

Matthew 16:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me,
Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the
things that be of God, but those that be of men.

Analysis

Jesus' rebuke 'Get thee behind me, Satan' reveals how Peter's well-meaning resistance to the cross served Satan's purposes. Peter's confession in verse 16 came by divine revelation; his rebuke here comes from human reasoning. Reformed theology recognizes that even believers can speak for the adversary when resisting God's will. The phrase 'thou art an offence unto me' (Greek 'skandalon'—stumbling block) shows Peter's words tempted Jesus away from the cross. 'Thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men' distinguishes divine and human wisdom.

Historical Context

Peter's reaction reflected contemporary Jewish messianic expectations focused on political triumph, not sacrificial death. Jesus' rebuke echoes His wilderness temptation where Satan offered power without suffering (Matthew 4:8-10). The designation 'Satan' doesn't mean Peter was possessed but that he functioned as the adversary at this moment, opposing God's redemptive plan.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Study Questions

1. When have you resisted God's plan because it involved suffering?
2. How can good intentions become satanic temptations?
3. What distinguishes divine wisdom from human religious thinking?

Interlinear Text

τῶν the things G3588	δὲ But G1161	στραφεὶς he turned G4762	εἶπεν and said G2036	τῶν the things G3588	Πέτρῳ unto Peter G4074	Ὑπάγε Get thee G5217
ὀπίσω behind G3694	μου, me G3450	Σατανᾶ· Satan G4567	σκάνδαλον an offence G4625	μου, me G3450	εἰ thou G1488	ὅτι οὐ art not G3754 G3756
φρονεῖς for thou savourest G5426	τῶν the things G3588	τῶν the things G3588	θεοῦ that be of God G2316	ἀλλὰ but G235	τῶν the things G3588	
τῶν the things G3588	ἀνθρώπων those that be of men G444					

Additional Cross-References

Colossians 3:2 (Parallel theme): Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.

Philippians 3:19 (References God): Whose end is destruction, whose God is their belly, and whose glory is in their shame, who mind earthly things.)

Mark 8:33 (References God): But when he had turned about and looked on his disciples, he rebuked Peter, saying, Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.

Matthew 4:10 (References God): Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

John 6:70 (Parallel theme): Jesus answered them, Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?

Romans 14:13 (Parallel theme): Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

1 Chronicles 21:1 (Parallel theme): And Satan stood up against Israel, and provoked David to number Israel.

Genesis 3:17 (Parallel theme): And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it: cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;

Luke 4:8 (References God): And Jesus answered and said unto him, Get thee behind me, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.

2 Samuel 19:22 (Parallel theme): And David said, What have I to do with you, ye sons of Zeruiah, that ye should this day be adversaries unto me? shall there any man be put to death this day in Israel? for do not I know that I am this day king over Israel?