

May 29, 2022  
The Seventh Sunday of Easter  
Pastor Matt Duerr

### He is God Alone! What's in a Name?

Grace, Mercy and Peace from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Amen. He is God Alone; that's the sermon series for Easter and we're in the last segment now where we focus on God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Last week we focused on God, the Father and He laid out a situation where He says He is Creator and He is the One who can tell the future through prophecy. He then makes a challenge and says; "Come before Me, make your case against Me." Understand there is no other God. You're in a boatload of trouble.

Today we look at God the Son. And as I prepared for the sermon one of the first things that popped into my mind, I don't know why, was a movie from the 1970's I saw. It was a Clint Eastwood movie, a western about a small town. It's actually filmed in Lee Vining, California; just north of Bishop. It's about a small town that was oppressed by a group of thugs until one day a man came into town. A man who never said his name, a man who taught them to stand up for themselves and not allow themselves to be oppressed. When the thugs came back, they failed miserably. standing up for themselves. This one man took all the thugs on and the last one as he is about to die, looks up at Clint Eastwood and says, "Who are you?"

And so, we move to our gospel today. There's a similar question but this time it's not a gunslinger or Clint Eastwood. It's Jesus Himself asking His disciples; "who do the people say the son of man is?" Now Son of man is the Messianic title from the book of Daniel. And the disciples accurately tell Jesus that the people are saying John the Baptist was the son of man. Or that Elijah, Jeremiah, one of the other prophets like maybe Isaiah was going to return and be the son of man. Jesus follows that up then with another question. "But who do you say that I am?" Good old Peter: man he grasps the moment. He understands what's going on and he says very clearly, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living

God.” Why did he say that? Well because it’s true, but he put it all together.

The word Christ is Greek. It means the anointed One. Who was anointed? Well, the priests were anointed, kings were anointed, and the promised Messiah was known as the Anointed One. And when we look at that word, Christ the anointed One. When the Old Testament was translated from the Hebrew into the Greek about 200 years before Jesus, YHWH, the name of God was replaced with EGO IMI, I am. And Messiah was replaced with Christ. So, he's putting it together.

Jesus suggests talk to them about being aware and wary of the teachings of the Pharisees and the Sadducees. What was the teachings of the Pharisees in the Sadducees? That's why Jesus asked what do the people say or who did the people say the son of man is. The disciples were accurately telling him what the Pharisees and Sadducees said. It wasn't that Jesus said. When Peter hears Jesus ask; ‘but who do you say that I am?’ He gets it. It's not what the Pharisees and Sadducees say, it’s what He says. It's what You say. It's what You do. You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.

Now Fast forward about 2000 years to today. Who do people say is the Messiah? What’s being taught? Well, we've already heard there's many pathways to God. There's many religions. But more and more increasingly God is out of the picture, and the Messiah that were being taught about is man himself and the government, higher education. Of course, you’ve got to follow the science.

But what would you say? Who do you say that Jesus is? Take a moment think about that. Put together an answer in your mind, play it before Him, let's see how it lines up. Let's see how it lines up with what the Bible says. Maybe you took one of the titles and you said Jesus is my Redeemer, He's my Savior, my LORD, Messiah. Maybe like Peter, you say He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. Maybe King of kings, LORD of Lords. All of them very good but let's get a little more ambitious, shall we say.

Now you might say, 'I know where you are going with this it's like last week in the sermon; 'not what would Jesus do, but what did Jesus do?' What did Jesus say? The book of John, that's where pastor Matt's going with that. That's where Jesus gives the seven "I am" statements. Again remember that transition, the translation from Hebrew to Greek. Yahweh, I am; the Greek Ego Imi; seven times Jesus used the personal name of God in describing Himself. Seven is the number of perfection, as we've heard in the revelation Bible study. So maybe you came up with one of those. Maybe you went with John 6:35 "I am the bread of life." Jesus is the One, who brings us the food for eternal life. "I am the light of the world." In this Dark World Jesus shines brightly as the Savior, John 8 verse 12. Or maybe you went to John 10, which is kind of loaded because it begins with Jesus being the door of the sheep. He's the one who opens the way to heaven. That ends with I am the Good Shepherd who lays down his life for the sheep. Maybe you went one chapter later Lazarus had died. Jesus arrived He's talking with Martha, and He says "I am the resurrection and the life, he who believes in me, though he dies, yet shall he live and whoever lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?" You know Martha came right back with, "Yes Lord, I believe you are the Christ of God." Or maybe you thought of doubting Thomas in John 14, where Jesus says "I'm going to prepare a place for you, that you may be where I am. You know the way to where we're going where I'm going. And Thomas goes back to Him, "Lord, we don't know where you're going so how can we know the way?" Jesus says, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father, except through me." Or maybe you went with the last one from John 15. "I am the true vine, you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is the bears much fruit.

You'd have some rock-solid answers. But some of you, maybe the minute I mentioned that number 7 as being the number of perfection, maybe you've been in one of the revelation Bible classes; or in one right now and you think Oh yeah, I know where he's going with this. Jesus, Himself talks to the seven churches and He identifies Himself to each one of those churches. "This is what Jesus said. He said to the Church of Ephesus; Him who holds the seven stars, that is the angels watching over

the churches, in His right hand, who walks along the seven golden lampstands, the churches themselves. Jesus is the One who's in control of His churches. He is present here with us right here, right now and He has set angels to watch over us and protect us. What a great answer!

Of course you may say, yeah but emphasis was a picture of a poor church. I'd rather go with Smyrna, which was rock solid, and Jesus identified Himself to them as the First and the Last. This is taken from the book of Isaiah; "who died and came to life." Again, a definite message coming from Isaiah, "there is no other, only Jesus does that!" Or maybe you went with Thyatira; He is quote "the Son of God," and "His eyes are like a flame," judgment-His eyes, He sees all, He judges all. And whose feet are like burnished bronze. The alter, the utensils in the temple were made of burnished bronze and these were the things that were used in the sacrifices, the payment of sins, the satisfying of God's judgment. And what does it tell us? Jesus is the one who walks among this church. He is the One who satisfies God's divine judgement. When He walks among the church, He knows the faithful. Their salvation is short, He knows the unfaithful, He will crush them.

Maybe you want to Pergamum where Jesus says He is the sharp, two-edged sword which when we go to Hebrews 4, verse 12, we know this was God's word. And in John one, we know that He is the word made flesh. Then there was Sardis where He tells them that He is the One who has the seven perfect spirits. That would be the Holy Spirit that He promised to give to His disciples. Maybe you like Philadelphia, another one of excellent churches because it sounds almost America. And Jesus had a lot to say about Himself there. He introduced Himself as the quote, Holy One. The One set apart to save them. As the True One, He's the True One, there is no other. He is the one who has the key of David. In other words, He's the key to understanding the Messianic line, it all points to Him. He is the One who opens, and no one shuts. That's a reference to heaven, He opens it to all mankind. No one can shut that door, Jesus did everything that's necessary. On the flip side, He is the One that shuts, and no one opens. At judgment, He will judge, and He will close the gates of hell and it's over.

Then there is Laodicea Jesus is “the Amen,” which means yest it is so. What is so? All of it. That’s what is so. Its yes, it so to everything. And He is the Faithful and True Witness, the beginning of God’s (wait for it) creation! Here we are back to the creation again. Why is He the Amen, the Faithful and True witness? Because He was and is faithful to God’s creation. Faithful to the point of dying on the cross to save God’s creation. That is what makes Him a faithful and true witness on our behalf.

Wow! Those are some great answers if you used any of those. But again, you may have said, ‘you know I just couldn't come up with a name, or a description like that. But Philippians 2:10 to 11 came to mind. “Therefore God has highly exalted and bestowed on Him, the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus, every knee should bow in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God.”

Another awesome answer! And if you used any of those names, I say well done. Being a former teacher, let me give you a grade, a solid B. You might say, ‘a solid B?’ ‘Pastor Matt, you're too harsh a teacher. We nailed all those names! How can you get any better?’ Because you missed one. What name? I don't know, that's the point. What? Listen to Revelation chapter 3, verse 12. “The One who conquers, I will make Him a pillar in the temple of my God. Never shall He go out of it and I will write on Him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, the new Jerusalem, which comes down from my God out of heaven and my own new name.” You see, when Jesus returns and He claims us, He is our witness, and He takes us to be with Him, He will write on us His new name. Well, what is that name? I have no idea! I just know He has a new name coming and it's a new name that's going to take everything we covered in this sermon, every single thing, and it's going to pull it all together in all the glory and majesty of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God!

Listen to what He says right after saying and my own new name. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.” What is the spirit saying to the churches? There are many things

chronicled there in those chapters, but I think the fact that it follows His own new name, we are to have an ear and hear that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who Peter proclaimed as the Christ, the Son of the living God is bigger than you or I have ever imagined. And to Him be all glory honor and praise, Amen.