

# Matthew 16:13-28

by John Nelson Darby

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*The sermon explores the significance of Christ's rejection and its connection to a higher glory, and how this relates to the church and our hope for conformity to Christ.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 16:16

**Topics:** "The Church", "Christ's Glory"

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## Description

John Nelson Darby explores Matthew 16:13-28, emphasizing the significance of Christ's rejection and the revelation of His divine glory beyond earthly kingship. He highlights that understanding Christ's crucifixion and resurrection is essential for grasping the foundation of the church and our reconciliation with God. Darby warns against the dangers of a superficial faith that lacks true power, urging believers to rely on Scripture amidst the challenges of the last days. He distinguishes between the church as the body of Christ, which is pure, and the church as a house, which may contain corruption but will ultimately be judged. The sermon concludes with the hope of believers being conformed to Christ's glory, encouraging purification in anticipation of that day.

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## Transcript

Dear Mr. Editor,

I venture to send a few disconnected notes taken many years ago at a lecture by J. N. D. on Matt. 16:13-28. As they are disconnected and imperfect I must, of course, be responsible for them in case I have missed the teacher's thoughts anywhere. I send them as I find them, in an old notebook, the immense interest of the subject impelling.

E. L. Bevir, Milan, November 30th, 1894.

In this passage we find Christ rejected and a revelation of a higher glory than that of Messiah as an earthly king. I must own His rejection if I wish to understand this better glory (see vers. 22, 23 where Peter wishes to set aside the Lord's rejection, because his flesh was unjudged).

All is founded on Christ having been crucified and raised. . . . On the other side of the cross we have Christ glorified in heaven, and this is the starting-point whether for the foundation of the church or for our own blessing. . . . He does not say here that He is the Christ merely, but more - the Son of the living God. Then He says, "I will build." Rejected as Christ, He had come in life, and in His death glorified God in the

cross. . . . The work was perfectly done, and its acceptance proved. God anticipated the day of judgment in the cross, by giving His Son to be made sin, so the question has been completely settled before the day of judgment arrives. The curse of God was borne, and the power of Satan has been overcome. Christ was heard from the horns of the unicorns, when His work was finished; the old state of things has been completely judged, and now there is a new creation.

The second Man stands alone acceptable to God; and we who are in Him are reconciled to God in a world which is not reconciled.

This may help us to understand the place into which the church is brought.

Now we find ourselves living in a time, when the truth about the church has been lost; and people have a form of godliness, whilst they deny its power. God has foreseen all the evil of the last days, and the perilous times that should come, and has given us this resource - His word. "From a child thou hast known the holy scriptures," &c. (2 Tim. 3)

Paul laid the foundation as a wise masterbuilder, but then responsibility came in as to those who should build after. Wood, hay, and stubble has been built in, and all that is false will be judged. Thus if people trust to the "church" which God is about to judge, they will be judged with that "church."

Christ builds the true church after He had accomplished the work of redemption. He builds as One who has the title to build.

Compare 1 Peter 2:4, 5, "To whom coming . . . as living stones, ye are built," &c., and Ephesians 2:20.

In 1 Corinthians 3 it is different; God has put into the hands of man the responsibility of building, and this has failed like everything else. People say that man has done no harm in introducing wood, hay, and stubble into the building; but God calls us to hear what the Spirit says to the churches, and we have this history in the seven churches in Revelation 2, 3, where Christ judges all the evil in Christendom.

There are two distinct characters of the church of God.

One aspect is that of the body; the other that of the house.

As to the body, there can be no unreal member in it. We are all (true believers) united to Christ by one Spirit, and to one another.

The house gives a very different aspect; it is the place where God dwells, and it does not cease to be the house because evil has come in, and wood, hay, and stubble have been introduced. The evil will be judged (see Rom. 11. where professing Gentiles shall be judged as the Jews were). The faithful will be called to heaven, and the apostasy will come in Christendom, after the church is taken away. The evil has already made great progress; compare the church in Acts 2, 4 with the present state of things. If a Chinese came to England, what would he think of Christianity? . . .

There is a new creation which brings us into a new place. No doubt we find ourselves in a very peculiar position, for our bodies still belong to the old creation. Christ bore all our guilt connected with the old creation; and there is a Man in heaven to whom we are to be like. The only perfection set before us is conformity to Christ in glory, and we shall never be satisfied till we have attained that glory. He that hath this hope in Him purifieth Himself even as He is pure.

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