

**“Who Do You Say I Am?”****How You Answer That Question Has Major Implications****1. For You    2. For the Church    3. For Your Work**

- **Vs. 15.** I get it, some ppl think I'm: JB raised fr dead; or prpht Elijah retrnd fr hvn; or some reincrntn of prpht Jer. I know, some ppl think I'm: myth created by men to control society; or just another relgs tchr amng many others over centrs. Some ppl think: contrvrsl figure – cause of wars, bldshd, hatrd, fam dvn. **Vs. 15.** That: the esstnl qstn; etrnal qstn – and how you answr is a statemnt of your personal worldvw; it's window into your soul; and determns your etrnty. There is no more imp qstn in wrld for you answr. Picture J standing in front you right now, asking you persnly: **vs. 15.**
- That qstn puts you at fork/road. Either you make bold confssn of Xian faith and answer like Pt: **vs. 16.** And, of course, your answr doesn't have use those exact wrds, that spcfc formula. You could just repeat what God said re self in 1<sup>st</sup> rdng: I bel you are **“Lord, Lord, compsn/grcious God, slow angr, abndng in love/fthflnss, maintng love to Ks and forgvng wckdns, rbln, sin”** (6-7). Or your answr could be more simple; Paul said in 2<sup>nd</sup> rdng: **“If you declare w/mth ‘J:Lord’ and bel in hrt that God raised him fr dead, you'll be svd”** (10:9). So there's lot ways you can say it. But at this fork/road, you either confess that J is Mes, promsd Sav/wrld, Son/God, who is exctly what Bbl says re him, whose tchns are 100% true, whose life/dth/res have brought about salvtn entire wrld – or you don't! No mid grnd. You either: confess or deny; hold to his tchns or rejt them; bel or don't! So here we stand, at this fork/road, and J asks us: **vs. 15.** How you answr that qstn has major impletns...
- First of all, for you persnly. When **vs. 16-17.** That means: if you're belvr/J, your faith is a gift given to you by God Fr. You didn't accept Xp as Sav; didn't choose bel in hvn; you were born in unbelf. But your Fr/hvn convrted you, changd, made into bel. Did this by sending you his HS, who entered your hrt, at baptism or when hrd Gos, and brght you to faith. And that's mrcl – most imp mrcl in life! And very often God uses human agnts (as says here: **“flsh/bld”** ppl) to bring about that mrcl. I'm thinkng: parnts who teach chldrn re J; your Pr who baptzs, shares Wrld w/you; or if go LES, your tchrs who explain Bbl to you – these: flsh/bld agnts that God uses to reveal truth to you. But the mrcl itself still comes fr God alone. And so, **vs. 17.** And when Fr/hvn sends HS to work faith in hrt and reveal truth to you, you are truly blessed – with: forgvnss/sins; peace of knowing that God's loved you fr all entity; and prom etrnal life w/J in hvn. If you don't bel in J, if reject work/Spirit, then not blessed; cursed. At this fork/road we're reminded how often J spoke re 2 paths: r/l, sheep/goats, good/bad fish, broad road & narrow way, wheat/weeds, bels/unbels. There are only 2 options. So how you answr J when he asks “Who you say I am” has major impletns – first of all, for you persnly.
- Secondly, for ch. Listen to this: **vs. 18a** – pause: rock is not Pt; rock is Pt's confssn. When Pt says **vs. 16** – that is the rock! J making play/wrds here. See, name Pt mean stone/rock, the size you could carry w/hands; Pt has rock-like chrctrs. But when J says **“on this rock,”** word rock means bedrock, mnt cliff, rock formtn, smthng massive/immvbl. So, **vs. 18ab** (rock solid confssn/faith); **vs. 18c.** Not even hell itself can overcome the biblical truth upon which Xp builds his ch. J builds the ch on what God says in Wrld – and impletns of that are huge! GW is strong, pwrfl, enduring, holy, infallible; foundtn of faith/life. But, if you build a ch on poison of false doctrine or garbage of cultrl influence (man, lot of influences in culture today that are absltly anti-Xian) – if you build ch on that, then Xp is not the builder, and hell will eat that ch for breakfast. All twisted tchns on marg, gender, sexlty, sanctity/life, philspy; every deviation fr GW in doct/prac that so many ppl embrace bec their persnl opinion is more imp to them than GW – all of that, Satan & hell just gobble up. Stn loves it when ppl & chs conform to wrld instead of Wrld, bec false doct & unscrptl prac erodes saving faith; and w/o faith you go hell – which is exctly what Stn wants for you, and is exctly why he fights day/night to push you off rock solid foundtn of GW into quicksand/falsehood. So you have to: be careful; be studnt of Wrld; let W/G be the standard for what you bel & how you live! **Vs. 18** (confssn of God's truth). The true ch is built on God's truth, and it'll endure forever; hell doesn't stand chance vs it. But the gates/Hds will most certly overcome evthng contrary to God's truth.

- And finly, how you answer J has major implctns for your work. As a Xian, J has given you a commsn. He says: **vs. 19**. And 2 chptrs fr now, in Mt 18, it's clear that J gives these keys/kngdm not just to Pt but all Xians. Keys do 2 thngs: lock & unlock (or, words/text: bind & loose). These are the keys of L&G. When you proclaim law to sinner, show them error of ways, urge them repent, warn that if continue in sin they'll be locked out God's grace, locked out hvn – that is using binding/locking key of law. But when a sinner repents and you forgive them in name/J (as J has taught us to do!), when you comfort them w/assrc of God's love/grace – that is using loosing/unlocking key of Gos. J has given you both keys and commsns you use them in your Xian life. Prs use them pubcly, in pub min, on behalf of cong. We proclaim L&G in liturgy, sermon, sacrmnt, private convrstns, in personal C&A. But you have keys, too; and J wants you use them! But you can't warn vs sin if society has convinced you that what God calls sin actly isn't. And you can't share Gos if never receive it, bec never come ch or Com. You can't use keys of L&G if you're not cut to hrt by law & comftrd/restored by Gos yourself. You have to live L&G; it has be blood that flows thru veins. J, Mes, Son living God has be faith of hrt and confssn of mouth. The keys/kngdm are in your hands. And even though **vs. 20**, now that he's risen fr dead, he commsns us to go & make discs of all nations, baptizing & tchnng them w/L&G. That is our work.
- So, **vs. 15**. That is J's qstn for you today. And how you answer that qstn has major implctns: 1) for you persnly; either you're belvr/un; either hold onto Xp by faith or reject work of his Spirit. Major implctns: 2) for the ch; a ch is either built by Xp on rock solid foundtn of truth/GW vs which gates/Hades cannot prevail; or a ch is built on sandy soil of false doct, man's opinions, and society's latest whims. And 3) major implctns for our work. If we truly bel that J is Mes, Son living God, then it's our job/joy to share L&G w/wrld using keys/kngdm. I pray that evone us here today has same confssn/faith in our hrt that Pt had on lips, so that when J stands before us & asks **vs. 15**, we all can answr confdntly: **vs. 16**.

### **Matthew 16:13-20**

<sup>13</sup> When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?" <sup>14</sup> They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets." <sup>15</sup> "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."

<sup>17</sup> Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven. <sup>18</sup> And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it. <sup>19</sup> I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." <sup>20</sup> Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.