

The title for today's message is: "***Jesus Questions His Disciples.***"

Jesus asked: "***But who do you say that I am?***"

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Life is full of questions, many questions such as: What am I going to do with my life?, or what will I be?. We ask ourselves, will the kids turn out all right?

What will tomorrow bring? Not only do these practical question beg for an answer, the same is true of questions concerning our spiritual life.

Such as; Am I saved? When I die will I go to heaven? Why does God allow such tragedy to exist on the earth, and in my life?

Then there are the philosophical questions, such as; Which comes first the chicken or the egg, or how many angels can fit on the head of a pin.

Or the one I like," If a tree falls in a forest and no one is around to hear it fall, does it still make a noise?"

We could go on and on. Look, all of these questions have one common element to them which is illustrated by the following story:

"A college student tried to prove how smart he was one day by asking his professor the following question, "Is the bird I'm holding dead or alive?"

If the professor said the bird was dead, the boy was going to free the bird and let it fly away; if the professor said it was alive, the boy was going to crush the bird.

The professor looked at the boy and said, "My boy, the answer is in your hands."

The common element with all questions is that the answer can and does lie with us. We can search for the answers to most questions.

We can find it ourselves or we can surrender the question and the answer to someone else, namely God.

But we can do something with all the questions of life and their answers. I began talking about questions because this morning our gospel lesson and the second lesson pose some questions for us.

In the gospel lesson, Jesus asks the disciples two questions: **"Who do men say that the Son of Man is?"** and **"Who do you say that I am?"**

And in the second lesson Paul asks, **"For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"**

These questions beg for answers and from us here this morning. So let us see if the answers do in fact lie in our hands.

In our gospel lesson for today, Jesus is taking a survey, a Gallup Poll, if you will. He asks the disciples what they have heard about him.

After hearing the disciples answer, Jesus then asks the disciples, ***"But who do you say that I am ?"***

Then Peter, good old Peter, responds for the group of disciples by saying: ***"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."***

Now in his answer, Peter was saying a whole lot about Jesus. He was saying that he knew Jesus was more than John the Baptist, more than a prophet like Elijah, and that He was connected to God Himself.

Here, Peter saw past the man and saw the divinity hidden in Jesus, giving him good reason to say: ***"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*** For example:

An organist was practicing one day in a great church in Europe. A man came up to the organ and asked if he could play.

The organist looked at him and thought to himself. I shouldn't let this man play, just look at him, he is unshaven, and he wears soiled clothe. So he told the man no.

But the man asked again and again. So finally the organist let him play thinking, he probably doesn't know much about organs.

The man's fingers danced over the keyboard in a way the organist hadn't heard in his life so he let the stranger play on and on.

When the stranger got up to leave, the organist couldn't contain himself and shouted, "Who are you, what is your name?"

As the stranger walked away, he turned looked over his shoulder and told the organist his name.

The organist gasped, and said to himself, " to think, I almost didn't allow the master play."

Now, Peter saw the divinity in the man Jesus and I wonder if we too see and feel the divinity of Christ today?

Look, we can miss seeing Jesus who is all around us and in each of us, because at times we get so caught up in the exterior stuff of our faith.

That we cannot see the God that is beyond all of that stuff, to the God who is active, living, and interested in our individual lives.

"Who do you say that I am?" asks Jesus. The answer lies in your hands?

Now Paul is asking in his first question, what motivates God? Just what makes Him tick?

Yet, Paul realizes all one can do is stand in awe of God, praise him, fall down on ones knees before Him.

But to understand, explain and comprehend all that God does is impossible. So the question to us is: Do we allow God to be God?

Do we stand in awe and wonder of His majesty and power? In the book titled; "Forever in Debt" the author wrote:

"One of the great tragedies of our time is that we Christians have lost our sense of wonder and awe.

We are a scientifically minded generation who consider all of living as a logical thing to be explained, analyzed and defined.

Again do we allow God to be God, or are we so preoccupied with figuring out how we can be gods ourselves.

That in our own searching and wanting to be in control, we have lost sight of the majesty and awe that the early Christians had of God?

Do we see the church and all that God represents as something that makes us "feel good".

And if it doesn't meet our expectations, we simply leave to find something that does?

Is the church a place that we hope will make us "feel good" because each day is a bad experience that it makes our days seem more positive.

Is it the kind of place that allows us to stay shut up in ourself, get a few strokes and then leave.

Is it a challenging experience that is simply like an inspiring lecture, is it an escape from the everyday madness of the world.

Is it like a drug that we expect will make us magically better able to deal with life or even escape the responsibilities of life?

Look, people join and leave churches on the basis of how a church supposedly "makes a person feel".

I would like to suggest that we cannot let a mere feeling, control or subvert the function of the church in our lives."

Let us look at our worship time as a time not to "feel good" but as a time for caring, sharing, loving and receiving each other in God's name.

Is the church suppose to make us feel good or is it suppose to be the other way around?

Worship is not primarily a time where we "feel good", rather its a time for us to be focused on God and what He has done for us through Christ?

Let us use our worship time to regain that awe, that wonder, that sense of worshipping in the name and presence of almighty God.

Let us capture again the essence of worship which begs for Jesus' question to be answered.

"But who do you say that I am." and Paul's question, ***"For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?"*** The answer my friends lies in your hands!

Amen

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy spirit be with us forever. Amen.