

## WHAT DO YOU THINK OF JESUS?

**Matt 16:13** *When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?*

**Matt 16:14** *And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.*

**Matt 16:15** *He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?*

What do you think of Jesus? Whom do you say he is? This is the most important question in this life. Your thoughts and answer will determine where you spend eternity. Get the answer right and your life is right; get it wrong and your life is wrong – this is the bald, brutal truth. Sir Isaac Newton purportedly observed an apple fall down in a garden and asked why it did not float up rather than fall down. This story is most probably spurious, according to scholars, but is instructive for us nevertheless. If observing something as banal as an apple falling down led Newton to the discovery of the law of gravity, should we not be asking who created the law of gravity? Jesus asked the question to his apostles who lived 24/7 with him for three years. They had seen his mighty miracles and heard his amazing words and, yet, he asked them who he is. Jesus is not interested in having followers; following Jesus does not save people – knowing his identity and having a personal revelation and relationship with him saves. Jesus asked this question in Caesarea Philippi. This was a place dedicated to the worship of many gods from the Greek and Roman worlds. In fact, this place was considered one of the biggest of its kind in that region of the world with many pilgrims coming from all over the world, which earned it the factious name “Galilee of the gentiles” (Matt 4:15). When there are many gods and philosophies vying for our attention, the Lord will ask us who he is.

**Matt 16:14** *And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.*

Because these “men” were Jews, they mentioned the opinions of Jews – that Jesus was a virtuous man like John, Elijah and Jeremiah. Clearly, this answer showed that the apostles had much work to do; these opinions were wrong and bereft of salvation; they contained no blessing. These opinions were respectful of Jesus, but they were nonetheless erroneous and damning. “Revelations” from human beings contain no salvation. Indeed, they were not even listening to John the Baptist. “John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the

chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable” (Luke 3:16, 17). Elijah sent down fire upon rebellious people but Jesus baptizes entire communities worldwide with his fire. Jeremiah could only weep for the sins of his people, but Jesus died and took away the sins of the world. Only the Spirit of Jesus, the Father, can reveal the identity of his flesh and blood. Even if I were to thunder from this pulpit that Jesus is God manifested in flesh, the everlasting Father, it will be of no help to you unless you receive this directly and personally from God. All other answers to this world – the law of gravity and motion, the nature of electricity etc. – can be received through sustained inquiry and teaching, but not who Jesus is. This requires a revelation from the Father himself because sin and Satan conspire to conceal this soul-saving truth.

***Mat 16:16*** And Simon Peter answered and said, *Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.*

***Mat 16:17*** And Jesus answered and said unto him, *Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*

***John 6:44*** *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

The identity of Jesus cannot be known unless by revelation from the Father. Who is the Father who reveals the Son? If the Father is separate or distinct from the Son, that is not a revelation – that is logic. However, if the Father is the same person as the Son, that requires a divine revelation. “Philip saith unto him, Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us”. Jesus saith unto him, Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou then, Shew us the Father? (John 14:8, 9). Humans made of flesh and blood reveal earthly matters, but God alone can reveal spiritual matters. Seven hundred years before the time of the Lord, God called a prophet named Isaiah to declare the identity of the Son and the Father. God had to use a prophet because prophets are channels for divine revelation. They did not know what they were saying.

***1Pet 1:10*** *Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you:*

***1Pet 1:11*** *Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow.*

***1Pet 1:12*** *Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the angels desire to look into.*

What did the Father say through Isaiah? “For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace” (Isaiah 9:6). How does this relate to Jesus? The answer is that he is the Father manifested in flesh, as the Father revealed to Isaiah. When we say “Jesus”, we are referring to the invisible Father who now dwells in a body of flesh and blood prepared through his own Spirit. “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God” (Luke 1:35). Jesus, then, is 100% divine – the Holy Spirit visible in a body prepared by himself. The body is God’s salvation for us. For one thousand five hundred years, the nation of Israel obsessed about salvation through the act of animal sacrifices. Most of their time was spent on finding, purchasing and offering animal sacrifices in the Temple for their sins. One nation looked desperately for one flesh and blood sacrifice to end all sacrifices. That sacrifice to end all sacrifices and bring in eternal salvation was found when a baby was born in Bethlehem, and his name is salvation (Jehoshua/Yeshua).

***Heb 10:10*** By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

***Heb 10:11*** And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins:

***Heb 10:12*** But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God;

Peter received the revelation about Jesus from the Father and was declared to be blessed – i.e. made happy by God. A person who receives this revelation from the Father will speak with conviction and without an iota of doubt. With God, there is no “maybe” or “perhaps” – only certainty and assurance. Secondly, among the Jews, there were many opinions, but among the apostles, only one – may there be only one opinion of Jesus in the Apostolic Church. We follow the apostles, hence let our revelation and declaration of Jesus also be one. A person who receives the revelation of Jesus from the Father is blessed because he or she will never waffle or be unstable in the knowledge of God ever again. “But the dove found no rest for the sole of her foot, and she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark” (Gen 8:9). Once you receive the revelation of Jesus, you will find rest, like the dove who found rest in the hands of Noah. Noah means rest. May God bless you and give you rest in the revelation of Jesus Christ!