

The Keys of the Kingdom

by G.W. North

The sermon emphasizes the significance of Peter's unique ministry and his responsibility to open the Kingdom of God to the whole world of men.

Scripture: Matthew 16:19, Acts 2:38

Topics: "Authority in the Church", "The Role of Peter"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes the unique role of Peter in the establishment of the Church, highlighting how Jesus bestowed upon him the keys of the Kingdom, granting him a singular authority to open the Kingdom of God to all people. This divine appointment underscores the importance of accepting God's choices and gifts with humility, as Peter was tasked with the responsibility of leading others to faith and the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost, Peter fulfilled this promise, demonstrating his pivotal role in spreading the gospel to Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria, and ultimately to the Gentiles. North illustrates that Peter's ministry was essential for the inclusion of all believers into the Kingdom, as he was the key figure in ensuring that the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit. The sermon calls for recognition of God's sovereign decisions in the distribution of spiritual authority and the importance of fulfilling one's God-given responsibilities.

Transcript

The reason for this is not far to seek. Years before this event, the Lord Jesus in the course of His ministry had, by promise, bestowed on Peter an honour which was to belong to him alone. By reason of this, Peter was given a functional position in the kingdom and gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ which no-one else could fill.

The Lord makes His choices and distributes His gifts among us according to His will, with absolute justice. Everything He does is in love and we must with humility accept that it is quite impossible to alter the decision of our Saviour-King. During His personal appearance and brief reign on earth, all the apostles He sent out did much the same things as each other. Occasionally the Lord would select a group of three from among the chosen twelve, and for reasons then hidden from their understanding, would take these with Him to certain places for purposes He did not always explain. From these three Peter was eventually singled out by the Lord and given a particular ministry; 'thou art Peter', He said, 'I give unto thee the keys of the kingdom', and that was final.

On the day of Pentecost, while fulfilling His promise to send the Holy Ghost to all His disciples, the Lord also kept His personal promise to Peter. That day the apostle received power and authority to use the

keys to the Kingdom. From that time forward, to him alone belonged the privilege of opening the Kingdom of God to the whole world of men.

.... and in Samaria

Reading carefully through this book, we find that from the very day the Lord inaugurated the Church, this is exactly what Peter did. Because in him personally was vested this great authority, upon him also lay great responsibility. He alone had been given the keys so he must discharge his duty. With faithfulness he opened the Kingdom of God to the peoples of Jerusalem and Judea and Samaria respectively, and finally also to the Gentile nations.

Therefore, having already been the key man in Jerusalem and Judea, upon hearing of the Samaritans' response, by common consent of the Apostolate, Peter accompanied by John is sent to Samaria that he might be the key man there also. Just because the Holy Ghost had not been poured out upon the Samaritans during Philip's ministry, they must not be denied their blood-bought right to be born from above.

These men had been chosen by God to be the foundation upon which He would build the Church. To them it was anomalous that people should believe and not receive the Spirit, or be dipped in water and not be baptised in Spirit also. Beside this, because the kingdom had not been opened to them, the Samaritan believers were neither in life nor in the Kingdom, and the fault was not theirs; it was simply because Peter, with his initiating ministry had not yet gone there. Therefore, upon hearing of the results of Philip's visit to Samaria, Peter was immediately sent from Jerusalem and promptly went to fulfil his ministry to the Samaritans.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/gw-north/the-keys-of-the-kingdom/>

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