

# Satanic Strategy

by Paris Reidhead

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*The church is built on the grounds of the cross, where men and women take their place crucified with Christ, and is the body of Christ, made up of those who have been born of God and have responded to Jesus Christ.*

**Duration:** 37:56

**Scripture:** Matthew 16:13

**Topics:** "Satanic"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of fully committing to following Christ. He highlights that salvation is not just a one-time decision, but a continuous journey of surrendering everything to Jesus. The sermon references Matthew 16:13-27, where Jesus reveals himself as the Messiah and establishes his church. The preacher warns that Satan will always oppose the church and try to destroy it, but those who are born of God and have a supernatural revelation of Jesus as the Christ can become part of the church. The sermon concludes by urging listeners to respond to the call of Christ and give him their all, as it is in their best interest and fulfills their deepest need for rest and salvation.

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## Transcript

We turn to our text, which is the scripture we read, Matthew 16, verses 13 through 27. The last occasion I was with you, the 14th, we considered together Matthew chapter 11. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

We saw that salvation is by revelation, salvation is by invitation, and salvation is by participation. We begin today again at the same place, really, for if our Lord repeated great truths because of their importance, it is imperative that we do the same. We find that the Church is revealed by our Lord Jesus.

And it begins with the revelation of the person of Jesus Christ, that Jesus, this man that was born of Mary and lived in Nazareth, was none other than the anointed one, the long prophesied, the long expected, the long awaited Messiah. And the text, as you know, is a very simple setting. Our Lord is with these whom he has come to call his disciples.

He turned to them, asking whom do men say that I, son of man, am? Using this term of his humility, the son of man, and they replied as they had heard. Some say that you're John the Baptist, and others say that you're Elijah, and others Jeremiah, and they've named several of the other prophets. And then he turned to these his own.

But whom say ye that I am? Without waiting, immediately, Simon said, why, thou art the Christ, the son of the living God. Now, this was the only correct answer. All the others were an error.

The answer of the fisherman Peter was the correct answer. Down across the centuries, this is the only correct answer. Today, it is the only correct answer.

This man, Jesus Christ, is the son of God. God come in the flesh. But even though our Lord was there in the presence of that generation of his people, for he came unto his own, and his words were tested by the miracles which he performed, by the demonstrations that he gave, by the fulfillment of prophecy that he presented, his generation viewed him as a deluded imposter.

For the most part, they did. And consequently, they said he was one of the apostles or someone, and later on, they said he was a drunkard and a winebibber, and he was a Beelzebub, and they crucified him because he was said that he was the Christ, the son of the living God. And so we recognize that no amount of miraculous ministry will prove that Jesus is the Christ.

No amount of eloquent speech or of scriptural and prophetic utterance will prove that Jesus is the Christ. This is a matter of revelation. It's a matter of revelation today, even as it was then.

You have a family, and we know of children that have grown up in devout Christian homes, where the lives of the parents were exemplary in the extreme, and in every particular that would be expected, far more perhaps than would be expected, every particular that would be desired. And yet children growing up in this wholesome influence have gone out into the world in rebellion, in open defiance of the faith of their fathers, to blaspheme the name of the Christ their parents loved. This has been done.

It wasn't a matter of parental influence. We often hear the scripture saying, train up the child in the way he is old, and when he is, in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. That is true in certain matters of character, in certain principles of conduct.

But when it comes to the matter of the person of Jesus Christ, it's not a matter of training, as important a place as training may have. It's a matter of revelation. Flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.

Multitudes of people today attest to the historical fact that Jesus was the Christ, but their lives give evidence that they've never had an inner revelation of this as a personal truth that has implications in their life, and in their conduct, and in their attitude. If all the people in all of our churches that hold assiduously and diligently, and there are many, who hold to the fact that Jesus is the Christ, if all had had revelation of the implications and the meaning of his deity in their lives, the church would be the greatest power that the world has. But instead of that, too many will give an intellectual agreement with the fact, the historical teaching, the doctrine, but they've not had revelation.

So to Peter, this fisherman, among the multitude that saw this one walk and heard him speak, beheld his miracles, there came from the Father the revelation that he was the Christ, the son of the living God. And all of his disciples had this same revelation. And all of his own across the centuries have had similar revelation.

And has there been this unveiling, this unfolding, this uncovering, this revelation in your life that Jesus of Nazareth, the man who lived and walked nineteen hundred and sixty years ago in the little oriental village of Nazareth and then in the country of Palestine, that this man is God come in the flesh? Does your heart

respond to this? Do you say, yes, I know that Jesus is the Christ, that this man is God. Do you understand that? Is this laid hold upon you? You understand, of course, the response of Saul of Tarsus was the only fitting and proper response. When he saw that Jesus Christ was alive, then he knew that he was the Christ.

And there was only one response to this one, then. It was to fall before him and in, for he had done that from the physical effect of the vision, but now there was a falling in heart and in spirit. And he cried out from the depths of his wounded, crushed, broken will, Lord, what will thou have me to do? And if you have had revelation of the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God, then it has been accompanied by a similar breaking that you have fell, fallen at his feet and have cried to him, Lord, what will thou have me to do? And so the answer to the question, have you had a revelation of the person of Jesus Christ, is what is your attitude toward him? Not what is the information that you may have garnered and gleaned and gathered about him, but what is your attitude toward him? If you are, have had truly this revelation of which we are now speaking, you have fallen at his feet, broken in his presence, abandoning your life to him.

All that have had him revealed thus have done this. Not something peculiarly Peter's, but something that he does in the life of everyone that he brings to himself. Flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee.

Again our Lord Jesus, speaking to Nicodemus about the matter of the new birth, said, when he answered the question, how can a man be born when he is old? He said, you do not savor, you do not understand the things that are of God, Nicodemus, in spite of the fact that you are a ruler of the Jews and a teacher in Israel. You do not realize, do you, that one must be warned of water and of the Spirit, that the Spirit of God as the wind, the breath of God, blows and moves and finds the prepared heart and upon that heart brings this revelation that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, and they see him as Israel's Moses presented the serpent upon the pole and in the wilderness, and those stung would look and live. So Nicodemus, those to whom the Spirit comes in revealing grace and work, see that their deliverance and their salvation is in Christ and their lives also are abandoned to him.

This is the work, the supernatural work, of the Spirit of God. It's by revelation, but it's not only the revelation of the person of Christ, but it's the revelation of the purpose of Christ. When it was clearly understood that he was indeed the Son of the living God, then he said on this rock, on this truth, that I am the Son of the living God and that this revelation will be made to those my Father brings to that point, then upon this rock, upon this truth, upon this breaking, upon this bending, will be built my church.

Not simply upon the historical fact. Yes indeed, that is a not without which. But the significant thing about this is that the foundation of the church is indeed the truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, but as he said subsequently, this rock is here, it's a stone cut out of the mountain, and if a man falls upon this rock he will be broken.

But then he proceeded to say, but if he refuses to fall upon the rock and be broken, the rock will fall upon him and he will be crushed and ground to powder. But this is the touchstone, this is the point where the church is to be built. That Jesus Christ is the Son of the living God, that they know, one knows this by revelation of the Father, that accompanying this revelation that Christ is the Son of God is the revelation that our proper response to him is one of abandonment and submission, and that those thus that have had this revelation, that he is the and have fallen before him and have broken before him, this company constitute the church.

And thus we see that the ground of the church is established once and for all in the response that is made to Jesus Christ, not the fact. The fact, yes, but it's the response to the fact, the personal heart response to this revelation of Christ, this brokenness before him. Then he stated that he would build his church, but that his church would be opposed and fought by Satan.

We know full well that God's nation, Israel, was fought, everything that possibly could be done by Satan through Pharaoh, hardening his heart to thwart and hinder the purpose of God was done. But by his stretched out arm and great power, God on eagle's wings bear Israel out of Egypt. And then, of course, we know that there was that constant conflict with themselves and their natures in this terrifying effort to keep Israel out of the land and the place of witness and blessing.

And after finally 40 years of wandering, they got into the promised land. We find those tragic words in the Judges, the second chapter, that there arose up a generation that knew not Joshua, and they served Baal and Ashtoreth. And the history of Israel was a history of satanic opposition to this people that he called his witness.

And now he is doing a new thing. He is establishing his church. Israel was constituted by men and women that were born of the will of flesh and the will of blood and the will of man.

But he said his new thing is going to be made up of those that are born of God. And the only way one can get into his church is by a supernatural revelation that Jesus is Christ and a supernatural operation making one a new creature in Christ. And so he said that even though the church should be with care thus built, still Satan would fight it.

Still he would hate it. Still he would seek by every means to destroy it and extinguish it. There in Revelation you read of Israel as the woman pregnant with promise across the centuries, straining and travailing to bring forth a man-child.

And then the serpent seeks to destroy first the woman. And when he can't destroy the woman, then to seek to destroy the child. This is the history.

And then he would again have his bride, not his married wife as he spoke of Israel saying, I have married you. You are my wife. But he speaks now of the church as being his bride.

And oh how Satan has hated this church and fought by every means. First to extinguish it by persecution and then to infiltrate it by subversion and to destroy it by corruption. But our Lord says the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

And now of course we're living to see a great counterfeit thing rise, calling itself the church, but knows nothing about the foundation and the grounds of the church, which is the individual personal revelation that Jesus is the Christ and a personal response to it of total submission to the one that he is. But having found now that his, or having found that his people do have from the Father, this revelation as to his person that he is the Christ, from that time forth he began to show how that in order that the church might be brought into being, he must go to Jerusalem and he must suffer many things of the scribes and the elders and the chief priests and he must be killed and he must be raised again the third day. This is the means by which the new covenant of which Jeremiah spoke would be implemented.

You remember he said I will make a new covenant, not as my old covenant which covenants you break, but in my new covenant I'm going to write my law upon your hearts. And then in Ezekiel he said I'll put my

spirit within you and cause you to keep the law that I've written upon your heart. So his church is to be this marvelous thing where everyone in it is supernaturally and individually and personally born of God and everyone in his church is to have broken before the sovereign Christ and everyone in his church is to have the law written upon his heart and everyone in his church is to have the spirit of God put within him to cause him to walk in his statutes.

Now how is it to be accomplished? He said on that night in which he was betrayed he took bread and he blessed it and break it and said take eat this is my body which is given for you and then he took the cup and when he had blessed it he said take drink you all of it for this is the new covenant in my blood. The new covenant could only be implemented by his going to Jerusalem and being rejected and being persecuted and hurt and injured and bruised and crucified and buried and raised again the third day from the dead. And he said this is the new covenant in my blood.

Everything that is to be the heritage of the church will come because I have been willing to go to the cross. The new covenant in my blood by means of the blood by means of the pouring out of my life all that I promised will be implemented and made possible. And then of course we see the revelation of satanic strategy.

Here it is. I said that Satan had fought the church and the Lord Jesus predicted he was going to fight Israel God's witness and he was going to be fought by the church. But you see right now in this very event this very setting this very occasion he has an opportunity to reveal to his disciples how Satan is going to fight the church.

How? Well notice it. From that time forth he began to say he must he must he must he must. And Peter taking him aside in a personal way assuming now that since the Lord had spoken so highly of him that he was able to speak face to face and man to man with the Lord.

And he took him aside and said oh God forbid absolutely you're quite mistaken Lord. Well you see he'd had one revelation now he was infallible. Oh how easy it is for one to feel that because God is blessed at some point in his career that he's infallible.

And how often it is necessary for us to be brought back again and again and again lest we should be puffed up in our own minds and think that we know oh the fellowship of the faith how wonderful it is when you found some truth unveiled to your heart and you're afraid to even say anything about it. Because you say well I don't want to go astray I want to stay in that path. He said there was a highway there and a way and a wayfaring man to a fool need not err therein.

And you're browsing and you're asking the Lord to lead you and then you come to someone someone. I remember years ago when God was stirring my heart about the fullness of the Holy Spirit and the spirit-filled life and some of my ultra-dispensational brethren would say to me now don't leave us don't leave us there's no place to go you see over there you see all that fanaticism you see all that wildfire you see all that excess if you ever leave us you go right into that. Well I looked around at the death I was in and saw the emaciated corpse in the ditch where I was and I said well it won't be any worse than this and took a hold of a promise here and a promise there and climbed a bit and to my amazement I discovered that between the two ditches was a road that no one had told me about.

There was a road a wide broad clear plain road marked and defined and on it it says there's a highway there and it's called the highway of holiness and a wayfaring man though a fool need not err therein. If he

errs it's because he wants to err. The error isn't in the highway it's in the heart and I discovered that there are footprints oh it's marvelous to look around find that there's someone been ahead of you and blaze their trail and carve their initials in the tree and here was old A.M.

Andrew Murray he'd been here and he'd written about the full blessing of Pentecost and divine healing and some of these wonderful treatise that grew out of the experience of this Dutch reformed man and I looked a little further and and there was R.A. Torrey he'd left his name and what the bible teaches and the baptism of the holy spirit and I looked just a little bit further and there was Hudson Taylor and there was Mrs. Hudson Taylor with this splendid book about pastor she and I looked a little to the rear and I found that there was Andrew Murray I mean F.B.

Meyer there was A.B.

Simpson man that God had used and blessed and they'd all left their footprints on this highway and so poor Peter instead of taking the humble place and realizing that the one who'd revealed to him was the one that was before him had to give the answer and to speak out of turn Lord be it far from thee this isn't what the what we we understand that when the messiah comes he's going to be given a throne he's going to reign he's going to rule he'll give Israel the glory she had under Solomon and all of the past will be restored and we're here with you to see it's done and by the way Lord make me uh let me sit on your right hand and your left when you come into the kingdom this is what they were looking for and this matter of a cross oh can't you see how it was back in the wilderness in those

40 days that satan came to Christ and said cast yourself down trying to keep Christ from the cross because if he kept from the cross then the new covenant would never be accomplished and God's new thing would never be brought into being and his church would never come so he did everything he could right there right then and our Lord once and for all made it clear that the resistance to the truth of the cross is a satanic strategy to impoverish and weaken the church and so he said get thee behind me satan declaring then and there that from that time forward the resistance to the message of the cross was a satanic effort to weaken and destroy the church just as satan used Peter to try and keep Christ from accomplishing the new covenant my dear since that time satan has tried to keep the

cross for Christ in history so as to weaken and destroy the church and to you the subtle thing will come and it will be it's not necessary for you to die to yourself it's not necessary for you to come to the cross it's not necessary to come to the end of yourself why believe is enough that's all just believe but the church isn't made up there church is made up on the grounds of the cross where men and women come to the place they not only see that Christ died for them but they take their place crucified with Christ the church only has its existence where the cross is wrought not only for the sinner but in the sinner other people remember of churches as all of us have been but when i say the church i am speaking of that which he said he would build old men build churches men build them i

built them i came to this ministry determined not to build it but to let him build it i know how to build it i've learned from the best some of your hearts may say why isn't he getting members why isn't he raising the budget why isn't why isn't it because dear heart the church of jesus christ must be built by the head of the church the son of god or else it's just a monument to a man's industry and not an instrument for the glory of god the church of jesus christ in the bible is on the grounds not only that christ died on a cross for men but that men have of their own volition and free choice taken their place crucified with christ this is where it begins and satan has done all he could and he is today to keep this truth of identification with christ and

union with him in his death from

finding its way into the heart and life and experience of men that profess faith in christ why because if he can do that he can keep the church an organization instead of an organism do you see and he said get behind me satan because satan is going to try and use the aversion to suffering and death as the means of making the church impotent and powerless and the church is on the grounds not only that jesus christ is the son of god but that the only way that the church could be brought into being was that he should die and be raised from the dead and that his people did die with him and were raised with him and consciously and deliberately brought themselves into experiential union with christ in his death so we see that his satan strategy today is to keep you from entering into conscious

deliberate intelligent meaningful union with christ in death and if he can do that then he can do two things through you first he can keep those who have entered into that life from knowing the blessing and the power that comes out of a united body and secondly if he can get you to fight that truth then he can get you to gossip to lie to lust to hate he can make you the instrument of every evil if he keeps you from the cross for if he can succeed there he can succeed in anything but when you recognize that the grounds of the church is not a historical fact alone but a fact that has been made experientially real in your heart and life that when christ died you died and now that's brought into the experience tomorrow morning when you get up and things aren't to your liking and you but the

part of you that would say that is the part that died and when you go to the office and the cross is working and constantly working and if he can keep the cross from working in your life then for all practical purposes he has destroyed the effectiveness of the work of christ on the cross as far as the church is concerned now bear that in mind as we move to the last point just touch it the revelation of the plan of christ to build his church it's given so clearly what's he going to do how what kind of people is he going to build it out of what kind of stones are you going to build it out of he's building a tower he's counted the cost and so he gives an appeal if any man will come down after me look let him deny himself it's the first thing his church is going to be made up of people that

have denied themselves said no to their right to rule no to their appetites no to their position no to themselves that's what the word deny means to say no and then he's someone that has taken up his cross not only said no to himself but he's come to the place where he's seen that when christ died he died and he's brought himself to it and he's taken up his cross you see there's not only a cross for christ but there's a cross for history across for christ in history but there's a cross for you in your own experience and in your own heart cross for me take up your cross so his people that are out of which he's going to build his church are people that have denied themselves or people have taken up his cross and then he says the last thing if any man will come after me let him follow me in

other words believing on christ is not an event that you finish and say i believe 20 years ago but a believer is someone who began to believe 20 years ago if that's the time and he's continuing to believe today in each issue in each test constantly a believer is someone living in the present tense and if you have to look back into history to find the time that you believe then your faith was a fantasy and not a fact or did you believe in truth you are a believer today and you believe what he says today said to that company of jews and john ate that believed on him he said if ye keep my word then are you my disciples indeed if you keep my word a believer is someone follows him a revelation is to his person that he is god come in the flesh a revelation of his purpose to build a new thing

the church a revelation of his enemy who's going to try to keep him from the cross and his people from joining them in joining him there in union and a revelation of his plan to set it right at the very threshold any man will come after me this isn't a deeper life message dear this is gospel this is the message to sinners this is what he says deny himself for what is sin i am what is repentance thy i will thy will that's denying oneself take up his cross part of me that wants its own way is the part that died when christ died crucified with christ follow me daily continuous obedience to his unveiled will this is his people these are his this is what it means he's going to build a church you see he's got at the cost and since he's building his temple he has a right to determine the kind of

material that goes into his temple any man will take for come after me let him deny himself and take up his cross come follow me for whosoever will save his life shall lose it it's going to cost oh he said it's going to cost but it's going to cost you so much more if you don't so why not pay it all now for my yoke is easy and my burden is light take my yoke upon you and learn me oh it seems heavy to put your head into this yoke it seems heavy to take this burden upon you it seems such a hard thing to say no to sell such a hard thing to die where and when he died but i am meek and lowly ye shall find rest unto your souls for you see he's acting in accord with your deepest need you need someone big enough and good enough to whom you can abandon all that you are and when you resist the call

that he brings what you are actually doing is resisting your own best interest in your own deepest need for you need someone big enough and holy enough and good enough that you can conscientiously and happily and freely abandon all you are to him and knowing that he'll never take advantage of you and he'll never hurt you and he'll never injure you he's not doing this just to be hard he's doing this because this is the only way that he can be glorified and you can be helped and you can be happy you can be fulfilled and if he'd have done anything else he'd have robbed you of the possibility there's nothing more utterly miserable in all this world than a christian that's walking with one foot in the world and one foot and the word of god nothing so if i am looking to someone here that has

known sin in your life and you're a child of god i am looking into the face of the most miserable creature in new york city i can't you can't be that way it's either all or nothing at all these are his terms now what did he say in closing the son of man shall come in the glory of his father and then he shall according to his works it's all going to be worthwhile when you see him one look at the lord one moment in his presence and it'll all be worthwhile yes it's going to cost you everything and and i look at you today will you follow christ and obey him and give him absolutely all that you have and all that you are will you do it today if you haven't done it let's be done with all academic questions when were you concerned about yesterday doesn't count it's today what you'll do today

let's bow in prayer heads bowed our eyes closed in this god have you like paul fallen before him before him at some time saying my lord what will thou have me to do perhaps somehow you haven't reached simply saying as you know your own heart have you given to jesus christ that which he asks for have you denied yourself your right to choose and rule i don't think if you had you'd have said some of the things you've said or done some of the things you've done or had the attitudes you've had if you denied yourself have you taken up your cross if you come to the place where you died with him are you following him are you opening your heart to the word are you day by day studying the word if you aren't won't you today let's not wait a moment longer let's not wait so much as a minute longer

won't you just stand right where you are for a moment of prayer if you say yes yes today i'm denying myself today i'm saying no to me today i'm going to take up my cross i'm going to follow him and i'm

standing right now to signify it will you stand right where you are not going to beg or cajole just just stand right in your seat all right i took you by surprise didn't i father of our lord jesus look down upon us there's no one here this morning that said that they would and we know full well that we all haven't because if we were the gates of hell would not be prevailing against us as they are so it must be that we don't understand what it means or we aren't willing and so we have to look into thy face and say oh god make us willing these are the terms of thy son we can't change them we

can't alter them we know that there are those here that love thee who are willing and who have and couldn't stand in good conscience and we know there are others that should have stood but didn't oh let the fact that they didn't stand just be to them an irritant let it be to them a gold let it be to them all the whips of love that thou canst bring until thou dost bring every one of us that are here this morning into that place where we responded to christ we've said no to ourselves taken up our cross and we followed him that he might get in us the church the grounds of the church here that he can do what he wants to do through us so drive the word deep into our hearts we said something this morning we've responded to what we've heard some way but we would not have it be final lord keep

working with us keep working with us father until everything that you just want from us we've given for jesus sake amen let us stand and now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think according to the power that worketh in us unto him be glory in the church by christ jesus throughout all ages world without end amen

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