

Discussion Questions

1. What are your thoughts about the current state of the church in America? Is it declining?
2. Do you think Christians are seen as negative people or is that a misperception that non-Christians have of us?
3. How can Christians be full grace and truth in the homosexual conversation?
4. What can the church do to change the way outsiders think of us? Is that even a worthwhile endeavor?

If you are doing the 5-week study with a group end here for the week, you can do this section later.

Matthew 16:13-19

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." 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. 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.

It is important to recognize that there are some discouraging realities about the church in America because the church needs a reality check. Only then will it begin to understand the pit it is in and find a way to get out of it, but the church is not in danger of death. It is built on the solid rock of Jesus Christ, and "the gates of Hades will not conquer it."

Going Deeper

5. When Jesus said, "on this rock I will build my church," what is the "rock" that He was referring to? Is Peter the "rock?" Or is it Jesus, the "Messiah, the Son of the living God," that is the rock?
6. How firm is the foundation of the church? If the church is built on the rock, what does it mean that the "gates of Hades will not overcome it?"
7. What does it mean that we have been given "the keys of the kingdom of heaven?"