability to open the door of our neighbors, of our school mates, of our colleagues, of our relatives, of another city, of another country, and of another language. We too can follow the footsteps of Peter.

So now, let's come to the basic outline. It says that point one, *Christ desires to gain the built-up church*. He wants the church to be built up, which is built on the spiritual rock. The spiritual rock means it always delivers and supplies something spiritual. Like what? Like the water of life. So how can you and I be built together? Brothers, you may be young and Caucasian or black. I am old and I'm yellow. However, do you know something very surprising? When you say "I love Jesus" and then I tell you "I love Jesus too," something happens. We are related. There's a life relationship between us that happens. For some reason we feel, oh we are so close, so near. We ARE for the same goal and the same purpose: that the church would be built up. When the church is built up, then the power, the gates of Hades, shall not prevail against it. When the church is built up, Satan can do very little.

Let me read this to you. Letter A, what is Hades? *Hades is the place Satan rules*. It's wherever Satan has his rule, sometimes even in a very manifested way. If you go to a casino or you go to a bar, you can clearly see Satan is ruling over this place. But sometimes you can go to a very decent place, and you would be surprised. Satan can use a very decent place to gain people away, to rob people away from Christ, and to bring them into the power of Satan, meaning a system of the world.

So here, Hades is a place where Satan rules, and there are many gates. You see Jerusalem had 12 gates, praise the Lord for that. A lot of gates. I think Hades has more gates, with authorities, with power. You say "How can you say 'more gates?'" Well, a gate of university, a gate of government, a gate of success in business, a gate of being specialized in something, the gate of I am a good dancer. I don't mean fake dancing, fallen dancing, I mean maybe ballet, maybe Swan Lake. Let me ask you, when Swan Lake was performed, we all were really impressed and appreciated it. I don't say it's right or wrong, but let me ask you, how many of them will be robbed away from Christ? Here's a piano. What's wrong with a piano? Nothing's wrong with a piano. But do you know how many people should be of Christ, should belong to Christ, should

be one with Christ, should live a life for the testimony of Christ, and are now totally captured by the keys of that piano? It could be very beautiful, and we could be sitting there enjoying it. And we may not even have a feeling! Oh, such a talent. I can say this, sometimes I meet a famous novelist. I meet the writer and I just had a feeling, if such a man could be for Christ, how valuable he could be. Now, he's just a novelist. Well brother, many gates. You can't believe it. With carpentry, there's a gate. With welding there's a gate. With those who live a common life, there is a gate. With those who specialize in anything, I'm an artist, I'm a painter, I'm a musician, I'm a novelist, I win noble prizes in physics, I win Nobel prizes in whatever. Brothers, do you realize eventually most of them apart from Christ? Satan has gained them.

So here, I write in this way, *there are many gates, continually sending out all kinds of things from Hades and taking captives into the power of Hades*. In the beginning, I just love music. Eventually, I'm possessed by music. Eventually I live in music, unto music, for music, with music, I'm attached to music, so I call myself a musician. Is there a musician who can be godly? Yes. But for most, for some reason, they were captured and taken into something not healthy.

So here, I give you, *it is hard for saints to overcome the temptation from Hades, unless they are in the built up church*. Why? Firstly, the temptation of various things. Some are very good, some are very bad, some are very noble, such as what? I'm working on my PhD. As I serve the Lord, I have contacted so many young people. I have met so many brothers who tell me, "I'm working on my PhD in a certain university, I'm specialized in something." Usually I don't know what that means, but "I'm specialized in something, I'm doing research, developing in something."

Brother, that's very noble right? What's wrong with getting a PhD? What's wrong with getting a master or bachelor degree? What's wrong with going through college or going through professional school? There's nothing wrong. This is noble! But for some reason, when some go to study for a PhD, they're for Christ. Others go to study for a PhD, they're for PhD. They're very different. I'm working on my degree, but I'm of Christ. I'm working on my degree. I'm for my degree, they're very different. One belongs to the Lord, one belongs to the realm of Hades. Or consider non-profit organizations for the benefit of fellow mankind. I'm working for something in welfare.

Or they can be common, ordinary jobs. Some are special, but most of them are very common. I just get a job, I'm a mechanic, I'm an engineer. Offering a sufficient, but common human life. Most are content having one or two or two or three items. I can be very common.

Meanwhile, some can be very fallen. Such as materials or fleshly vices. You know, fleshly vices mean, when I get into it, I'm addicted to it. Fleshly means what? I have my couch, I have my house, I have my car, I have my nice living. Right? But for some reason, when we consider it altogether, it's called the realm of Hades. They can take you, they can swallow you. You can say, "I'm satisfied, all I want is to live this kind of life to raise my kids." Marvelous, there's nothing wrong with it. But without Christ you got into the realm of Hades.

So point C, *no matter how much saints love the Lord. It is easy for them to be swallowed by the power of darkness into the gates of Hades if they fail to see the church and the necessity of the building up*. If I don't see the church, I don't care about the building up. Then, for some reason,

it's easy for me to get caught. I say this in a very nice way. Look I'm smiling right? I'm not upset, I'm including myself. You're locked at your house. One week, two weeks, three weeks, so finally you're released. You're able to work, but what's the distance you should keep and how careful you should become. Especially if your household has somebody who is older. You're even more careful. You know brother? What's happened? Within you, there's a longing. I like to go to the mountain. I like to go to the beach. I like to visit the south. I like to go to another city.

One brother even asked me. He's a dear brother. "Titus, with your disposition, you have been bound in Cleveland for so many months. Are you still able to handle it? I told him, 'If I'm not careful, Hades can come and swallow me. I must learn to be more in Christ.'" Through what? Through the church life. I tell you. What does the church life give to me? No matter how limited we are, I have brothers to fellowship, I have brothers to pray with. I have brothers to consider whatever the decision I need to make. I have brothers who support me. I have brothers who protect me. I have brothers who stand with me. For some reason, I realize Satan can do very little.

Imagine I have a job. I don't, I'm 85, nobody offers me a job. I want to try some place to see if I can get a job, which I believe they will say, "sorry you're too old." Brothers, when you are young and someone tells you, "I offer a job in Arizona, in Utah, in Montana, in Hawaii." You know quickly you can say, "I'm happy, I'm in the church life. Praise the Lord, I can go there, I will still have something." No for some reason you go to a place by yourself, isolated, pushed by the job, pushed by the job you just took. In only a few months you find out, your protection is gone, your Christ is gone, your trust is gone, your joyfulness in the church life is gone. Why? Because you ignore being builded up in the church life.

This is why the Lord says, "I will build up my church upon this rock." Means they will always enjoy my life supply. They will always have revelation from Father to see me and from me to see the church. Therefore, what? There's protection. It's hard for anyone to take me away. Brother, how do you overcome the unnecessary things? How do you overcome? They are there all the time trying to grab you. Trying to take you. Maybe you are at home too long. You say well, I'll watch a movie. Then you find out, after you watch one movie, two movies, three movies, you find out your whole person can be occupied by movies. Maybe I'm at home, there's nothing to do. I learn a trade, a music instrument, then you find out you get occupied. Brother, you need to be builded up. Even at home, even with this time, with everything being hard. Please call brothers, fellowship with brothers, pray with brothers, read the bible with brothers, memorize verses with brothers together. In these you enjoy what is "build up the church."

Then, when the gates of Hades cannot overcome the builded up church, then the Lord says something even more. There's a kingdom of the heavens. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of the heavens. Now we come to another hard topic. The kingdom of the heavens. You know, everytime a brother talks about "the kingdom, the kingdom!" we have a little frustration. What does that mean? Well, kingdom means king-domain right? Who's the king? God is the king. Lord Jesus Christ is the king. The resurrected Savior is the king. When the resurrected Christ has dominion. When God has dominion, then we can say, "This is the kingdom."

The kingdom of heaven means God is dominating. He has full control in the heavens and He likes to bring the heavenly kingdom down to the earth. The kingdom of heaven is a realm of God's government in the vitality of His life. You consider, you can have a good king if the king is vital. All the time, He thinks, we need this project, we need that project, we need to do this for people, we need to do that for people. The whole kingdom is filled with vitality. If you have a king who sleeps all the time, you can say the whole kingdom will settle. There's always peace! Nothing happens. Christ is the king, Christ resurrected now is the king. God, the triune God is the king. With Him, what does it mark? It marks something vital. He would say, the kingdom of heaven, the realm of government, is in the vitality of His life. John says, "In the beginning was the Word." The Word means operating! It means something's moving, something's exercising, something refuses to be common, something always desires to accomplish the eternal desire of God Himself. He is always in action, active, with vitality to accomplish what He wants.

Now, this realm of God's government is called a kingdom, meaning a king's domain. You can say, "I see a picture of a realm. In this realm, there is all the vitality. What moves is the vitality of life, the vitality of love, the vitality of power, the vitality of strength, the vitality of righteousness." All the divine attributes, when composed together, become the totality of the vitality of this very God. He desires to do a lot so that He can have a whole domain.

Now, you ask, who is this God? It's very interesting: one great servant, Moses, asked God, "Can You tell me Your name? What is Your name?" God did not answer with His name, but His existence. He said, "You want to know that? I am who I am. I am that I am." None of us would dare to say, "I am," because tomorrow comes and today becomes "I was." Even now, one minute ago, that "me" has become "was." I am 85. I hope so much that I could be 70, or even 60, so that I can be energetic, fully burdened, and not feel tired. I could exercise. But that is "I was," not "I am." Well, today I say, "Oh, I'm 85, I'm old and I'm tired." I tell myself, "Don't say too much. 5 years from now you may be even worse. 10 years later, you may be much worse. 20 years from now, who knows where I might be?" But, remember, there is One in this universe to whom there is not summer or winter. To Him, there is nothing called "this year" or "next year." He said, "I am who I am. Do you want to know who I am? Do you want to know My name? It is hard to give you My name, but let Me tell you who I am: I am who I am." What does this mean? That He is the self-existing and ever-existing triune God. Who is our God? Who is this king of the domain? He would say, "The 'domainer' (the one who domains) is self-existing and ever-existing." We have a hymn which says, "Yesterday, today, to eternity, Jesus is the same. All may change but Jesus never." It's a beautiful hymn, but still, if you go deeper, it is not just that he never changes, but even His existence is self-existent. Nobody created Him; He's just there. You might say, "How could that be?" That's why He's God and why you are a man. He's God. That's why He's self-existing and ever-existing. He is self-existing all the way. He's the same-existing. Self-existing, ever-existing triune God Himself.

So you talk about His being. What kind of person is this? He is omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent. This means He's always there, He knows everything, and He's always with His

power. *Always*. Do you realize that there is such a God who rules the universe? You ask Him, “Who are You?” He says, “I am who I am,” or, “I am that I am. I am always here. I know everything here. I always have power over everything here.” What a glorious, marvelous God. He has the power of creation. “Let Me tell you: not only am I eternal—I am able to create. I created the universe. I created the earth. I created the creatures on the earth. I created man. I have the power of creation. I am all-possessive, all-sufficient, and all-abundant.”

Furthermore, His existence is full of energy. His being has omnipresence, He has the power of creation such that He supplies whatever you need, but more than that, you can say, “God, How do I know You are there?” He replies, “You want to know? Let Me tell you: My existence is just power—the existence of power, the existence of vitality, existence of energy, full of vitality, and full of creativity.” Brothers, let me say a word to you: do you know why you are so bored in the church life? Because you are short of creativity. You might say, “The church is my church. I am 40 or 50 years old, I’ve been in the church life for many years, and I’ve heard all these messages—” Brother, none of them count! Forget about it! Use them as capital for you to have creativity. Then you are one with God. God is full of creativity. Nothing to Him is routine; Everything is fresh; Everything produces new hope.

His existence is also full of execution in the power of His wisdom. He is so wise, yet He knows how to execute it. You know, we have an idea for creation: I want to have a university. But we have no power! I don’t know how to do it. I know that we should have a university. I really mean that. I wish that everybody could be in a Bible class. Let me tell you, since we brothers are common and have become even more common, even the leading ones dare not have classes. I told the leaders, “Go, have a class.” Brothers, now, could I tell the leaders and the elders: be full of creativity. Could I tell you brothers and sisters, “Pursue.” Brothers sisters, could you have some creativity? Could you begin to think to yourself, “The Lord has given me so much and I have heard hundreds of messages, now how do I use it? Should I write? Should I share with others? Should I get a group of brothers together to make it richer? Should I make it an exhibit?” What is that? Creativity. You know where creativity comes from? Creativity comes from God Himself. He is the first creative One. If He doesn’t have creativity, then why did He create the universe? Why did He create man? Why did He create all the beauties of the universe? Why did He create many things that encourage or satisfy man? Brothers, He is vital, He is full of creativity, and He is full of executing in the power of His wisdom. I am wise, but my wisdom is not a thought. My wisdom is a power. I exercise it. I execute it. Eventually, all things will happen.”

Then, you ask Him, “Ok, You’ve got all this. You are so marvelous! What do You want?” And He says, “I desire to dwell with man.”

May the Lord have mercy. We stop here.