

Who Are You?

- I. In Matthew 16:13, we read where Jesus asked the question of who did men say he was?
- Mt 16:13 (NKJV) — 13 When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, “Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?”**
- A. Here, he was interested in **who did men say** he was? We are told they said... **Mt 16:14 (NKJV) — 14 So they said, “Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”**
1. They had various names for him because they weren't really sure who he was. They didn't know what to call him?
 2. Even though they called him those names they were wrong!
- B. Now, he wanted to know what some **specific men** had to say. Then he said to his disciples...
1. **Mt 16:15 (NKJV) — 15 He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”**
 2. This time he was interested in not what the world called him but who his people said he was.
- C. Then **Peter spoke up** and said **Mt 16:16 (NKJV) — 16 Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”**
- D. Notice what Jesus said after that **Mt 16:17 (NKJV) — 17 Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.**
1. This is important because God, the creator of all things is the one who has the final authority to name the things he has created!
 2. Therefore, Peter having communicated with the father, recognize that Jesus was the Christ, the son of the living God.
 3. **No matter what people said, God's word was the final authority and it was God the father that had declared that Jesus was the Christ.**
 - a. That settled it!

THE CREATOR OF A THING IS THE ONE WHO HAS THE FINAL AUTHORITY TO NAME THE THING HE HAS CREATED

Jn 8:18 (NKJV) — 18 I am One who bears witness of Myself, and the Father who sent Me bears witness of Me.”

- E. On that day, Jesus asked, **who did men say that he was? Then he asked who did his disciples say he was?**
1. Today I'd like to turn the tables on the question. I would like to ask you, **"Who do men say you are?"**

WHO DO MEN SAY YOU ARE?

- F. *Let us talk for a few minutes and reason together how men see you.*
1. You see me here and you know me and if I ask you who do you say I am? What would you say?
 - a. You may say many things of which you may be right and wrong. But, basically from the information you have you can make certain assumptions that you believe to be correct.
 2. Let's talk about some people in the audience.
 - a. *pick a person in the audience*
 - b. *have them stand*
 - c. *let them describe themselves*
 - (1) *who they are by name*
 - (2) *who they are by occupation*
 - (3) *who they are by any other reference they choose to make*
 - (4) *repeat the process*
 - d. *make a summary of the people presented*
 3. We have a limited knowledge of the people who are around us. We know them by name, by profession, by characterization or by many different ways of describing them.
 - a. But what is most important and is the next question to be asked like the example of Jesus

WHO DOES THE FATHER SAY YOU ARE?

4. Remember, Jesus told Peter he was blessed because he spoke who the father said he was.
 - a. This is the most important question that can be asked regarding all of us.
 - b. No matter what we think of ourselves, in the final analysis only what God says about us will stand.
- G. Now I would like to share with you a story Jesus told his disciples.
- 1.

Now, Who Does The Father Say You Are?

- II. This is a serious question. After all it is God who defines what his creation is.

Just a few scriptures of God naming things.

Ge 1:3 (NKJV) — 3 Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light.

Ge 1:5 (NKJV) — 5 God called the light Day, and the darkness He called Night. So the evening and the morning were the first day.

Ge 1:8 (NKJV) — 8 And God called the firmament Heaven. So the evening and the morning were the second day.

Ge 1:10 (NKJV) — 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good.

Ge 32:28 (NKJV) — 28 And He said, “Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel; for you have struggled with God and with men, and have prevailed.”

Now we shall see a story where God the father also gives another designation to a specific man.

Then, he defines other men the same way when they do the same things this man does.

See if you can figure out the name that God calls people who fit a certain description.

Lk 12:16–21 (NKJV) — 16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: “The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, ‘What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?’ 18 So he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, “Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.” ’ 20 But God said to him, ‘Fool! This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?’ 21 “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

- A. **Summarize and contemporize the story;**
1. a rich man – apparently resourceful; a businessman; an entrepreneur; an astute financier
 2. extremely successful having more than enough financial return, he seeks to maximize his investment and secure it in the proper investment vehicles.
 - a. Perhaps government bonds or gold or silver
 - b. He plans and set aside for retirement
 - c. Just like many of you,
 - (1) you are trying to set things aside so that you can spend your life enjoying life.
 3. he begins to pride himself on his success
 - a. but he fails to take into account his bankrupt state in the eyes of God.
 - b. He has a concept of himself in his own eyes
- B. He probably thought of himself as
1. who his mother had named him
 2. perhaps by his profession
 3. perhaps by his title

4. or any other honor that might have been bestowed upon him by men
- C. Even though he thought of himself in a certain way,
1. God declares him something else.
 2. **A Fool!**
- D. Jesus said this particular person is not unique.
1. Just like this man there are many people who have their focus on this world and what it has to offer and have been quite successful in their worldly dealings.
 2. Jesus says many are playing the fool
Jesus says
21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."
 3. **"So is he"**? Who is he? The Bible says God says he is a Fool!
 - a. **20 But God said to him, 'Fool!**
- E. Let us look at some **definitions** of Fool as defined in the Bible;
1. From **Eerdman's Bible dictionary**; a fool is one who lacks the wisdom that comes from the knowledge of God.
 - a. Someone who in his pride,
 - (1) is wise in his own eyes, but acts contrary to the will of God, and
 - (2) does what is evil (intentionally or not) in God's eyes.
 - b. In the New Testament the fool is one who refuses to recognize the truth of God is communicated through the life and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
 2. **Common language synonyms: idiot, blockaded, dunce, don't, ignoramus, imbecile, moron**
 - a. A Google search of the word fool also shows, the word "ass". I did not want to use it because I did not want to offend. But God also used it when he compared his people
 - b. **Is 1:3 (KJV 1900) — 3 The ox knoweth his owner, And the ass his master's crib: But Israel doth not know, My people doth not consider.**
 - (1) God is using this word to refer to people who do not pay the same amount of attention to him as they do the things of the world.
 - (2) Let us look further
- F. Now, since this is April Fools' Day, let us look at Scripture definition of a real fool;

1. **Ps 14:1 (NKJV) — 1 The fool has said in his heart, “There is no God.” They are corrupt, They have done abominable works, There is none who does good.**
 - a. Here, the Bible makes it clear the fool says no to what God says.
 - (1) Sometimes a person is a fool and they don't even know it. They don't know it because they have not sought out wisdom from the word of God.
 - (2) They have chosen to be wise in their own eyes.
2. **Pr 12:15 (NKJV) — 15 The way of a fool is right in his own eyes, But he who heeds counsel is wise.**
 - a. A fool can always make excuses for what he does even when it is contrary to the will of God.
3. **Pr 17:24 (NKJV) — 24 Wisdom is in the sight of him who has understanding, But the eyes of a fool are on the ends of the earth.**
 - a. In other words, the fool is focused on things that he gets here on this earth
4. **Pr 14:9 (NKJV) — 9 Fools mock at sin, But among the upright there is favor.**
 - a. Here we see they ignore what is really sin. It might be in their ignorance and because they are fools they don't make a serious study of the word of God to find the truth.
5. In the book of Romans we are told that people
 - a. **Ro 1:22 (NKJV) — 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools,**
 - b. in verses 22 to 32 you can later read how God let them do what they want to do because you cannot explain anything to a fool.

G. So, who does God call a fool? What type of person is he talking about?
21 “So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God.”

GOD DEFINES A FOOL AS A PERSON WHO LAYS UP TREASURE, FOR HIMSELF WITH NO CONSIDERATION TO HIS MORTALITY AND HIS RESPONSIBILITY TO GOD

- a. **A person who is focused on money, prosperity and profiting here on the earth and**
- b. **Gives no concern for his eternity.**
 - (1) There are plenty of busy people on earth who give no concern that it is appointed unto man once to die and after that comes the judgment.
Heb 9:27 (NKJV) — 27 And as it is appointed for men to die once, but after this the judgment,

- c. I don't care how rich you are in this world. You are going to die!
 - (1) the cemeteries of full of proof that people die!
 - (2) only a fool can believe he won't die!
 - d. this man was caught all of a sudden. After he thought he was going to be okay. He was not okay with God!
2. Those who are focused on only themselves God says are fools. Focused on...
- a. About what they're going to do in life
 - b. the money they make
 - c. their comforts, their pleasures, their benefits
 - d. What they want
 - e. how they feel
 - f. they believe life is about being successful here on earth
3. This is not to say some of these people are not religious or spiritual.
- a. It is obvious that this was a Jew.
 - b. This would mean he would have some degree of spirituality, but he had no relationship with God.
 - c. Many people are spiritual and religious. But they are still fools in God's eyesight because they have not by the life that they live proven they have accepted Jesus as Lord.
4. That's like many people that are here today. Your focus has been on you! You say you are saved but...
- a. You are spending a lot of time trying to survive.
 - b. Trying to make a living.
 - c. Trying to be successful
 - d. trying to take care of your family
5. So very often, you just have not had the time to attend to church and experience the fellowship with other believers because you have been so busy doing other things.
6. You believe God knows your heart... But the Bible says if the heart is right the life will be right!
- a. You may consider yourself saved, but the Bible says in **Isaiah chapter 1, you're like a garden that receives no water.**
 - (1) You have been dying for the lack of true spiritual water.
 - b. You have been playing the fool. You have become wise in your own eyes believing you do not need to hear the truth of those men and women that God has called to help you with this walk in life.
 - c. You think it more important to take care of the things you value more than the things God values God values.

d. God says, not Bishop...

HE IS A FOOL WHO IS RICH TO THINGS OF THE WORLD BUT NOT RICH TOWARDS GOD

7. There is nothing wrong with wanting to experience a comfortable life, but Jesus says doing well in life is not what your purpose is here in life.
 - a. Many people are just existing trying to exist. Trying to make it. Trying to live a comfortable life.
 - b. but Jesus said, if you put his kingdom first he will give you all the things you need in life and
 - (1) he will deliver you from all of your troubles

H. Let me make it clear, there is nothing wrong with experiencing a good life! In fact, God wants you to experience a blessed life. But you must not be so focused on striving to live that you forget the one who causes you to live!

YOU MUST NOT BE SO FOCUSED ON STRIVING TO LIVE THAT YOU FORGET THE ONE WHO GIVES YOU THE ABILITY TO LIVE!

- I. From this understanding from Scripture we can see that a fool can actually be a person that calls themselves a Christian, but by their actions, they prove themselves to be fools.
 1. Prov 14:9 says the fools mock at sin. This means a person who does what they want to do in life and pay little attention to what God wants them to do. I pray that is not some of you!
 - a. If you have been ignoring the will of God, no matter how smart you may think you are God will one day call you into account.

NO MATTER HOW SUCCESSFUL YOU ARE IN THIS EARTH IF YOU HAVE NOT MADE SOME PREPARATION FOR YOUR ETERNITY YOU ARE A FOOL IN THE EYES OF GOD!

2. Jesus said:
Mt 6:19–20 (NKJV) — 19 “Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy and where thieves break in and steal; 20 but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal.
 - a. Those are great words of wisdom! Are you so caught up on the world that you have no thought of where you will be when you leave this world?

J. With what we have learned from Matthew 16 I want to review. There are 2 questions to be asked.

1. Jesus asked, "Who do men say that I am?" And they told him what men said.
 - a. John the Baptist-John name by his profession
 - b. Elijah
 - c. Jeremiah
 - d. a prophet
2. But when he asked his disciples who they say he was he was really looking for the answer to the main question.
 - a. Who does the father say I am?

K. Now, I ask you the question again,

1. "Who do men say that you are?"
 - a. Some of you might say
 - (1) your birth name
 - (2) your profession
 - (3) how you describe yourself
 - (4) any definition you want
 - (5) you might say...
 - (a) I am a businessman
 1. An attorney
 2. A doctor
 3. A Teacher
 - (b) my name is Fred
 - (c) I am a father
 - (d) I am a family man
 - (e) I am an entrepreneur
 - (f) I am a husband
 - (g) I am a rich man

2. But no matter what you say, we must ask what the father says you are

SOME PEOPLE HAVE MADE IT THEIR PROFESSION TO BE A FOOL

3. Perhaps not intentionally, but out of their ignorance or because of their desire to do things their way they have become fools and they are good at it!
4. Many propose to know more than those God has sent when he called some to be apostles, prophets, evangelists and pastors teachers

III. Let us review the story again

Lk 12:16–21 (NKJV) — 16 Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. 17 And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' 18 So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. 19 And I will say to my soul, "Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry." ' 20 But God said to him, 'Fool! This night your

soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' 21 "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God."

A. From the story we can see... This man thought he was somebody and perhaps he was somebody to people in the world, but that was not what mattered!

1. What really mattered is what God said.

**IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT YOU SAY REGARDING A THING
ALL THAT MATTERS IS WHAT GOD SAYS**

B. Let me say this to you now, no matter how you have described yourself, no matter what men may call you, no matter how successful you are,

1. God says:

a. If you have laid up treasure for yourself and are not rich towards me... **Your name is fool!**

2. God says:

a. Even if you are successful here in this earth, but have not considered your eternity... **Your name is fool!**

3. God says:

a. If you are continuing on in your sin and ignoring my word... **Your name is fool!**

4. God says:

a. If you have been disregarding the kingdom of God and focusing on the kingdoms of this earth... **Your name is fool!**

5. God says:

a. it doesn't matter what you say, hear, think or feel if you have said no to me... **Your name is fool!**

C. Today is April 1. To most of the world it is known as April Fools' Day. And for most of the world, they have played the fool. The fool of Satan!

1. But this does not have to be you!

2. The father offers you salvation and deliverance. Won't you respond to his voice and call.

3. Don't let the Father have to tell you the truth at your judgement that you have played Satan's fool so long that you are truly a fool!

D. Now, if I were to do an altar call and ask for every fool to come forward, almost certainly none of you would come. So, I am not going to ask that.

1. But please be assured of this... God will do that one day!

2. And guess what, when he does, everyone who is a fool, will have to step forward.

E. But over the next few moments I want you to consider your life and consider all the time you have spent trying to be successful here on the earth,

1. Have you given any consideration to your eternity?

2. Have you been more faithful to your job, than you have your church? Remember, Jesus died for his church.
3. This man in the story was focused on being successful in this life. Focused on building earthly wealth, but he forgot to focus on his eternity... Is that where all your energy has been focused?
 - a. This man's time ran out on him before he got a chance to get his life right with God.
 - (1) God called him a fool!
 - b. I pray that you will not be a fool before God. I pray that before you leave this earth you will make sure you are right with God.
 - c. Today is the day you're going to get that opportunity.
 - d. Today is a perfect day to make sure you're not playing the fool!

F. Listen, none of us is perfect. We all have come up short of what God wants us to do. That is the reason he sent Jesus. That is the reason for this day... Easter

G. It doesn't matter what your background was, what your sins were or even are now.

1. Remember, the thief on the cross?
2. Remember the woman caught in the act of adultery... Jesus forgave her...
3. Jesus will forgive you also
4. Today is the day!
5. Today is Easter!
 - a. Time to stop playing the fool

H. God sent his son so that everyone of us no matter what our shortcomings are can be made perfect and named perfect by the father by simply accepting Jesus as our Lord and Savior.

1. By focusing on Jesus, by denying ourselves, taking up our cross and following him we become wise to God!