

1.) Human Speculation (Matthew 16:13-14)

In a region where people worshiped many gods, Jesus exposes their inability to discern His true identity.

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say [PAI] that the Son of Man is [PAN]?’

¹⁴ They replied, ‘a.) [conj] Some say John the Baptist; b.) others, Elijah; c.) [A] still others, a.) Jeremiah b.) [A] or one of the prophets.’

2.) Divine Identity (Matthew 16:15-16)

Then Jesus asked His friends the same question, and Peter professed, You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.

¹⁵ ‘[A] But you,’ he asked them, ‘who do you say [PAI] that I am [PAN]?’

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are [PAI] the Messiah, the Son of the living [PAP] God.’

3.) Kingdom Declaration (Matthew 16:17-19)

Affirming Peter's revelation as divine, Jesus declared His church will be strong, unbeaten, and He will give it authority.

¹⁷ Jesus responded, ‘Blessed are you [PAI], Simon son of Jonah, [G] because a.) 1.) flesh 2.) [S] and blood did not reveal this [AAI] to you, b.) [A] but my Father [in heaven]. [C] ¹⁸ And I also say [PAI] to you [E] that 1.) you are [PAI] Peter, 2.) [P] and [on this rock] I will build [FAI] my church, 3.) [S] and the gates of Hades will not overpower [FAI] it. 1.) ¹⁹ I will give [FAI] you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, 2.) [S] and whatever you bind [AAS] on earth will have been [FMI] bound [RPP] in heaven, 3.) [S] and whatever you loose [AAS] on earth will have been [FMI] loosed [RPP] in heaven.’

4.) Strategic Timing (Matthew 16:20)

Jesus asked His friends to not tell anyone, because it was not the right time to tell the world.

[T] ²⁰ Then [C] he gave [AMI] the disciples orders to tell [AAS] no one [E] that he was [PAI] the Messiah.

Sermon preparation worksheet

Passage: Matthew 16:13-20

1. How has the author organised this passage? a) *An outline*, b) *Tools*, c) *The emphasis*.

- a) 1) In a region where people worshiped many gods, Jesus exposes their inability to discern His true identity (Matthew 16:13-14).
 - 2) Then Jesus asked His friends the same question, and Peter professed, You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:15-16).
 - 3) Affirming Peter's revelation as divine, Jesus declared His church will be strong, unbeaten, and He will give it authority (Matthew 16:17-19).
 - 4) Jesus asked His friends to not tell anyone, because it was not the right time to tell the world (Matthew 16:20).
- b) I identified Matthew 16:13-20 as narrative discourse, and used syntax analysis. The structure emerged from grouping Jesus' questions with the disciples answers (Matthew 16:13-14, Matthew 16:15-16), Jesus' final declaration concerning the church (Matthew 16:17-19), and then His warning not to reveal that He was the Messiah (Matthew 16:20).
- c) Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of the living God, will build His victorious Church and delegate authority to Her.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage? a) *Literary*, b) *Historical*, c) *Cultural*, d) *Biblical*.

- a) Immediately before (Matthew 16:1-12), Jesus warns against the leaven of the Pharisees, human tradition and unbelief. Immediately after (Matthew 16:21-23), He reveals His path as the suffering Messiah. This matters because it frames Peter's profession as the divine alternative to human religion and defines the Church's authority built on the rock of the God-revealed, suffering Messiah.
- b) We know very little about Matthew, and can only speculate Matthew 16:13-20's audience.
- c) Caesarea Philippi was a centre of pagan worship (Pan) and imperial cult (Caesar). Peter's profession that Jesus is the Son of the living God stands in stark contrast to the dead idols and deified emperors. This matters because the Church is founded on allegiance to the one true King, and the authority of her keys triumphs over every false god and earthly power.
- d) There are no direct citations or allusions in Matthew 16:13-20.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

Profess Jesus as the Son of God who builds, secures, and authorises His Church.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

The Defeated Gates are Death's Prison. When Jesus promises that the gates of Hades will not overcome His Church, He is not describing a fragile defence. He is declaring a finished conquest. Gates are not weapons; they are prisons. They lock the dead in darkness. But our Lord, the living God, strode willingly into death's fortress. He let those gates clang shut behind Him. And from within, by the raw power of His resurrection, He shattered them from hinge to lintel. He turned death's stronghold into a routed tomb. The Church's security, therefore, is not a probability. It is a historic fact. We do not outlast the grave. We stand upon the victory of the One who already stormed it, emptied it, and left it broken.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

Profess Jesus as the victorious Son of God who builds, secures, and authorises us.

6. What applications will you make? a) *To believers*, b) *To unbelievers*.

- a) Therefore, profess Him boldly. Declare Jesus as the victorious Son of God where you have been silent. This is the foundation of His unbreakable Church. Pray with confidence, joining our evening prayers, because He alone builds His church. Give with faith, increasing your giving to plant a new church in Benoni, since He holds the kingdom's keys. And participate with hope. Attend the quarterly meeting on 15 February. Standing with us as He advances His Church, which the gates of hell cannot overcome.
- b) Today, answer His question. Stop speculating. Profess Jesus as the Son of God and be forgiven. Speak to me after the service. Then, join us. Read Matthew 16 this week. See His vision. Consider His Church. And come witness the living Christ build what death cannot destroy.

7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) *Sermon outline*, b) *Sermon title*.

b) Who is Jesus?

- a) 1) The speculation of man (Matthew 16:13-14)
 - i) The question: "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"
 - ii) The answers: John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, a prophet.
 - iii) The point: Human religion offers many opinions about Jesus. It guesses. It speculates. It substitutes prophets for the Christ.
- 2) The profession of faith (Matthew 16:15-16)
 - i) The personal question: "But you. Who do you say I am?"
 - ii) Peter's answer: "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."
 - ii) The point: True faith is not a guess. It is a God-revealed profession. In a city of dead idols, Peter declares the living God.
- 3) The declaration of Jesus (Matthew 16:17-19)
 - i) The divine source: "Flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven."
 - ii) The Church's foundation: "On this rock I will build my church."
 - iii) The Church's victory: "The gates of Hades will not overpower it."
 - iv) The Church's authority: "I will give you the keys of the kingdom."
 - v) The point: Jesus builds His Church on the profession of His identity. He authorises it. Secures it. And Hell's gates will not prevail.
- 4) The strategic silence (Matthew 16:20)
 - i) The command: "Tell no one that He is the Messiah."
 - ii) The reason: The time was not yet full. The suffering Messiah must first go to the cross.
 - ii) The point: God's vision unfolds in God's timing. Our confession is lived out in patient obedience.

Pray

Read Matthew 16:13-20

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, ‘Who do people say that the Son of Man is?’ ¹⁴ They replied, ‘Some say John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.’

¹⁵ ‘But you,’ he asked them, ‘who do you say that I am?’ ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, ‘You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.’

¹⁷ Jesus responded, ‘Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven.’

²⁰ Then he gave the disciples orders to tell no one that he was the Messiah.

Introduction

What is the most expensive mistake a man can make? It is not a bad investment. Not a failed career. It is a wrong answer to one question. Who is Jesus Christ? Get this wrong, and every other truth slips through your fingers. Get this right, and you gain a foundation for all life. This morning, Jesus asks you that very question. He is not interested in popular opinion. He demands your verdict. My argument is this: Profess Jesus as the victorious Son of God who builds, secures, and authorises us. We will see the world’s speculation shatter against God’s revelation. We will hear Peter’s profession echo through history. We will receive Christ’s declaration of an unconquerable Church. And we will learn the purpose of His strategic silence. So let us open Matthew 16 and hear the question that defines eternity.

First, behold the speculation of man.

1) The speculation of man (Matthew 16:13-14)

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' ¹⁴ They replied, 'Some say John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.'

Caesarea Philippi was a city carved into a cliff where the god Pan was worshiped. It was also a Roman centre of the imperial cult, where Caesar was called lord. And it was situated close to a grotto named the Gates of Hades. It is in this place, a place of dead idols and deified emperors, where Jesus asks, Who do people say that the Son of Man is?

He asks His disciples. He didn't ask the crowds. He didn't enquire of the priests. He asked His men. Who was saying what? Some say John the Baptist – a prophet martyred. Others say Elijah – a prophet promised. Still others say Jeremiah or one of the prophets. All good answers. All holy men. All wrong.

Human religion guesses. Human religion speculates. Human religion offers many opinions about God. Human religion may honour Jesus as a teacher. As a reformer. As a miracle worker. But human religion will not bow to Him as God.

In Caesarea Philippi when they spoke of Jesus, they called Him a prophet. A moral example. A spiritual figure. But they would not call Him Lord. They could not. Their eyes were full of stone idols. Their mouths were full of imperial decrees. They had no category for a living God who walked among them.

Jesus exposes this. He does not debate it. He displays it. The world's best guesses fall short. Human speculation, no matter how sincere, cannot reach heaven's glory. It cannot name heaven's Son. It cannot see heaven's King.

Imagine a man describing the sun by the shadows it casts. He can speak of its warmth. He can speak of its light. He can describe the shapes of shadows on the ground. But because he never looks up, he never sees the source. That is human speculation about Jesus. It describes His effects. It admires His influence. But it misses His Person. It trades the sun for its shadows.

Human religion guesses about Jesus. But it does not know Him. This failure sets the stage for God's revelation. The speculation of man must be shattered by the profession of faith.

But then Jesus turns. He looks at His disciples. He looks at you. And He asks not what others say, but what you say. Who do you say that I am?

2) The profession of faith (Matthew 16:15-16)

¹⁵ 'But you,' he asked them, 'who do you say that I am?' ¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.'

Hear the shift. The same question. Different audience. But you. Not the crowd. Not the scholars. You. Who do you say that I am? Peter does not hesitate. You are the Messiah. The Son of the living God.

Jesus turns. He looks at His disciples. He looks at you. He's not interested what others say. He wants to know what you say. This is personal. No more speculation. What do you believe?

Peter speaks. You are the Messiah. The Christ. The Anointed One. The promise of ages past. The King who would come. Not a prophet pointing to God. Not a teacher showing the way. The Way Himself. The very One Israel longed for.

And more. The Son of the living God. Not a dead idol carved in stone. Not a deified emperor rotting in a tomb. Jesus Christ is to Son of the living God. Breathing. Active. Sovereign. Equal. Eternal. Divine in essence. In the shadow of Pan's grotto, Peter names the breathing God.

Again, where have these words been spoken? Caesarea Philippi. A city of dead gods. A shrine to Pan. A monument to Caesar. And in that place, Peter calls Jesus, the Son of the living God. He does not compare Jesus to the idols. He contrasts Him with the idols. He declares Him in a category of one. There is only One God who is alive. And His Son stands before them.

This is not human achievement. This is divine revelation. Jesus will say so in the next breath. Flesh and blood did not reveal this. This is light breaking into darkness. Truth crashing against every lie of hell and empire.

Imagine a courtroom. The witness has heard all the theories. All the opinions. All the speculation. Then the judge looks at him. Not what do others say. What do you say? The witness does not guess. He does not speculate. He states a fact. I saw it with my own eyes. Peter is that witness. He speaks what heaven has shown him. He declares what God has revealed to Him.

Peter professes Jesus as the divine Christ. This God-revealed profession is the rock upon which Jesus will build His unconquerable Church.

But what does Jesus do with such a profession? Does He thank Peter? Does He merely accept it? No. He builds upon it. He unveils His plan. And He promises victory no power of hell can undo. What then does He declare?

3) The declaration of Jesus (Matthew 16:17-19)

¹⁷ Jesus responded, 'Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven. ¹⁸ And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven.'

Peter you're blessed. Not because you're clever. Because heaven spoke to you. Jesus is going to build the future on that profession. He will promise victory. He will delegate authority. Deliberate words. Sure promises.

Jesus begins with the source. Simon, you're blessed. Why? Flesh and blood did not reveal this. No man taught this. No book gave this. Heaven showed you this. A divine gift. Rock-solid because God is its author.

Then Jesus builds the future. You are Peter. Πέτρος. A stone. And on this rock. πέτρα. I will build my church. What is the rock? Not Peter. He's just a man. The rock is the profession Peter made. The God-revealed truth that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Upon that unshakable reality, Jesus says, I will build my church. My assembly. My called-out people.

He guarantees its victory. The gates of Hades will not overpower it. Yesterday Lance pointed out to me that gates are defensive structures. They represent the strongest point of a fortress. Hell's fortress will be stormed by a Church built on a living God. The Church will advance. Hell's forces will fall.

Then He delegates authority. I will give you the keys of the kingdom. Keys represent stewardship. What you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven. What you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven. Real authority. Delegated authority. Tethered to the King's will.

Imagine a master builder at a granite quarry. He points to a massive stone. This is the bedrock. Upon this, I will build. No storm can shift it. No flood can erode it. The foundation is sure. Then he hands his foreman the keys to the site. What you authorise here, I have already authorised. What you prohibit here, I have already prohibited. The plan is mine. The authority is yours. The triumph is certain. So it is with Jesus and His Church.

Jesus founds His unconquerable Church on the rock of divine revelation. And delegates to it heaven's authority. This declaration proves He is the Messiah. Who builds, secures, and authorises His Church as He said.

But then Jesus does something puzzling. He immediately commands silence. Tell no one He is the Messiah. What does this sudden silence mean?

4) The strategic silence (Matthew 16:20)

²⁰ Then he gave the disciples orders to tell no one that he was the Messiah.

Hear the contrast. He just promised to build a Church that Hell cannot defeat. He just handed them the keys of the kingdom. Then He says, Tell no one I am the Messiah. It's such a strange twist.

Note, He gave orders. This is not a suggestion. This is a command. Tell no one. Not the crowds. Not the religious leaders. No one.

Why? The best answer is that the time was not yet full. The plan was not yet complete. Peter had professed the Messiah. But Peter did not yet understand the suffering Messiah. Peter still needed to learn. The crown would come, but the cross must come first. The keys would be used, but the door of salvation must still be opened.

This silence is strategic. Not permanent. Purposeful. Jesus is controlling the revelation of His identity. He is moving according to the Father's timetable. He will not let human excitement run ahead of divine purpose.

This matters for the Church He builds. Her authority, her victory, her very existence flows from a Messiah who goes to the cross. The profession, You are the Christ, must include, the Christ crucified. The Church is built by a suffering Saviour. Their silence ensures the whole story will be told.

Imagine Napoleon revealing his battle plan to his officers. He shows the map. He points to the final objective. Then he says, Tell no one. The time to advance has not yet come. First, the bridge must be taken. First, the enemy's stronghold must fall. The victory is certain, but the sequence is sacred. So it is with Jesus. The Church's triumph is sure, but the path runs through Calvary.

Jesus commands silence because His messianic mission must first pass through the cross. This strategic pause ensures that His Church is built on the full truth of a crucified and risen Christ.

So what does this mean for us today? If Jesus is the Christ who builds, secures, and authorises His Church, how then shall we live?

Connect to the gospel

Jesus, the Messiah, the Son of the living God, will build His victorious Church. And delegate authority to Her. Hear the gospel that makes this true.

The Defeated Gates are Death's Prison. When Jesus promises that the gates of Hades will not overcome His Church, He is not describing a fragile defence. He is declaring a finished conquest. These gates are not weapons which have any hope of fighting against Him. They are prisons which lock unbelievers in the kingdom of darkness.

By His death, our Lord, the Son of the living God, strode into death's domain. After the cross He let those gates clang shut behind Him. And from within, by the raw power of His resurrection, He shattered them from hinge to lintel. He turned death's stronghold into a routed tomb.

And so, the Church's security is not a probability. It is a historic fact. We do not outlast the grave. We stand upon the victory of the One who already stormed the grave. Emptied grave. Left the grave broken.

The Church is not built on human courage. On moral effort. On religious tradition. She is built on the resurrected Christ. The One who has overcome. The Son of the living God. The One who holds the keys of hell and of death.

Therefore, profess Jesus as the victorious Son of God. Who builds, secures, and authorises us. He does not invite us to a speculation. He summons us to a certainty. His victory is our foundation. His authority is our stewardship. His reign is our hope.

So then, how shall we live in light of this victorious Christ?

Believers

Profess Him boldly. Declare Jesus as the victorious Son of God where you have been silent. This is the foundation. Your profession is not a theory. It is a testimony. It turns private belief into public allegiance. It means the Christ you trust in the quiet names you before His Father, and the Christ you profess in the crowd names you before your world. Speak His name where it costs you comfort to do so. At work. At home. In the quiet corners of your doubt. Let your lips affirm what your heart knows. He builds. He secures. He authorises. Profess Him this week.

Unbelievers

Today, answer His question. Stop speculating. Your opinions are the shadows. His Person is the sun. Profess Jesus as the Son of the living God. And be forgiven. This is not a negotiation. It is an amnesty. Speak to me after the service. Profess Jesus as the Son of God today and speak to me.

Our vision at Benoni Baptist Church

Our vision at Benoni Baptist Church

You have heard His vision. Jesus builds His victorious Church. He authorises her. The gates of hell cannot overpower her. That is His vision. Our task is not to invent a vision. It is to align ourselves with His.

Last Saturday, your leaders met. We acknowledged a pressing reality. The Lord is growing His church here. Not a Sunday passes without visitors. More stay than move on. God's grace is on display in real time. This growth demands planning. We will run out of space. We will run out of seats. We will run out of parking.

In step with Jesus' vision, we agreed. We must prepare to plant. We will plant a conservative, evangelical Baptist church with our healthy DNA right here in Benoni. This is new for us in living memory. It is a big plan. Yet it is the clearest way for us, in this moment, to align with our King's command. He will build. We will obey.

We have not figured out every detail. But we have identified four building blocks. People. Finances. A shepherd. A venue.

We believe we will be ready when our Sunday morning attendance reaches 320. So that a core of our own people can go with the plant. That will need growth. That will need change. We believe we will be ready when our regular giving increases by 40%. That will happen naturally as we grow. But it will also give us the opportunity to give generously towards this plan. We believe we will be ready when the Lord provides a qualified shepherd. A man of godly character. A man of spiritual competence. One who shares our DNA. And we believe we will be ready when a suitable venue is secured. A venue in Benoni. For a sister church in Benoni. Not so close that we fish the same pond. But near enough to labour together for our city.

That is our vision. To plant a church.

Here is how you partner with us. Pray. Partner. Participate. First, pray. Join our evening prayers tonight. Ask the Lord to go before us. Plead with Him to revive our own hearts. And revive the city where we live. Second, partner. Your faithful giving fuels mission and ministry here and beyond. Third, participate. Attend our quarterly meeting on Sunday, 15 February. Stand with us as we step toward this work. The leadership will bring this proposal at that meeting. Benoni Baptist Church will prepare to plant a conservative, evangelical Baptist church with our healthy DNA in Benoni.

Jesus builds His Church. I'm excited to build with Him. I'm excited to build alongside you. I trust you are too.

Conclusion

Let's cycle back to the beginning. What is the most expensive mistake a man can make? A wrong answer to one question. Who is Jesus Christ? This morning, we have heard the only answer that stands.

We heard the speculation of man. Human religion guesses. It offers shadows and calls them light. It cannot name the Son. We heard the profession of faith. Peter spoke heaven's revelation. You are the Messiah. The Son of the living God. In a city of dead idols, he declared the living God. We heard the declaration of Jesus. Upon this rock of divine revelation, He builds His Church. He secures it. The gates of hell will not overpower it. He authorises it with the keys of the kingdom. We heard the strategic silence. The cross must come before the crown. The full truth of a suffering Messiah must be told.

Thus, the argument stands firm. Profess Jesus as the victorious Son of God who builds, secures, and authorises us. He builds. Therefore, we obey. Our vision to plant a church in Benoni is not our idea. It is our alignment. He builds His Church. We prepare the ground. He secures. Therefore, we hope. Our future is not a fragile defence. It is a finished conquest. The tomb is empty. The gates are shattered. We stand on a victory already won. He authorises. Therefore, we act. We pray with confidence. We give with faith. We participate with purpose. We join our evening prayers. We increase our giving. We attend the meeting on the fifteenth of February.

So I return to you the question. Who do you say that He is? To the believer, profess Him boldly. Speak His name where you have been silent. Your testimony is the rock He uses. To the unbeliever, stop speculating. Your opinions are shadows. His Person is the sun. Profess Jesus as the Son of the living God. And be forgiven. Speak to me.

This is our foundation. This is our task. We do not guess. We know. We profess. He is the Christ. The Son of the living God. He builds. He secures. He authorises. And His Church will prevail.

May you leave this place certain of His victory. May you live this week confident in His authority. And may you profess His name before a watching world.

The benediction

2 Corinthians 13:13, The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

This is how I parse Greek verbs:

- I use a three-letter combination in square brackets (e.g. [PMI] for Present, Middle, Indicative) after a verb, which I underline.
 1. First letter indicates the tense. Tense deals both with time and kind of action.
 2. Second letter indicates the voice. The relation of the subject or agent to the action.
 3. Third letter indicates the mood, participle, or infinitive.
- Tense:
 - P: present, continuous or linear action.
 - I: imperfect, continuous action in the past.
 - F: future, both progressive and punctiliar action.
 - A: aorist, expresses punctiliar action that has happened.
 - R: perfect, represents an action that is complete but has an ongoing resultant state of being.
- Voice:
 - A: active, reflects the subject that performs the action.
 - M: middle, the agent participates in the results of the action.
 - P: passive, subject is being acted upon by someone or something else.
- Mood/participle/infinitive:
 - I: indicative, reality, that which is actually occurring.
 - S: subjunctive, likely to occur.
 - M: imperative, a command that is possible.
 - P: participle, participles are verbal adjectives that behave like a verb and an adjective..
 - N: infinitive, verbal nouns that use the preposition "to", and they can also be used with "ing".

This is how I indicate the function of conjunctions:

- I put a letter in square brackets before a clause to indicate a logical relationship.
 - [S] - SERIES, Each proposition makes an independent contribution to the whole (and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [P] - PROGRESSION, Each proposition is a further step toward a climax (then, and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [A] - ALTERNATIVE, Each proposition expresses an opposite possibility arising from a situation (or, but while..).
 - [W] [Ed] - WAY-END (ACTION-MANNER), Statement of an action and one which tells more explicitly what is involved in carrying out this action (in that, by).
 - [I] [I] - COMPARISON, Statement that clarifies an action or idea by showing what it is like (even as, as...so).
 - [-] [+] - NEGATIVE-POSITIVE, The relationship between two alternatives in which one is denied so the other is enforced, implicit in contrasting statements (not...but).
 - [Gn] [Sp] - GENERAL-SPECIFIC, Statement of a whole and one or more statements which set forth parts of the whole.
 - [Ft] [In] - FACT-INTERPRETATION, Statement and clarifying statement; does not set forth a distinguishable part of the preceding whole.
 - [G] - GROUND, Statement followed by the argument or reason on which it stands; supporting proposition follows the supported proposition (for, since, because).
 - [I'] - INFERENCE, Supporting statement followed by the conclusion drawn from it; supporting proposition precedes the supported proposition (therefore, wherefore, consequently).
 - [C] [E] - CAUSE-EFFECT (ACTION-RESULT), One action and another action which results from the first as an automatic consequence (that, so that, with the result that).
 - [C?] [E] - CONDITIONAL, Like cause-effect except existence of the cause is only potential (if...then, if, except...).
 - [M] [Ed] - MEANS-END (ACTION-PURPOSE), One action and another that is intended as the goal or purpose of the first (in order that, that, lest, to the end that).
 - [T] - TEMPORAL, Proposition and the occasion when it occurs (when, after, before).
 - [L] - LOCATIVE, Proposition and the place where it can be true (where, wherever).
 - [Adv] - ADVERSATIVE, Main clause that stands despite a contrary statement (although, yet, but, nevertheless).
 - [Q] [A] - QUESTION-ANSWER, Statement of question and answer to that question (question mark ?).
 - [S] [R] - SITUATION-RESPONSE, The relationship between a situation in one clause and a response in another.
 - [B] [L] - BILATERAL, A proposition which supports propositions in both directions, rarely used.

This is how I use colour highlighting:

- **Orange**: structure indicator, conjunctions, and prepositions.
- **Yellow**: verbs, Greek, and Scripture reference.
- **Green**: keywords.
- **Red**: repeated words.
- **Pink**: imperatives.
- **Blue**: main idea.

On my sermon preparation sheet, these are the questions and an explanation:

1. How has the author organised this passage?

- a) An outline: The author's organization (or structure) is a way of talking about the shape or form of a biblical passage. Beneath the surface of each passage is an underlying arrangement of material and a logic that the author has used to organize the passage. And each part of the passage has a role to play in that structure.
- b) Tools: Identify the text type, and any grammatical tools used to identify the structure.
- c) The emphasis: The structure will reveal an emphasis that the author is making.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?

- a) Literary context: How do the passage that comes before and the passage that comes after relate to your passage?
- b) Historical context: The historical situation or circumstances experienced by the first audience at the time when the book was written.
- c) Cultural context: The setting in the daily life of the people/characters in the book and how that will have been understood by the first audience. This is distinct from historical context in that it does not relate to a particular audience in a particular place at a particular time, but the details of life that the people/characters in the text had in common. Anything that requires extra-biblical knowledge should be treated skeptically.
- d) Biblical context: Is the author citing or alluding to some previously written Biblical passage? What connections could the author have reasonably expected his first audience to make.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

The author's main point is a way of talking about the aim of a passage as a whole. It can be descriptive or prescriptive. It is not simply a summary statement. But rather, it is the idea of which the author is trying to persuade his audience. As you work on articulating the author's argument, please keep in mind that it needs to be specific enough to the passage that it clearly comes from the particular passage (and not any other passage), it is for the first audience, it should be one single sentence that is both short and clear, and captures the argument of the passage.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

What part of the gospel (the death and resurrection of Christ) is in view? Every part of the Bible, every passage of Scripture, in some way relates to the gospel of Jesus Christ. What parts of the passage connect to the gospel? The connection must be legitimate and textually driven.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

6. What applications will you make? a) To believers, b) To unbelievers.

The main point of a sermon is the fundamental statement of what you, as a speaker today, are trying to convince your audience today. It will certainly be intimately related to the author's main point for his original audience and it will consider the gospel connection. It should be well reasoned and, perhaps, articulated as the result of proof (so depending on premises and building arguments).

7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Sermon outline, b) Sermon title.

On my sermon preparation sheet, this is how questions relate to one another:

- 1 a) should be driven by the text.
- 1 c) should be driven from the outline in 1 a).
- 2) should be directly relevant to 1 c).
- 3) cannot be disconnected from 1 c), and should be clarified by 2).
- 4) must be found in the text.
- 5) cannot be disconnected from 3), and should be driven by 4).
- 6) should flow from 5).
- 7) should structurally relate to 1 a), and make the argument in 5).