

## Helping or Hindering God's Cause Matthew 16:21-23

“A kingdom person” is the one willing to adjust his decisions to God’s decision even if God’s decision is not the one preferred.” (Tony Evans). Based on this definition a kingdom person is the one willing place God’s agenda over his/her own.

That definition is simple, the complicating part is knowing when my decisions are God’s decisions and not just my own. With every decision we make in God’s kingdom, we either help advance the kingdom or we hinder its advancement.

*Even in church we may hinder the kingdom of God from moving forward because we are not willing to adjust our expectations to God’s expectations.*

When Jesus began his earthly ministry, he started telling the people to change their ways because God’s kingdom was at hand. Many people followed Jesus, some became disciples and some were appointed as apostles. They all had expectations about Jesus. They began to follow him because they believed he was the expected Messiah of Israel. They embraced Jesus’ teaching and continue to follow him as they expected the kingdom of God to be ushered in any moment. One day Jesus spoke to them openly about the road to Jerusalem. This was the teaching they didn’t expect; they didn’t like either. It reveals to us that this idea never crossed their mind.

### **Matt.16:21-23**

Matthew tells us that “from that time on” Jesus began to tell them what would happen to him in Jerusalem. This is right after Jesus had asked the disciples who do people say I am? And who do you say I am? Peter acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, the Son of God. Jesus applauded Peter for this God-revealed answered. They all agreed that Jesus was the Messiah. But the expectation they had about the Messiah didn’t match Jesus’ expectation.

### **Jesus told them the suffering road all the way to the cross.**

*-Suffering many things at the hands of elders and chief priests and teachers of the law.*

*-death*

*-Resurrection of the death on the third day.*

The disciples only heard suffering and death, this thing took them all by surprise because they didn’t expect this to be how the kingdom would begin. This was truly devastating news to their hopes and dreams concerning the Messiah.

Then Peter intervened; he was very close to Jesus and he just confessed Jesus as the Messiah and got commended for it.

*Have you ever done something you thought was the right thing to do, but ended up being the wrong move?* Maybe you tried to help, but instead of helping you ended up aggravating the situation? Well. This is Peter here. He felt the need to talk to Jesus about what he just heard, and not just talk with Jesus; the text tells us that Peter took Jesus aside to rebuke (reprimand) him. **Never Lord, (God forbid it Lord) This should never happen to you.**

**Jesus' response to one of his best friends: (v23)** *Get behind me Satan! You are a stumbling (hindrance) to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."*

**Isn't it interesting?** Peter at one time he is being used by God to reveal his truth, then later Peter is being used by Satan to try to stop God's plan.

One day you find yourself advancing God's kingdom and the next day you become a hindrance in God's kingdom.

**Why did Jesus call Peter Satan?** You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.

*You are only thinking about your agenda*, what makes you happy and you are not thinking about what makes God happy. You're only concern about your agenda and not God's agenda here. *How often do we find ourselves relating to Peter, our thinking or perspective doesn't match God's plan?* Peter's thinking wasn't in line with God's mission. Jesus was about to fulfill God's mission and he wasn't going to let his friend deter him from it.

*Satan can use the most subtle thing; the most committed disciple, the most exciting activity to get your thinking off of God's mission.*

The expectations of the apostles had blinded their eyes and blocked their ears for they didn't even hear about the resurrection. When our thinking is not in tune with God's thinking, we become hindrance in his kingdom. At that time we stop doing God's work and begin to enable Satan to do his work through us.

***When someone or something encourages you to go against God's mission, God's plan, God's will, God's teachings. Then at that moment you must recognize the voice of Satan.***

Peter had the best intentions in his mind and he was also looking for the interest of the other apostles. But even your best intentions may not always help advance God's kingdom.

We must adjust our thinking to God's thinking or else we become hindrances in his kingdom. **What does God want?** He left us a manual by which you can know him, his will and plan for you.