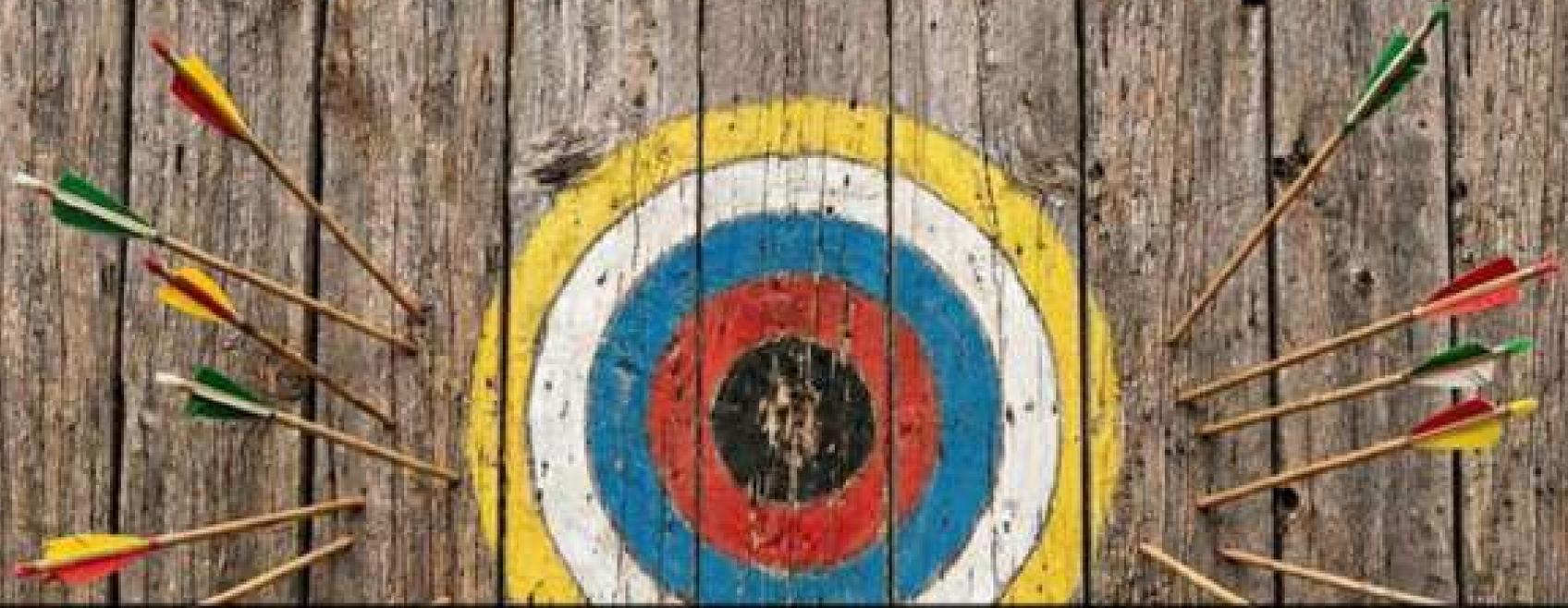


MISSING THE MARK



Clarity and Confusion

Matthew 16:13-23

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Matthew 16:13-23

¹⁵ "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.

Matthew 16:13-23

¹⁸ And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." ²⁰ Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Matthew 16:13-23

²¹ From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.

Matthew 16:13-23

²² Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. "Never, Lord!" he said. "This shall never happen to you!" ²³ Jesus turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

“Who do people say the Son of Man is?”



“Who do people say the Son of Man is?”

A solid majority (76%) of Americans believe Jesus was a historical person.

While 56% of Americans believe Jesus is God, nearly half (49%–52%) of U.S. adults believe Jesus was a great teacher, but not God.

“But what about you? Who do you say I am?”



“You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”



“There is little doubt that among most Jews in first-century Palestine the primary connotation of ‘Messiah’ would be of a ‘son of David’ who would restore the nation to the glory and independence it had known under the first David. It was a nationalistic term, and hard to separate from the political aspirations of a subjected people.”

Not only was it a *good* answer, it was a *divinely gifted* answer: “not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.”

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How open are we to God “showing” himself to us?
Gifting us divine wisdom that develops as we spend time in the presence of Jesus?

Peter gets a new name.

Peter gets a new name.

Peter will be the foundation for the Church.

“These ‘gates’ represent the imprisoning power of death —death will not be able to imprison and hold the church of the living God... The imagery is of death being unable to swallow up the new community which Jesus is building. It will never be destroyed.”

(R.T. France)

“Jesus is giving his followers the assurance that nothing in this world, or the next, can overthrow the church.”

(Leon Morris)

Peter gets a new name.

Peter will be the foundation for the Church.

Peter will receive the keys of the kingdom.



**"NO, NO, NO--! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE COMING IN THRU
GATE 7-- AND LOSE THE LUGGAGE!!"**

Peter gets a new name.

Peter will be the foundation for the Church.

Peter will receive the keys of the kingdom.

Peter will "bind and loose" important things.

"Announcing a Messiah could all too easily be misinterpreted and understood in political terms. If the disciples had gone out proclaiming that Jesus was the Messiah, both they and their hearers would have thought of a glorious, conquering Messiah. They would have looked for armies and bloodshed and victories. To know that Jesus was the Messiah was one thing; to understand what messiahship really meant was quite another." (Leon Morris)

Once the disciples have established Jesus' identity and purpose, he now begins to show them the pathway by which he will accomplish his victory: suffering and death.

“Nothing in their background prepared Jesus’ disciples for the notion that Israel’s eschatological champion should suffer a shameful death. The Messiah was expected to inflict suffering and death on Israel’s enemies and on the wicked within Israel, not to experience it himself.”

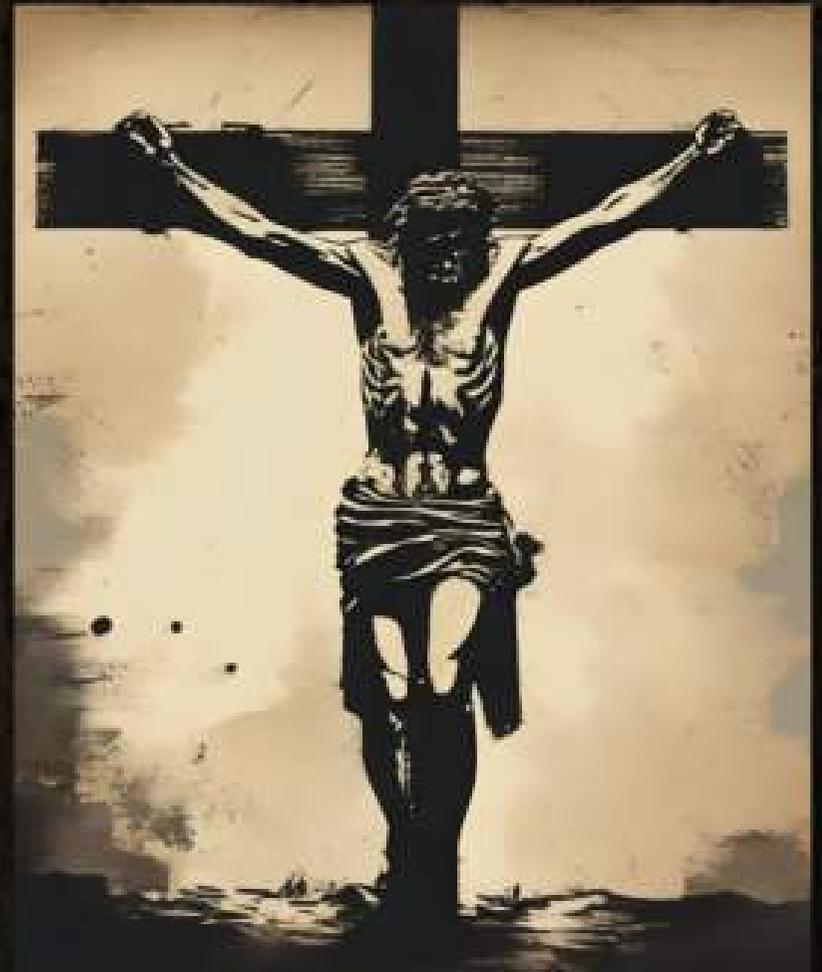
(Douglas Hare)

“For the Jews in general, and presumably for the Twelve up to this point, being Messiah meant unadulterated glory. The Messiah might encounter opposition and even hardship, but this kind of thing was no more than an unpleasantness that must be passed through on the way to majesty and splendor.”

(Leon Morris)

What happens when Jesus isn't
the Savior we expect?

How do we respond when God
disappoints us?



"My idea of God is not a divine idea. It has to be shattered time after time. He shatters it Himself. He is the great iconoclast. Could we not almost say that this shattering is one of the marks of His presence? The Incarnation is the supreme example; it leaves all previous ideas of the Messiah in ruins."

(C.S. Lewis)

Peter wants to veto the plan of Jesus and chart another way forward. He wants to hold onto a path to power, authority, and success that maximizes the gain and minimizes the pain.

Peter wants to veto the plan of Jesus and chart another way forward. He wants to hold onto a path to power, authority, and success that maximizes the gain and minimizes the pain.

Peter goes from blessed, church-founding, key-holder... to Satanic stumbling block... in about six verses!!!

Why would Jesus call Peter "Satan?!?"



“Jesus’ death was so central to God’s plan that to try to avoid it was to do the work of none less than the evil one himself. Indeed, Peter was taking up essentially the position of Satan in the temptation narrative. The evil one had tried to get Jesus to take the easy, spectacular way and to avoid the path of suffering, and that in essence was what Peter was advising.” (Leon Moore)

Peter is guilty of prioritizing “human concerns” over “the concerns of God.”

Peter is guilty of prioritizing “human concerns” over “the concerns of God.”

“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways,” declares the Lord. “As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts.”
(Isaiah 55:8-9)

Closing Reflections

How do you answer the question from Jesus: "Who do you say I am?" Based on your knowledge and experience, who is Jesus to you?

Closing Reflections

Do you, like Peter, resist struggle or suffering—
regarding them as incompatible with a Christ-like way
of living?

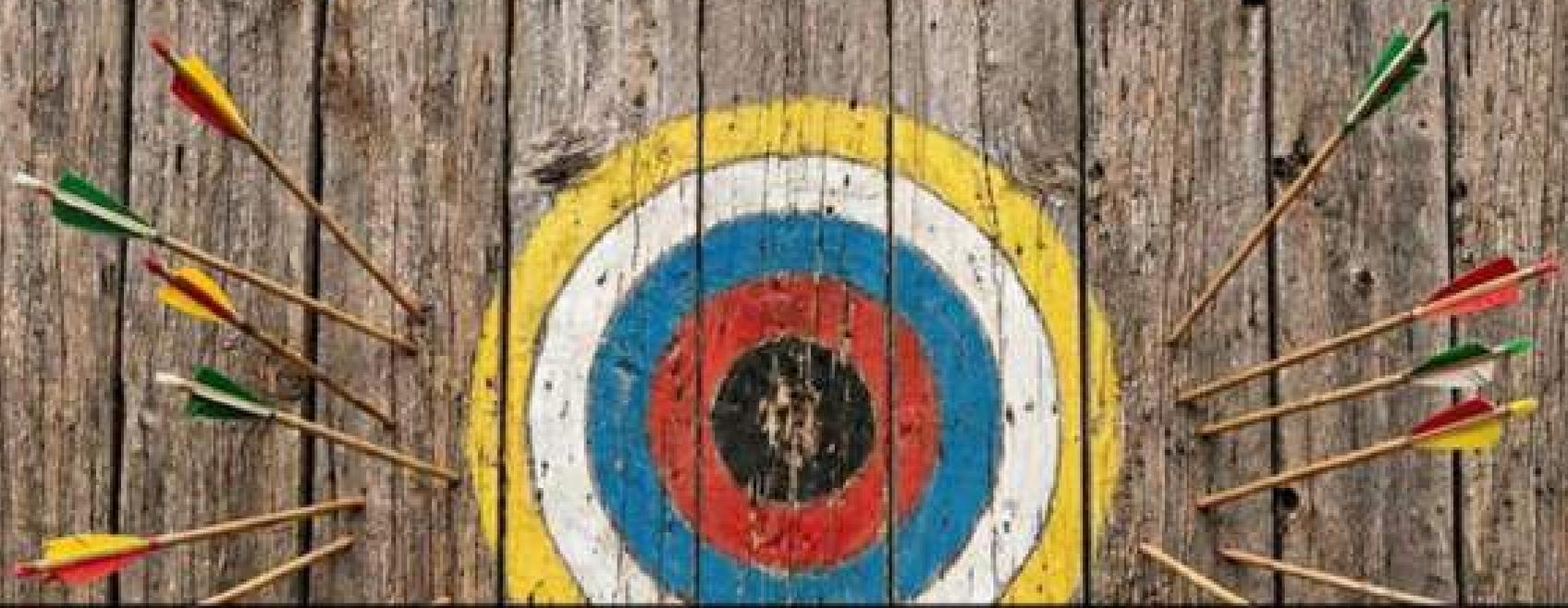
Closing Reflections

Invite the Spirit to break down and reshape your understanding of God in any ways that are necessary so that you can see Him more clearly.

Closing Reflections

Are there any “human concerns” that might be blocking the way for the “concerns of God” to become clear and embodied in your life?

MISSING THE MARK



Clarity and Confusion