Daily Devotion #73

The Greatest Question Ever Posed to Mankind

*Matthew 16:15 (NASB) 15 “He \*said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"*

I had a conversation nearly 34 years ago with a man who was sharing the Gospel with me. He asked me a question that I have never forgotten. He asked me if I knew the President of the United States. I said, “Of course I know the President; everyone knows the President.” He responded, “But, do you know the President personally?” To which my reply was, of course, “No”.

I realized that I knew a lot about Jesus, but I didn’t know Him for who He is - Lord. I found that I had been believing in a god who I didn’t know. This was revealing and very alarming. At that moment things began to change for me. I understood that knowing Jesus was not just knowing about Him or even worshipping Him, but knowing Jesus was more about a personal relationship.

From that time I began to search my heart and open it to Jesus. I discovered that He is truly Lord of lords and King of kings. He began to pour into me an understanding about Himself that changed my life completely. And, over the years, our relationship has grown.

I believe this was the same for many of the disciples. When Jesus asked them this question about who He is to them, He knew they didn’t really know Him. He knew their relationship with Him was more superficial than it was personal. Not that they weren’t pursuing Him, but they didn’t really know who they were pursuing.

Peter was the only one who had a grasp of who Jesus was. And his answer gives clarity to that understanding. For Peter, Jesus had moved from someone who was being used of God, to being God in the flesh. And because Peter understood who Jesus was, he gave his life in submission to Jesus.

For many people, Jesus is someone who they cherish, who they worship and even the One who they want to please. But too often that is an external relationship. Jesus is someone who is critically important, but He is not God of all gods. He is more like a “relationship” with someone famous. You know what that’s like - meeting someone who the world knows and finding yourself privileged to be in the same company as that famous person. Then you can feel like he or she knows you. But in reality, the “relationship” is more of an acquaintance. You can’t call this person any time or share your deepest feelings with them. It’s not the kind of relationship where you can simply stop by and have coffee any time you feel like it.

A true relationship with Jesus is first understanding He is Lord. Peter acknowledged that about Jesus when he answered the Lord’s question by saying in verse 16, “*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God*.”

The next thing about having a true relationship with Jesus is that you know you can be with Him any time. He is available 24/7/365. And not only that but He also longs to hear from you.

This is the best kind of relationship, one where you can be yourself and always know that you are accepted for who you are. Not that He will accept your sin, but, in this relationship with Jesus, He will show you your sin and help you be the person He wants you to be.

Jesus is not a friend who allows excuses, but a friend who helps you get past the roadblocks in your life. And in turn, you see Him as God and Lord and friend. As Jesus Himself said, “No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends.” (John 15:15) Who do you say Jesus is? If He is an acquaintance, can I encourage you to really get to know Him? In doing so, your life will never be the same.