

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