



THE HUMBLEHEART MESSENGER

Contending For The
Christian Faith
(Jude 1:3)



2023

THE MESSAGE FOR TODAY!



WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?

Try to imagine yourself in the presence of Jesus probably on a hillside in the district of Caesarea Philippi about 25 miles north of the sea of Galilee. After being out in the world among the people of that region who knew about Jesus, also referred to as "The Son of Man," when Jesus asks you, *"Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"*

If you or I had been among those who witnessed His divine teachings, the miracles and healings that had taken place in public for all to see, we would have responded in the same way. We would have answered, *"Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets."* Up to that point during His ministry on earth Jesus had not officially revealed Himself to His disciples as the long awaited Messiah.

Imagine if you considered yourself as one of His disciples or simply one of the followers of Jesus pondering in your mind

how you should answer His question. Picture yourself among the group gathered when he asks, *"But who do YOU say that I am?"*

Now the question is directed personally to you, not to the rest of the group or the person standing next to you. Think of the brief moment of silence as you look at each other waiting, but your mouth will not open. Your mind is probably recalling the things you have witnessed or perhaps even the words of Nicodemus a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews when he said to Jesus, *"Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."* (John 3:1-2)

Suddenly Simon Peter answered and said, *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."* *"And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.'"*

You could say that this passage of Scripture taken from Matthew 16:15-20 is the foundation of the Church that was born at Pentecost Acts 2:1-47. Concerning His Church Jesus told Peter he was blessed because of his confession of faith. This faith is the "rock" foundation of the Church.

Peter himself was not elevated to a higher position in the Church beyond the example of his faith. As a matter of fact it was shortly after Peter's confession when he felt emboldened to tell Jesus he would somehow stop Him from suffering and being killed in Jerusalem. Can you imagine how

Peter must have felt when Jesus responded, Matthew 16:23 *"But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but man's.'"* Peter went on to make other mistakes, but recovered by repentance and the filling of The Holy Spirit as we learn in Matthew 26:34, John 21:15-17 & Acts 2:14-47.

I believe "every" human being, male or female, will stand before the throne of Christ and be asked, *"Who do you say that I am?"* What we believe about Jesus Christ and who He is determines our salvation. This present world needs to see a precise example of what we believe about Jesus. The following can help with the support of Scripture:

"We believe in Jesus Christ, truly God and truly man, in whom the divine and human natures are perfectly and inseparably united. He is the eternal Word made flesh, the only begotten Son of the Father, born of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit without human father, the only Mediator between God and man. We believe that He is equal with God in all things. As ministering Servant He lived, suffered and died on the cross as the only Savior of mankind. He was buried, rose again "bodily" from the dead and ascended into heaven to be with the Father, from whence He shall return. He is eternal Savior and Mediator, who intercedes for us, and by Him all men will be judged."

(Isaiah 9:6, Matthew 1:23, John 1:1-3, 14, John 10:30, Colossians 1:15-17, 1 Timothy 2:5, Hebrews 9:24, 1 John 2:2, Revelation 20:11-15)

The clear teaching in Scripture from Genesis through Revelation confirms the Deity of Jesus Christ, God the Son, the Messiah, and that salvation can only come through Him. (John 14:6, Acts 4:12)

As we begin a new year the preaching, teaching and writing does not change. Ask the ones you love the question that matters most, is your name written in the Book of Life? (Revelation 20:15) It is obvious this world is fading quickly. Turn your eyes upon Jesus, pray and walk humbly in His Word. ☐

Ministry Update

Humbleheart Ministries continues to offer Bible studies open to the public. Our core teachings are the Essential Christian Doctrines and Comparative Religions. January through February 2022 there was a lot of construction with ministry renovations. In mid March we began our Spring quarter Bible study. After a brief break in July we held our Fall quarter Bible study. Our studies during 2022 included "How We Got The Bible," an accurate history of "The Pilgrims," and the studies of how we can deal with the intrusion of LGBTQ+ and Gender confusion infiltrating the Church – from a Biblical worldview.

While we will continue our studies that cover some of those topics I hope to direct our focus more on "Evangelism."

Remember what the function of a healthy faithful Christian Church should be. It is Worship, Instruction, Fellowship and Evangelism. (John 4:24, Romans 10:15, Hebrews 10:25, 2 Timothy 4:5) A Church found lacking in any one of the four areas of function will not survive the things to come. One affects the other. Evangelism is rarely seen today among the many Churches in our communities. Weak, compromised or tainted preachers are allowed in the pulpits. The fellowship is dead because people have decided that going to Church is no longer relevant. Worship becomes ineffective due to overwhelming distractions. These things we do not want to hear, but we know it is true.

Call upon the Lord in prayer. Seek His guidance and instruction to rescue us from ruin before it's too late. Remember *"...Greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world."*

Note: January 1, 2023 marks 33 years since the founding of Humbleheart Ministries and 20 years serving as pastor of the Community Church of Cutting, French Creek, NY.

MARANATHA!

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