



BIBLE TALK

Mike King

Question: What is the meaning of Matt. 16:18? Did not the gates of Hades prevail against the church during the Dark Ages?

Answer: Jesus was speaking to Peter on this occasion after His confession of Jesus being the Christ, the Son of the living God. *“The gates of Hades shall not prevail against it,”* has reference to Christ’s building His church. This was a custom in ancient cities in the east to have great walls of protection with gates for entry. Jesus was stating He was going to build His church, establishing it on the earth and that no power would or could prevent it. *“The gates of Hades”* represent an opposition that might try to prevail against it. All the power that Satan has on earth, including death itself, would not be sufficient to hinder or prevent the establishment of the church. Though Jesus would be crucified and die, even that would not prevent His return following His resurrection, to build His church.

Since there was no power that could prevent the building of the church, no power could destroy it. Jesus was its head (Eph. 5:23), the church being His body (Eph. 1:22-23) therefore, to acknowledge defeat of the church would be to acknowledge defeat of Christ and His body, Christ is King, and His church is His kingdom (Col. 1:13; 1 Cor. 15:24-28). The kingdom and the church being the same, it shall continue until Christ shall surrender it to the Father (1 Cor. 15:24-28). The church has not discontinued since its establishment and will not until surrendered by Christ!

What we refer to “the Restoration” was not a re-establishment of the church of Christ on earth, but merely a bringing people back to the gospel, which is the seed of the kingdom (Lk. 8:11). When the seed is planted in fertile soil, it produces the same now that it did in the first century. All the denominations now existing could be destroyed and the church of the Lord would remain. It will survive in spite of all other religious organizations.

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