

THE QUESTION-"JUST WHO IS JESUS?"

Matt 16:13-19

Introduction: Most everyone has an answer to the questions posed in the verses of our text.

Here we see:

A Social Question.. Matthew 16:13 "... Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?"

A Personal Question... Matthew 16:15 "... But whom say ye that I am?"

An Eternal Question... our eternal destiny depends upon our answer to these questions as they relate to one solitary Person. That person is Jesus Christ.

It has been estimated that more than 40 billion people have lived on the earth since God created Adam/Eve. (Red and yellow, black and white.) They have spoken many different languages and hundreds of dialects. They have practiced multitudes of religions and promoted a variety of cultures.

They have ranged from Einstein's to morons in intelligence and knowledge. They have ranked from the Paul Gettys, the Howard Hughes, and the Bill Gates in wealth. They have been as well known as Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle, or as unknown as the child in the streets of India or the pygmy in a jungle.

But everyone of these forty billion in all these varied places and different backgrounds and time periods have one thing in common. Their eternal destiny depends upon their relationship to Jesus Christ.

The question Jesus asked the Pharisees, "*What think ye of Christ, whose Son is He?*" is not just for the religious leaders of His day, but for every person who has ever lived on earth.

Other similar questions are posed in the Bible. On one occasion the Bible says, "*And they feared exceedingly, and said one to another, 'What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'*" (Mark 4:41) On another occasion the Bible says, "*He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.*" (Luke 9:20)

When faced with this question, Paul spoke of Him as, "*the same yesterday, today and forever.*" John said, "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*" Pilate said, "*I find no fault in Him.*" God spoke from Heaven and said, "*this is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" Peter blurted out, "*Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God.*" Gabriel said, "*He shall be great and shall be called the Son of the Highest.*" The Roman centurion aid, "*Truly this was the Son of God.*"

Billy Sunday stated in one of his sermons, "To many Jesus Christ is only a grand subject for painting, a heroic theme for a pen, a beautiful form for a statue, or a thought for a song; but to those who have heard His voice, who have felt His pardon, who have received His benediction, He is music, warmth, light, joy, hope and salvation, a friend who never forsakes, who lifts us when others try to put us down. We cannot wear Him out; we pile on Him our grief's and troubles. He is always ready to lift us; He is already ready to help us; He addresses us with the same love; He beams upon us with the same smile; He pities us with the same compassion. There is no name like His. It is more inspiring than Caesar's, more musical than Beethoven's, more conquering than Napoleon's, more eloquent than Demosthenes, more patient than Lincoln's. The name of Jesus throbs with all life, weeps with all pathos, groans with all pain, stoops with all love. Its breath is laden with perfume. Who like Jesus can pity a homeless orphan ? Who like Jesus can welcome a prodigal home ? Who like Jesus can make a drunkard sober ? Who like Jesus can illuminate a cemetery plowed with graves."

Dr. S. M. Lockridge said in his famous sermon on the Lordship of Christ, "He *precedes* all others in priority, He *exceeds* all others in superiority, He *succeeds* all others in finality, He is the Master of the mighty, He is the Captain of the conquerors, He is the head of the hero's, He is the Leader of the legislators, He is the Overseer of the overcomers, He is the Governor of the governors, He is the Prince of Peace, He is the King of Kings, and He is the Lord of Lords."

Dr. R.G. Lee in his eloquent way stated, "to take Jesus out of the Bible

would be like taking calcium out of lime, carbon out of diamond, truth out of history, matter out of physics, numbers out of math, and cause and effect out of philosophy."

A.W. Rainsbury stated, "We read of Alexander the Great, Herod the Great, Napoleon the Great, but never Jesus the Great. He is simply Jesus, nothing need be added to that."

A.W. Grant said, "He is the Lamb of zoology, He is the Rock of geology, He is the Star of astronomy, He is the Head of biology, He is the Flower of botany, He is the Public Relations man of sociology."

Someone wrote:

- He put on humanity that we might put on divinity.
- He became the Son of Man that we might become the sons of God.
- He lived in poverty and was reared in obscurity.
- In infancy He startled a king;
- In boyhood He puzzled the doctors.
- In manhood He ruled the course of nature.
- He never wrote a book, yet all the libraries of the country could not hold the books that have been written about Him.
- He never wrote a song, yet He has been the theme of more songs than all other subjects combined.
- He never founded a college, yet all the schools together cannot hold as many students as those who study His life.
- He never practiced medicine, yet He healed more broken bodies than all the doctors that have ever lived.

Great men have come and gone, yet He lives on.

- Herod could not kill Him,
- Satan could not seduce Him.
- Death could not destroy Him,
- The grave could not hold Him.
- All others have imperfections, but He had none.
- He is "the fairest of ten thousand;" "He is altogether lovely."
- And He is our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

I. JESUS IS CREATOR... He Existed Before Creation.

The pre-existence of Christ is one of the most amazing truths of the Bible. **John the Baptist** was born six months after Jesus and yet he made the statement, "*He that cometh after me was preferred before me: for He was before Me.*" (Jn. 1:15)

The Apostle John wrote, "*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*" (Jn.1:1) A few verses later, he wrote, "*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the father, full of grace and truth.*"(Jn. 1:14)

Paul wrote, "*Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God....took upon Him the form of a servant.*(Phil. 2:6)

Simon Peter said, "*Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world....*" (I Pet. 1:20)

Christ Himself said, "*For I came down from heaven*"; (Jn,6:38) "*Verily, Verily,.. before Abraham was, I am.*"(Jn.8:58) He also spoke of "*the glory which I had with Thee before the world was.*" (Jn.17:5)

1. He worked in Creation to make everything.

John's record tells us that, "*All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.* (Jn. 1:3) Paul's statement declared, "*For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him:*"

2. He worked at Controlling everything.

The Bible states that after He created everything He then controlled it and kept it in place. Col 1:17, "*And he is before all things, and by him all things consist.*" The word *consist* means, holds together.

3. He was in Communion with the father.

Jesus spoke of the love that the Father had for Him before the foundation of the world. (Jn. 17:24) There was perfect harmony and agreement in the Trinity.

II. JESUS IS THE VIRGIN BORN SON OF GOD.

Isaiah had prophesied years before that a *"virgin would conceive and bring forth a son and His name would be called Immanuel: (Isa. 7:14)* Jeremiah prophesied, *"for the LORD hath created a new thing in the earth, A woman shall compass a man."* Of course he was referring to a woman bringing a man child into the world without a man. This is referred to as "parthenogenesis."

Dr. John Rice wrote, "all Christianity stands or falls with the doctrine of the Virgin Birth."

Dr. John Walvoord said, "The incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ through the Virgin Birth is the central fact of Christianity."

III. JESUS IS FULLY HUMAN.

Jesus had human parents. Even though Joseph was not the human father of Jesus he was still the *custodial* parent. Luke tell us that Mary physically gave birth to the Son of God. *"And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS."* (Luke 1:31)

Jesus had a human body, soul, and spirit. In (Matt 26:12) Jesus said, *"For in that she hath poured this ointment on my body, she did it for my burial.* In (John 12:27) He said, *"Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour."* Again, the Bible says in (Mark 2:8) *And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts?"*

Jesus looked like a man. Mary mistook Him for the gardener at the tomb. We read that He grew in stature and wisdom. (Luke 2:40) He asked questions of those around Him. (Luke 2:46) He prayed. (Luke 11:1) He was tempted (Matt. 4:1) He learned obedience. (Heb. 5:8) He hungered. (Matt. 4:2) He thirsted. (John 4:7) He was weary. (John 4:6) He slept. (Matt. 8:24) He loved. (Mark 10:21) He had compassion.

(Matt. 9:36) He was angered and grieved. (Mark 3:5) He wept. (John 11:35) He rejoiced. (Heb. 11:2) He was troubled. (John 11:33) He sweat. (Luke 22:44) He suffered. (1 Pet. 4:1) He bled & died. (John 19:34) He was buried. (Matt. 27:59)... and He rose again (Lk. 24:46)

IV. JESUS IS FULLY GOD.

1. As seen in the Old Testament.

David said of Jesus, *"Thy throne O God is forever and forever."* (Psa. 45:6) Isaiah said, *"His name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."* (Isa. 9:6) Daniel said of Him, *"Behold one like the Son of Man came with clouds of Heaven."* (Dan. 7:13)

2. As seen in the Gospels.

A. His Omnipotence.

He had power over disease. He healed the lepers. He gave sight to the blind. He raised up the man at the pool of Bethesda. He had power over demons. This was manifest when He cast out the legion of devils into the pigs. He had power over death. He raised Jarius's daughter, the widow's son, and Lazarus. His power was not limited by distance. He healed a man's son who was miles away from the place where he commanded the healing.

B. His Omnipresence.

Jesus saw Nathaniel under a tree miles away. He knew of the plot of Judas. He knew the condition of the hearts of the Pharisees. He knew the thoughts of the scribes. He knew all about the woman of Samaria.

C. His Omnipresence.

He said, *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."* (Matt. 18:20) In the Great Commission, He said, *"Lo I am you always, even unto the end of the world."*

3. As seen in the book of Acts.

Stephen saw Jesus and said, *"Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God."* Jesus was in His glorified body when Stephen saw Him. The Ethiopian Eunuch also testified to this

truth when he confessed, *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."*

4. As seen in the Epistles.

Paul said, *"Christ liveth in me."* (Gal. 2:20) God spoke to Peter and said, *"This is my beloved Son, hear ye Him."* In Jude He is referred to as, *"The only wise God and Saviour."* In James He is, *"the Lord of Glory, our Lord Jesus Christ."* In the book of Revelation Jesus Himself declared, *"I am He that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore."*

V. JESUS IS OUR SINLESS SUBSTITUTE.

Pilate said, *"I find no fault in Him."* Pilate's wife had an insight into His sinlessness. She said, *"have thou nothing to do with this just man."* Judas Iscariot cried out, *"I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood."* And there is the statement of the thief on the cross, *"this man has done nothing amiss."*

In 2 Cor. 5:21, we read. *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.* Again in 1 Pet 2:22, *" Who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth: "And in 1 Jn 3:5 "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin."*