

The Gospel of Matthew

Session 2: Matthew's Community with Pastor Dixon

Scripture: [Matthew 16:13-18](#); [Matthew 18:15-18](#)

Peter's Declaration about Jesus (Matthew 16:13-18)

¹³ Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" ¹⁴ And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." ¹⁵ He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, ^[a] the Son of the living God." ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ And I tell you, you are Peter, ^[b] and on this rock ^[c] I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it.

Reproving Another Who Sins

¹⁵ "If another member of the church ^[a] sins against you, ^[b] go and point out the fault when the two of you are alone. If the member listens to you, you have regained that one. ^[c] ¹⁶ But if you are not listened to, take one or two others along with you, so that every word may be confirmed by the evidence of two or three witnesses. ¹⁷ If the member refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if the offender refuses to listen even to the church, let such a one be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. ¹⁸ Truly I tell you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.

Questions

Matthew was likely written by someone who lived in a time of great upheaval in both his political and religious context. What advice do you think he would have for us living through our current moment?

What is the guiding compass for Matthew's community ethic? In other words, if there is a disagreement in the church, how do we know what is good or right or wise or faithful?

Matthew is the only Gospel to use the word "church." Considering the context in which the Gospel was written and looking especially at chapter sixteen, what do you suppose "church" meant to the author and what should it mean for us now?