

**June 2016**

**Pastor Chuck Rains**

**How Do You Know What the Truth Is?**

I hope you can tell by my voice at least that I'm getting stronger. And I'm feeling better. I think if you get these CDs of past messages, you can probably tell that I was not doing too well. So I'm very glad to say I'm here today feeling a lot better. I won't say that I'm perfect, because I'm not where Marilyn is this morning. But someday soon, right? Someday soon.

How do you know what the truth is? Good question. Matt. 16

Your inductive notes - observations, questions, interpretation, application.

*13When Jesus came into the region of Caesarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?"*

*14So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."*

*15He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"*

*16Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

*17Jesus 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.*

*18And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. 19And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."*

*20Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ.*

Open to Matthew chapter 16. I'm going to help you a little bit. That's right after chapter 15. Okay. All right. All right. Chapter 15, 16, chapter 16:13. I want you to use your Bibles because I want to work from the scriptures with this question. **How do you know what the truth is?** Verse 13-17 "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? So they said, Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets. He said to them, But who do you say that I am? Simon Peter answered and said, You are the Christ, the Son of the living God. 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.

Father, I pray that our eyes of understanding might be open in a new way this morning to your word and to your heart in Jesus' name.

Well, he's asking the question, who do men say that I am, but he says, I the Son of Man am. Now, a far more fundamental question is here than most people seem to think. You might look at this and say, well, that's a very basic question, but it's far more basic, far more fundamental than you may realize. Who do you say he is? Jesus puts one source of information before you. Men. He says, who do men say that I am? That source of information. Mankind. People. What do they say?

Then, he really gives them an answer. And he tells you really in its question who he is, who do men say that I the Son of Man am. Interesting, isn't it? The source, the opinions of man, the fact he's the Son of Man, I don't know. Did the source agree with the fact? Put that together. But he gets an answer from them about this question. And this is a pretty typical answer.

When you go to mankind, you get opinions about the truth. Listen, when you go to mankind for an answer, hear me now, you never get a single answer. In other words, what I'm saying to you is everybody you go to doesn't say the same thing. All people don't come up with the same answer when you go to them as the source for truth. It's that way on anything.

So on this most fundamental question, who is Jesus? They had multiple opinions. It's always that way with mankind. They came up with the idea, well, you're John the Baptist. Because by this time, John the Baptist had been beheaded. I don't know, those that were offering that as an answer didn't think very much because, you see, Jesus and John the Baptist were contemporaries. They had been living in the same area together for years. John was the one that baptized Jesus in

Very interesting

the Jordan. And now they would come up with the idea that he was John the Baptist. You see, some opinions are not well thought out. They may sound religious, they may sound, oh, like they're even great in their depth, you know, and they've plummeted the mysteries of truth somehow, but in truth, they're not even well thought out.

And somebody else would say, oh, you're Elijah. Elijah, he went to heaven in a whirlwind. Well, they thought because he went to heaven and whirlwind, I guess, that he was able to come down somehow and be here again. So they thought, well, you might be Elijah.

Another one was Jeremiah. Jeremiah, you know, seeing his name here in the list of possibilities may shock you, but when you read the book of Jeremiah, you see what a devoted man he was. Some of the things that he did to try to get God's message over to the people are just amazing. You ought to read Jeremiah. To think that Jeremiah would lay naked out in front of people in the dust for days and days and days just to get the message over to them. You say, you know, that guy must have been a fanatic. Well, he was, and though the people of that day turned away from him, they knew that he was sold out, that he was a very special messenger, and they believed he was from God. Not that they accepted it, but his name shows up here or one of the prophets, and that's where opinions of men multiply. They just kind of multiply: is this Hosea or Joel or Amos or Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Zachariah, Malachi? Who is this? Is this the prophet Nathan? Who is this? They didn't know. That's what happens when you go to mankind and try to look for truth. You get many opinions, but you never get an agreement.

**(Observe what the word but does. What is the contrast?)<sup>1</sup>**

**But** who do you say that I am? Jesus said. Well, first look at his first question when he asked them, "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" And again, I say, if you look at that first question, he says, "I, the Son of Man," he stresses something there. He stresses the fact that he is the Son of Man, not a question there, not a matter of opinion. He states it as a fact. He uses himself as the source for that fact: "Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" He uses himself as the source to declare that he's the Son of Man, asking, "Well, if I use men as a source, what do they say?" He, as the source, says, "I'm the Son of Man." Man, as the source, says, "Well, John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, some prophet." No truth in what they said.

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<sup>1</sup> Reeves - You see but you do not observe. How do we use the word but? Use your dictionary. Wald, Oletta. The New Joy of Discovery in Bible Study (Function). Kindle Edition. Middle of the book - Things to observe.

Many opinions, and then he claims something about himself that is outside all human experience. What he states is impossible to be true by any process that man can perform, any process that man can duplicate, any process that man can fully even understand: that he is the Son of Man. He states that. You see, when man first appeared, he was created by God.

Instead of going back to Genesis, I'm going to take you to the words of Jesus, chapter 19 of Matthew. Look what he says. Matthew 19, verse 4. *Have you not read that he who made them at the beginning made them male and female?* That's Jesus saying man was created. That's when he had his beginning. When God created him. When God created man male and female. They each had their beginning in creation with God stated as fact, that's what Jesus says, but then when God sent his Son into the world, he came as he had always been. He came as who he was, fully God. Never changed. He came as who he was. But he came in a human body. He came by a process that all men come by: conception. Conception. There was conception, there was development, there was growth inside the womb, you know, development in the womb. Then there was birth, and then there was development outside the womb, aging right on up to adulthood. He went through all those developments that human beings go through because he came by conception.

But one thing that was outside of human experience or power in that matter of conception was this: that conception was by God, not anything having to do with man at all. Man wasn't the source of it; man didn't make it happen. God was the source of it. God made it happen; he did it by the person of the Holy Spirit. He conceived in Mary's womb.

Now, I've got to draw a contrast here: as Adam was fully a created being, and when I say that, that means he was sourced in God. He had his source in God; he didn't have his source in apes, didn't have his source in worms, didn't have his source in lesser forms of life; he had his source in God. That's what the scriptures claim. Adam was created sourced in God, and therefore he could be called a son of God, not the son of God but a son of God. He was a son of God still, as the father of the human race. Adam being the father of the human race, we all are in Adam's likeness. We bear his likeness in fact; we bear Adam's likeness in all of our being because he is our father. We are human beings of Adam's race, and so our father Adam is expressed in all of our being.

But Jesus being born as a human being and in that sense he is a son of man, he is a son of man because he's born as a human being but being conceived by God, that's the Holy Spirit. When I say that, he who he is, who he was from the beginning and always has been, the Son of God. Now, I didn't say

a son of God there; I said the Son of God. He has always been the Son of God, but being sent to us by the miracle of divine conception in the womb of Mary, Jesus came as a new beginning place for mankind. He was the divinely sent one to make the new beginning that he was bringing available to man. And for this new beginning place, He<sup>2</sup> can now be called the Son of Man. He brings something to the human race that wasn't here. A new beginning. In him. In Adam, we look to Adam as our father. Our beginning in Adam, in our nature, in our whole being.

Jesus came of the human race, but he came to bring us a new beginning. Something that Adam couldn't bring to us. And he did come by the human race. And therefore, he can be called the Son of Man. Came by Adam's race, but he comes as the one who can bring us this new beginning. And so he takes up that title the Son of Man it speaks of in its meaning. The Son of Man therefore speaks of a new beginning. He's the source. He's the one you must come to for it. The title looks to his role as the one that is that person that we have to go through to be born into the family of God. That's what that title means. That's our new beginning. To be born through Jesus into the family of God. That's what he brings. In other words, he is the Savior. But Jesus was looking for a recognition of himself that went beyond this because he states that in that question, who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?

Usually I haven't been so usually I haven't been so loud in my speaking these last several days. I haven't had to push my voice this way. So when I push it this far, I kind of reach a limit where I... My voice says, you can't do that, so it wants to cough. Boy, am I aware that we're just human instruments and we're just weak human instruments at that. We're just little channels, aren't we?

But let me take you back to this now. When Jesus asked this question in verse 13, he was looking for an answer that went beyond this identification of him as that place of new beginning for salvation as Savior. He's the Savior for the whole world, but he was looking for something very specific that went beyond even his role as Savior. What was it? Well, through that miracle of his human identification for us, it brings us to God as one of God's children. Because he is God in the new birth, he can lift us from being just mere human beings. He can lift us into being what he is. He's in the family of God. He is God. He can bring us into his family.

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<sup>2</sup> When a pronoun is referring to Jesus, God, Holy Spirit there should be a capital letter. My missing them is part of my editing problem choosing most of the time to ignore this action due to my attempt to present a lot of material in a short amount of time. In the NT times these words were not capitalized. When you come across pronouns referring to the Godhead capitalize them. Reeves

If anybody ever says, “Well, Jesus was, you know, he was a great prophet. He was a wonderful teacher. He was an elevated man. He was marvelous, but he wasn't God, you know, like the Mormons would say or the Jehovah's Witnesses or some other groups you know anything but that he's not God,” let me tell you something: if he is not God, he cannot bring you into the family of God. Only God can bring you into the family of God. You need a Savior that can bring you into the family. You want to be a child of God, then your Savior has to be the Son of God, nothing less.

You see, and Peter gave the fuller identification first of all in verse 16. Peter says this: “You are the Christ.” Now Christ or Christ is a New Testament translation for that Old Testament word Messiah, which meant the one anointed to be the king over the kingdom, the one promised by God to reign over the kingdom that God was going to give to that one, the kingdom first over Israel and then over the world. The Christ. They had been looking for the Christ for centuries. Of course, the Jews are still looking for him because they don't accept the Lord Jesus as the Christ. But Peter did. You're the Christ, the Messiah. You're the king, the one to rule in the kingdom that God is going to establish over Israel and over the whole world.

But Peter went beyond that first answer. He was not only the Christ. He said, “But you are the son of the living God. The son of the living God. In other words, the divine one. A part of the Godhead. You're more than just the Messiah; you're a part of the Godhead. You elevate us into the family of God because you're God. You bring us into a relationship with who you are.

See, one is a child of one who's fathered, and we only have one human father. Each of us has a human father. Will always be the one who is our father because he brought us into being.


Well, even so, we're a part of the divine family only of the one who Fathers us spiritually. I don't want to confuse title here with the Father, but Jesus literally fathers us into the family of God.” Now the father sending the son provides that for us, and we look to him ultimately as our father, but we are brought into the family through our Savior. Doesn't just happen though. That new birth, that matter of being born again into God's family, can only come one way. And that comes when we ask Jesus to be our Savior. When we ask to be born again.

When we ask him to cleanse us from our sin and make us his child.<sup>3</sup> So, the source for the true identity of who Jesus of Nazareth is. Let's get the source. He tells us right here.

Jesus answered and said to him, “ Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood, that's mankind, flesh and blood. Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you. The source for this truth is not man. You don't know this because man told you by his reasoning, by his philosophies, by his impressions, by his feelings. Man gave you that information no way, no, but my Father who is in heaven you get that as your source. The source for this truth is the Father in heaven. Nowhere else can you get that truth.

Where do you get your truth? About where things really have their origin. Do you get it from man or do you get it from God? Do you get it from the public school? Is that your source for truth? Oh, how about the government? Is that your source of truth? Boy, are you confused. Do you get your source? Is your source of truth scientists? Scientists? How about philosophers? Get your source of truth from philosophers? Do you get it from the public? Do you get it from your friends? Do you get it from your neighbors? What is your source of truth? I'll ask you a question. How do you know that Jesus was resurrected? Somebody tell me how do you know that Jesus was resurrected? You went to the government and found out, right? Or did you go to the public school and ask them? Oh, the Bible, God's word. Okay, well, how do you know that there was a virgin birth? Well, that came from philosophers, didn't it? Didn't that come from scientists? What would scientists say about the virgin birth? Impossible! That

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<sup>3</sup>  Reeves - the cleansing and making us a child of God are a result of believing in Christ as our Savior. Acknowledging Christ as our Savior, we recognize that we are sinners who need saving from our sin. Even when we believe we who were spiritually dead, receive eternal life. Eternal life is something else that God gives the moment we believe, and trust in Christ as our Savior. John 1:12; 3:16; Acts. 4:12; 16:31; Ro. 1:16; 10:19; Heb. 11:6; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4; Eph. 2:1-10.

The repentance is the acknowledgment of our need of a Savior. We may have the awareness of certain sins or the remorse of guilt that helps us see our need of the Savior. The experience of emotions vary from one another. They are not absolute or the same with each one that comes to Christ. There is a change to believing and trusting in Christ as our Savior. Matt. 4:17; Lu. 5:32; 15:10; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 20:21; 26:20; Ro. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:25; 2 Pe. 3:9. Even the works worthy of repentance come after we trust in the Lord. Eph. 2:10.

Consider the logic of Titus 3:8; 14; James 2. Faith is followed by works. Spiritual development has an individual development both in time and quality. Good works is by the power of the Holy Spirit and obedience. Maturity happens over time.

Here is a question to think about. How is it most of evangelism we do in a life time occurs in our first two years of belief? It is a time when we are the most immature. We grow in faith but we win less people to the Lord. Why is that? The time factor is the same whether we grow or not. There are exceptions but not what we observe.

better not be your source, the Bible, the word of God. What's your source for knowing that Jesus healed people? That Jesus fed people thousands, 5,000, 4,000 men at different times? That Jesus cast out demons? That Jesus could walk on the water? That Jesus could walk through a crowd? Like he did at Nazareth. When they were really trying to find him and put their hands on him to throw him over a cliff, he just walked through the crowd. What's your source? It better not be the public school. It better not be your neighbors. How do you know that the Red Sea really opened up and that there was a path of dry land that Israel could go across? How do you know that?

How do you know that there was an ark and that all the land animals were saved in it? Because there was a worldwide flood. How do you know that?

Now, scientists are very upset with people who come along and say there was a worldwide flood. Scientists say there was not a worldwide flood.

There were just floods all over the world, local floods. Everybody had their own flood. Because it shows up in all the literature all over the people, all over the world, you know. The Chinese had their local flood. The people in South America had a local flood. Even the aborigines in Australia had a local flood. Isn't that amazing? Here's another amazing thing: they all had it at the same time. That's amazing, isn't it? But they say, "But there was no worldwide flood." How do you know there was a worldwide flood? You weren't there. In his word. Yeah. Yeah. It landed on a mountain. It might still be there. I don't know. Your friend of mine invited me to go along with him to go look for it, and I told him I would go, but he never got his final okay to go from the government of Turkey. So I never got to go. I don't know. I believe it could still be there, parts of it.

Did Pharaoh's army actually drown in the Red Sea? Do you know historians don't believe that? They don't believe that. They would argue with you and tell you that didn't happen. What is your source? Well, I go with the historians or do you go with the word of god did David really hit a giant right in the forehead with a stone? And you know they say that these stones that these shepherds used to fling around, you know, they were not these little peas, you know, that people think. They were about the size of a small orange, like a big lemon, okay? And they would go to the creeks and pick up these smooth stones because smooth stones went through the air with the least amount of wind hitting rough edges to turn them on their course so that the smooth stones could go through the air with a truer arc, with a truer aim. I'm going to tell you if a stone that big came whistling through the air and hit you in the middle of the forehead, I don't care if you were nine feet and a half tall. It wouldn't surprise me

that you would fall down. Did David really hit that giant in the forehead? I believe he did. Did a great fish really swallow a man? Here's a big one.

Did God create everything in six days? Or, do you want to go with the scientists? They're not agreed now, by the way. There's no agreement among the scientists. But they would, by and large, they would say, no, no, it took millions and billions of years for all this stuff to come about. Do you know in the short space of my lifetime, the short space of my lifetime, that the number of stars out in the heavens has multiplied a hundredfold? See, when I was a little kid, there was X amount of stars out there, I was told. But now, it's a magnitude beyond that. And when I was a little kid, it only took so many million years for everything to come about. Now it takes billions of years, they say. Science doesn't know. Science's answers are not in agreement.

So you have to ask the question, what is your source? I want to come down to spiritual things: Can you really be forgiven of your sins? You see people want to argue about whether a fish could swallow a man. I'm going to tell you something: if you won't trust God for that answer, how can you trust him for the answer about this that he would be willing to forgive your sins? I mean, a little thing like a fish falling to man, that's a little thing. Having your sins forgiven is not a little thing. Giving you eternal life is not a little thing. I'm having a hard time, but I'm going to finish real quick. Can you be made a child of God? Can you go to heaven? Those are big things. Who are you going to trust? What's your source for truth? We could stand up here all week and point to that and talk about the ark and say there really was a flood and God did save all the animals in that ark. It was real.

Is a very small thing compared to this that God can forgive your sin? He can make you a member of his family and he can take you to be with him in eternity forever when you die. Not only that, he can but he will if you put your faith in Jesus. Oh boy, I'm done.

Let's pray: Father, thank you, thank you for the Son, thank you for our salvation in Him, thank you, thank you that He's our source. He's our source, He's our all. We believe Your word and we're glad to be called a Bible church, Lord, because we believe Your word. Your word is the source for truth, and though others may scoff, they may criticize. Guys, we believe that by faith in Jesus, we are born into Your family and given eternal life because You said so.

And Your word is truth. In Jesus' name, amen. Amen.