

Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost

Sermon Road Map

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Matthew 16:13-20

October 16, 2016

Jesus' gift of the Keys - too precious not to be used!

Have you ever seen an honored guest receive "the key to the city"?

- Is it the only one? No! - What does it unlock? Nothing
- What do you do with it after you receive it? Mount/display/dust?

Jesus presents 2 Keys - The Keys - Kingdom Keys.

- Ceremonial? Decorative?
- Rusty from a lack of use? For Emergency Use Only?

Jesus' gift of the Keys - too precious not to be used!

❖ Context is critical!

- Those convicted: *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.*
- **This confess is the Rock** on which the Church is built.
 - ♦ This confession identifies his - defines his - attaches to him.
 - ♦ The Church: Community where his confessors are blessed & kept safe
- With his authority as the Christ he **give every confessor** his keys.
 - ♦ Yes, God alone has the power to forgive sin. Jesus is God!
 - ♦ As the Christ, he as the **authority to give** us a set of his keys.
 - ♦ They are His Keys. **The only work as authorized.**
 - To forgive with his forgiveness as he would apply it
 - To bind with his power - to serve his purpose (not ours)

❖ Why do the forgiven need to be forgiven?

- We need forgiveness because we keep on sinning. *Sin is bad!*
- Jesus went to the cross to pay for all our sins - *Paid in Full!*
- Brought to faith (Baptism or the Word) - **standing in grace forgiven**
 - ♦ Believers **don't** pass in and out of grace with every sin!
 - ♦ Through faith, we stand counted *righteous/ not guilty* in God's sight
- **Sin burdens our conscience with guilt**
 - ♦ Embarrassed, ashamed, mad at ourselves, dealing with guilt
 - ♦ Guilty - I distance my self from God
 - ♦ Guilt, keeps us captive to our sin - makes us blind to our sin
 - ♦ The loosening key releases us from **guilt and sin's reign**
 - Medicine of the Gospel poured **directly** on our injury (vs. general)
 - It silences our guilty conscience - freeing us to walk with God.

❖ Can't I just confess my sins privately and directly to God?

- Of course. Jesus is our Mediator.
- *(When) we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.* 1 John 1:9
- So are the Keys useless? Of course not. Jesus issued them to be used!
- The need and advantage of having a Confessor
 - ♦ Sin likes the dark, breeds in the dark, thrives in darkness
 - ♦ Adam & Eve hid sin with leaves - covered shame - hid in bushes
 - ♦ *Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that their deeds will be exposed.* John 3:20
 - ♦ Bringing sin into the Light before a Confessor - exposes/breaks hold
 - ♦ When I confess directly to God, I assure **myself** with the Gospel:
 - Guilty conscience whispers: *Are you sure you aren't kidding yourself? How could God forgive you for that?*
 - But when a faithful believer Absolves - it's objective reality.

❖ Using the keys in everyday life.

- Given to believers for believers - Confess sin, seek Absolution in family and church family relations. (Never say, *That's OK. I understand.*)
- Ask a believer with wisdom who can handle hearing your confession
- It's natural for your Pastor to be your confessor.
 - ♦ His training, spiritual maturity and care for you - Private Absolution
 - ♦ The role of Repentance & Absolution - to free from sin, walk in Christ
 - Your Pastor can counsel how or point to others who can help
 - The purpose - free from guilt, freed to experience fuller life in Christ
 - Regular sessions of Private Absolution are welcome.
- Clearly use when troubled conscience - don't wait for ravaged conscience
- What about the binding key?
 - ♦ It's presence - lifted up as sober remind of remaining in sin.
 - ♦ The binding key - given to rescue fellow believers taken captive to sin
 - *...hand this man over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.* 1 Cor. 5:5
 - Not about cleaning the church or punishment. It's love rescuing!

Those who've discovered their Baptismal calling to a *joyful life of repentance* discover the Keys are there so they don't have to go it alone. The refreshing Gospel of the loosing key makes it clear...

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