**The Transforming Power Of The Cross**

Matthew 16:16-18 KJV  And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.  (17)  And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.  (18)  And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.  
  
Matthew 7:21-24 KJV  Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.  (22)  Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?  (23)  And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.  (24)  Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

2 Timothy 2:19 KJV  Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

All three of these passages deal with

(1) A rock or foundation   
  
(2) Knowing one's identity (in Matt 16 Peter knows Jesus, but in 2 Tim 2 and Matt 7 Jesus only knows certain people's identities)

Matt 16 and Matt 7 both refer to Jesus words:   "...and **I say** also unto thee" and "whosoever heareth **these sayings of mine**, and doeth them".  
  
Jesus' words about building His church on the rock so the gates of death cannot prevail against it correspond to His words in Matt 7 about a wise man who hears his words and does them, who builds his house on the rock.  
  
And in Matt 16 there is revelation from the Father of who Jesus is plus ADDITIONAL revelation from the Son about building church on the rock.  
  
Matt 7 shows the same thing.  People know Jesus is Lord, before Jesus speaks of "these sayings of mine" (additional revelation from the Son) that put us on the rock.  
  
2 Timothy 2:19 speaks of a foundation or rock, and Jesus knowing people, just like Matt 7 speaks of Jesus not knowing some and wise men building on rock.  
  
So all three of these passages go together.  
  
But I also want to take us into Matthew 17, since that also goes together with all of this!

Matthew 17:1-5 KJV  And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,  (2)  And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light.  (3)  And, behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him.  (4)  Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, it is good for us to be here: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.  (5)  While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

HIGH MOUNTAIN.

* Sounds like a ROCK.
* Last week we spoke about Rev 14 and Mount Zion, and the LAMB -- Jesus sacrificed who resurrected again - standing on it.

On this mountain, JESUS WAS TRANSFIGURED.

* And Moses and Elijah appeared there and TALKED WITH JESUS.

Let us find out what they were talking about.

Luke 9:30-31 KJV  And, behold, there talked with him two men, which were Moses and Elias:  (31)  Who appeared in glory, and **spake of his decease** which he should accomplish at Jerusalem.

THE CROSS.  
  
What was it that Jesus began to speak to them about after Peter got a revelation from the Father about who Jesus was?

Matthew 16:21 KJV  From that time forth began Jesus to shew unto his disciples, how that he must go unto Jerusalem, and suffer many things of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised again the third day.

THE SAME ISSUE OF THE CROSS IN JERUSALEM.  
  
What did Peter do when he heard Jesus speak about the cross?

Matthew 16:22 KJV  Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke him, saying, Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee.

And look what happens after Peter hears Jesus speaking of the cross to Moses and Elijah:

Matthew 17:4 KJV  Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord, **it is good for us to be here**: if thou wilt, let us make here three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.

Peter told Him to forget about going to Jerusalem.  
  
PETER WAS STILL REJECTING THE NOTION OF THE CROSS.  
  
Despite Jesus' rebuke a week earlier, Peter was still not getting this second revelation.  
  
Jesus said the gates of the grave could not hold the church built on the rock!

* If Peter got that revelation, he would not worry about death.
* He would not worry about risking his own neck if he should stick with a Jesus who is going to die.
* He would know death and the grave being unable to hold back the church means the church will resurrect from the grave!

Not only that, but, speaking of BUILDING A CHURCH ON THE ROCK in Matt 16, Peter suggested building tabernacles on that big rock of a mountain!  
  
But Jesus was not speaking of a physical house on a physical rock.

* He was talking about building HIS PEOPLE, the CHURCH, on the ROCK OF HIS KINGDOM.
* And this would require the DEATH AND RESURRECTION that Peter was trying to avoid.

And look what happens after this.  
  
Recall that the sequence of revelations was THE FATHER GIVES A REVELATION OF WHO JESUS IS, and THEN JESUS REVEALS THE CROSS AND RESURRECTION FROM DEATH.  
  
THE SAME THING HAPPENS AGAIN:

Matthew 17:5 KJV  While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.

The Father gives the same revelation again, and then TELLS PETER TO HEAR WHAT THE SON HAS TO SAY NOW.

* What was the SON talking about with Moses and Elijah?
* HIS DEATH!
* THE CROSS!

In fact, Jesus DOES speak of the cross some more.

Matthew 17:9 KJV  And as they came down from the mountain, Jesus charged them, saying, Tell the vision to no man, until the Son of man be risen again from the dead.  
  
Matthew 17:12 KJV  But I say unto you, That Elias is come already, and they knew him not, but have done unto him whatsoever they listed. Likewise shall also the Son of man suffer of them.

The KINGDOM MOUNTAIN cannot be our foundation and experience unless we SUFFER WITH HIM.

2 Timothy 2:11-12 KJV  It is a faithful saying: For if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him:  (12)  If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him, he also will deny us:

We do not deny Jesus by rejecting His identity.

* We deny Him by denying the need for His cross so that we might follow Him.
* Refusing to follow Him is denying Him.
* And that is refusing to take up our cross to follow Him.

The 144,000 follow the lamb wherever he goes and are seen STANDING ON MOUNT ZION when a kingdom built on sand, Babylon, falls!  
  
The wonderful thing about this is that the TRANSFIGURATION OF JESUS on this MOUNTAIN or ROCK represents the TRANSFORMATION THAT OCCURS IN OUR LIVES when we ARE BUILT ON THE ROCK by receiving a revelation of the cross and the power of resurrection!  
  
The real house on the rock is not a physical structure.

* IT IS OUR LIVES.
* THE CHURCH is the PEOPLE who have taken up their crosses to follow Jesus.

Notice that SACRIFICE is associated with TRANSFORMATION:

Romans 12:1-2 KJV  I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.  (2)  And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God. Romans 12:3 KJV  For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Renewing our minds is getting the concept of SACRIFICE of self into our thinking.

* LOSE YOUR LIFE FOR MY SAKE means LOSE YOUR OLD THINKING.
* LIFE is SOUL or PSUCHE in Greek.
* And that is why Rom 12 speaks of RENEWING YOUR MIND.

Notice Paul involved this with THE WILL OF GOD.

Matthew 7:21 KJV  Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

So we have Matt 7's ROCK, KINGDOM ENTRANCE AND THE SON'S SAYINGS associated with Matt 16's CHURCH ON THE ROCK and I SAY ALSO UNTO THEE of the SON.

* And this is found again in Matt 17 where the Father gives Jesus' identity and tells Peter to hear what the SON HAS TO SAY about the cross.
* All of this is connected to Rom 12 where doing the will of God corresponds to Matt 7's "he that doeth the will of my Father," as well as LIVING SACRIFICE associated with the cross.

And Romans emphasizes just what it means to THINK about the cross concept.  BE A LIVING SACRIFICE.