

## SERMON - PASTOR GREG

15.09.2024

WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM? Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus had healed a deaf and mute man. Jesus had fed about 4000 men with seven loaves of bread. Jesus had healed a blind man. Then he asked his disciples a question- the ultimate question for all people of all time: WHO DO THE PEOPLE SAY I AM? Let us pray.

Jesus had asked his disciples *“Who do the people say I am?” They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” Then Jesus asked: “But what about you, who do you say I am?”*

What about us? Who do you say that Jesus is? Not hard really because we have just confessed the Creed where we said that we believe that Jesus is The only begotten Son of God...God of God, Light of Light, begotten not made...Being of one substance with the Father...By whom all things were created...Becoming a human being by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary...Crucified for us...suffered...died and buried...raised and ascended to where He had come from...He will come again and His kingdom will have no end.

This is what we believe. And so much more. And because we believe this we also believe his words- all of his words- from Genesis to Revelation- all of these words are the words of Jesus the Christ- the Son of God- God.

Including these words: Matthew 4:17: *Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.*  
4:19: *Come, follow me.*

5:20: *I tell you that unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the Law, you will certainly not enter the Kingdom of Heaven.*

5:29: *If your right eye causes you to sin, gouge it out and throw it away.*

6:15: *If you do not forgive those who sin against you, your Father in heaven will not forgive your sins.*

10:32: *Whoever disowns me before others, I will disown him before my Father in heaven.*

12:30: *He who is not with me is against me.*

John 14:6: *I am the Way and the Truth and the Life. No one comes to the Father except through me.*

Do you believe this? Jesus also spoke of heaven and hell. Jesus said: Matthew 7:13: *“Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow is the road that leads to life; and only a few find it. Do you believe this?”*

If not- why not? It seems unfair. It seems hard. It seems uncompassionate. If it is God who made us, then why did He make us like this? Why is anyone deserving of eternity in hell? If there is only salvation through faith in Jesus Christ- why?

What about all the other good living people who try very hard to live good lives- no matter what god they serve? Why does God only choose some to be saved?

Is there any other alternative? Some in the Church believe that in the end- all people will be saved- that all live for eternity in heaven. Some in the Church believe that those who deny Christ will be annihilated when they die. Many in the Church- deep down- believe that most people are good people and not deserving of hell.

Big questions. What do you believe?

What about these words: John 10: *I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep .... My sheep listen to my voice; I know them and they follow me. I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.*

And finally: John 11:25: *I am the Resurrection and the Life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies...Do you believe this?*

Christmas and Easter tell us the story of God and His creation- including you and me. *Believe in God and believe in Jesus* and live for ever in light, life and love.  
Amen.