

# Declare Your Loyalty

One day, Jesus pressed his disciples to declare their faith in him openly. When we declare our allegiance to Christ publicly, it becomes the premise by which others will relate to us and the foundation of our personal witness.

- 1** → **Making Disciples**  
**Declare Your Loyalty**  
 Live Authentically  
 Break Through Social Barriers  
 Answer People's Questions  
 Point Others to Jesus



## Peter's Declaration Matthew 16:13-20

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." 17 And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. 18 And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. 19 I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." 20 Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

## Observations

### Who do **the people** say...?

The people got it wrong. The Messiah was before them, yet they failed to see his true identity.

### Who do **you** say...?

The affirmation that Jesus is the Messiah is first spoken before Christ himself. It is then the basis for our personal witness.

### The Father reveals the truth.

Jesus wanted Peter to realize that his faith did not come from himself, but was a gift from God.

### The Gates of Hell

The gate of an ancient city was typically a building where the town officials met to do official business. The authorities of hell cannot prevail against the church.

### Binding and Loosing

Jesus conferred the authority to build his kingdom to his followers.

### Do not tell anyone.

Jesus' time had not yet come, so he asked his disciples to remain silent for a time.



## Your Notes *what God is saying to you:*

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## Application *for abundant living:*

### Declare your loyalty

One of the first things we can do to bear witness to our faith is to say simply,  
**“I am a follower of Jesus Christ.”**  
This declaration sets the stage for God to begin working in our relationships. While some might dismiss us, others will be drawn to us. These are the ones Jesus is drawing to himself.



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## Further Study *for a deeper understanding:*

The Gospel of John was the last of the four gospels to be written. By that time, the church had begun to develop more accurate statements about who Jesus is and what he has come to accomplish. Read the introduction of this Gospel for a fuller explanation in:

### John 1:1-16

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## Questions *for reflection or group discussion:*

Where do you see the need for a Messiah in our current culture?

What will you do now that you know you have authority in the kingdom of God?

As Jesus told his disciples to remain silent, is there ever a time when we should remain silent?