

WHO AM I?

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TEXT: Matthew 16:13-18

INTRODUCTION:

1. Throughout Jesus' ministry, he asked about 130 questions!
 - a. All of these questions had the purpose of helping people understand the Word of God, and also who He really was.
2. In the passage under consideration Jesus asked one very important question: Who am I?
 - a. The answer we give to this question will determine how important Jesus is to us and also where we will spend eternity!
3. With this in mind, let us examine the following points:
 - a. The geographical context where the question was made
 - b. The popular and erroneous view of the day regarding Jesus
 - c. The correct and true answer to the question
 - d. The importance of the question and the right answer
4. As we study this lesson, let us search the Scriptures to make sure the things being said are so (Acts 17:11).
 - a. Let us also be doers of God's Word and not hearers only (James 1:22).

Regarding the question, Who Am I? Let us examine the following points:

THE GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT OF THE QUESTION

1. **What do we know about the region of Caesarea Philippi?**
 - a. Located north of the Sea of Galilee, at the base of the southwest slope of Mt. Hermon.
 - b. This place had been long associated with idol worship, since a site for pagan worship was located here, and most of the people who lived there were pagans.
 - c. Herod the Great built a temple here in honor of Caesar Augustus.
 - d. Later Philip named this region "Caesarea Philippi" in honor of Emperor Tiberius.
 - e. This location of Caesarea Philippi is different from the one mentioned several times in the book of Acts.
2. **Why did Jesus choose this location to ask His disciples this question?**
 - a. We can only speculate as to the reason, but it may be the case that a vital contrast can be made between the dead idols of the region and the Son of the living God.
3. **Things have not changed in our days!**
 - a. We still live in a world where most people are given to idolatry!
 - b. Today, more than ever, we need to answer Jesus' question the correct way.
 - c. Jesus will always stand out among many other gods! He is the Son of God, He is Deity.

THE POPULAR AND ERRONEOUS VIEW OF THE DAY REGARDING JESUS

1. **The popular view of the day: *What others thought of Jesus?***
 - a. *John the Baptist* – Herod thought Jesus was John the Baptist (Matthew 14:1-2).
 1. This cannot be the case since John the Baptist was sent from God to bear witness of Jesus and to prepare the way for Him (John 1:6, 8, 23).
 2. John the Baptist himself clarified that he was not Jesus (John 1).

- b. *Elijah*—This was probably based on the teaching of Malachi 4:5-6.
 - 1. The New Testament teaches that John the Baptist was the Elijah that was to come (Matthew 11:14; 17:10-11).
 - 2. Jesus is not the literal Elijah that some expected to come in the future.
- c. *Jeremiah*—Maybe because Jeremiah, like Jesus, both spoke against sin and rebellion against God's Word. Also, both of them suffered as they proclaimed the Word of God.
- d. *One of the prophets*—this was a popular view of the day.
 - 1. The man born blind acknowledge Jesus as one a prophet, as well as many (John 9:17).
 - 2. The Samaritan Woman (John 4:19)
 - 3. The Jews (John 6:14; 7:40).

2. None of these people, which had an erroneous idea of who Jesus really was, actually acknowledged Him as the Son of the living God.

3. **What about today? What do people think of Jesus?**

- a. Some do not even believe He existed—the historicity of Jesus proves that He was a historical person.
- b. Others think that He was just a good man—the wonderful things He was able to accomplish do not permit this description alone to be correct.
- c. Others think He was just a good prophet—Not enough!
- d. Others think that Jesus is the brother of Satan—Totally incorrect and out-of-context.
- e. Others called Jesus “a sinner.”—A terrible accusation against the Son of God! (John 9:24).

4. Sadly, many do not recognize Jesus for who He is—The Son of the living God, the only Savior of the world.

THE TRUE ANSWER TO THE QUESTION: “WHO AM I?” REVEALED BY GOD

- 1. **Who do YOU think I am? - Jesus was more interested in what His Apostles thought of Him!**
 - a. The Apostle Peter answered, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*” (Matthew 16:16).
- 2. The word “**Christ**” comes from the Greek word, “*Christos*” which literally means, “The anointed one.” This word denotes someone who has a special task from God to carry out.
 - a. The Old Testament term is “**Messiah**”, which in the Septuagint (LXX) is the word “*Christos*” (cf. Daniel 9:25-26).
 - b. Another meaning for this word is “deliverer.” He is the one who delivers us from sin (John 8:32-34).
- 3. **Three offices were anointed under the Old Testament:**
 - a. Kings (1 Samuel 10:1).
 - b. Priests (Exodus 28:41).
 - c. Prophets (1 Kings 19:16).
- 4. Jesus fulfilled each of these offices as He is the **King** of kings, and Lord of lords (Revelation 19:16). He is also our **High Priest** (Hebrews 4:15), and **the Prophet** that was to come (Deuteronomy 18:15).
- 5. The title, “**Son of the living God**” is a very important one. Why?
 - a. This title points to the Deity of Christ.
 - 1. This means that Jesus possesses the same nature and divine essence as God does.

- b. The Deity of Christ is emphasized throughout the entire Bible, especially in the Gospel of John (e.g., the "I am" statements, the 9 signs, the 5 witnesses, the preexistence passages, and the Deity passages).
- 6. **How the Old and New Testament describe Jesus:**
 - a. The Prophet that was to come (Deuteronomy 18:15; Acts 3:22).
 - b. The Savior of the world (Matthew 1:21).
 - c. The Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36).
 - d. The Son of God (John 20:30-31).
 - e. The Son of Man (Mark 14:62; Daniel 7:13-14).
 - f. The Messiah (John 4:25-26).
 - g. The Way, the Truth and the Life (John 14:6; Acts 4:12).
 - h. The Resurrection & the Life (John 11:25).
- 7. **The main source of the right answer for Peter's confession: God's revelation.**
 - a. The answer was revealed by God to the Apostle Peter (Matthew 16:17-18).
 - b. Peter had acknowledged Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God (John 6:68-69); nevertheless, the context of Matthew 16:13-18 is of great importance, because Jesus took such great confession as a great opportunity to speak about His Church. This was the perfect moment!
- 8. We can be confident that this is the right answer because God has revealed this through His inspired Word.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION & THE RIGHT ANSWER

- 1. What does it mean for Jesus to be the Christ, the Son of the living God? Why was it important for His Apostles to know this? Why is knowing this so important to us?
- 2. *Jesus being the Christ, the Son of the living God...*
 - a. means He is the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (approximately 332).
 - b. means He is the only founder and building of His Church (Matthew 16:18; 1 Corinthians 3:11). The Church is His body (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23; Colossians 1:18).
 - c. means that Jesus, as the founder and builder of the Church, is so powerful to establish the Church that not even the gates of Hades were able to prevail against such establishment.
 - d. means He is the only Savior of the world (John 3:16; John 14:6; Acts 4:12).
 - e. means He is the only one who can deliver us from Sin (John 1:29; Ephesians 1:7).
- 3. **What is the spiritual application for us today?**
 - a. Acknowledging Jesus as the Christ and the Son of the living God will strengthen our faith in Him.
 - b. Deep conviction in Jesus as the Messiah and the Son of God will encourage us to teach others this great truth.
 - c. Acknowledging Christ as the Son of God will motivate us to appreciate more and more His Church.
 - d. Acknowledging this great truth will encourage us to be more active in the work of the Lord. The fact that the Apostles acknowledged this truth helped them to take the gospel to the whole world!
 - e. Christ is the only one who can establish the one true Church of the New Testament! (1 Corinthians 3:11).
- 4. Thank God for Jesus Christ!

CONCLUSION:

1. In this lesson we have examined...
 - a. the geographical context of the question made by Jesus
 - b. the popular view of the day concerning Jesus
 - c. the true answer to the question: Who Am I?
 - d. the importance of the question & the right answer
2. May we always confess Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God!
3. If you have not obeyed the gospel of Christ, today you may do so by:
 - a. Hearing the gospel of Christ (Romans 10:17).
 - b. Believing in the gospel (Mark 16:16; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Romans 1:16).
 - c. Repenting of your sins (Acts 3:19; 17:30).
 - d. Confessing Christ as the Son of God (Romans 10:9-10).
 - e. Being baptized for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; Mark 16:16).
 - f. Living a faithful life in Christ (1 Corinthians 15:58; Philippians 2:12).

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