

*In Matthew 16: 13-17 we find Jesus in a private conversation with his disciples, asking for their assessment of the crowd's opinion of His identity. He wanted this not just to have information but, rather, to correct misconceptions.*

**Verse 16:13** 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?" **14.** So they said, "Some say John the Baptist, some Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." **15.** He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" **16.** Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **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. **18.** And I also say to you that you

are Peter, and on this rock (*on this revelation of who I am*) I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. **19.** And 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.” **20.** Then He commanded His disciples that they should tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ. (*NKJV*)

*Today, we continue our discussion on Becoming Who We Already Are in God.*

***Notice:** In these verses of scripture, because the disciples depended on the court of public opinion for information, their perspective of*

*Jesus was flawed. The disciples struggled with who Jesus was, including:*

- 1. Who they thought He was*
  - 2. Who other people perceived He was;*  
*and,*
  - 3. Their lack of revelation of who He already was*
- We can't live our lives based on the court of public opinion; this always includes endless opinions from others about who they think we should be – all these opinions usually have nothing to do with who we really are.*

*It takes divine revelation to give a true definition of who a person really is on the inside.*

*When we declare who God is, He will return the favor and tell us who we are*

*ready to be (Peter had that experience, when Jesus said to him you are Peter).*

*The world and its systems are not designed to allow people to be their true selves. The World System forces people to survive on a treadmill to achieve validation and acceptance from mankind.*

*What "acceptance and success" means in society is often judged by an imperfect standard defined by those with **flawed** lives who pressure others to perform according to external and worldly standards.*

*The identity of who we already are in God can be lost among the judgmental attitudes of those who do not know our God-appointed value.*

- *There is no better version of us than what God created in the beginning.*

***Remember what God said in Verse 5 of Jeremiah 1: “I knew you before you were formed within your mother's womb;”***

***We are all originals created by God; there's no need to become a copy based on the opinion of others.***

- *You are the first and only "You" God ever made.*
- *You are the only you alive right now on planet earth (You are an "endangered species").*
- *We all will be extinct one day. There will never be another you after you're gone.*

*We all are designed for uniqueness – we are one-of-a-kind on earth.*

*That's why we can't allow society's standards of acceptance, accomplishment, and achievement to be defined by social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram) or the court of public opinion; none of these influences generate true acceptance and life transforming fulfillment.*

*There is a disconnect and confusion in today's society between:*

- *Success and internal fulfillment;*
- *Accomplishment and lasting satisfaction; and*
- *Achievement and eternal peace.*

*We need to understand several important factors about acceptance, accomplishment,*

*and achievement when it comes to becoming who we already are.*

***First,** Our acceptance, accomplishment, and achievement in life cannot be defined by the assessment of public opinion.*

- *We are not successful simply because everyone says we are;*
- *We are not successful if we've only done what others expected us to do;*
- *True acceptance, accomplishment and achievement can only be achieved by being satisfied with becoming who we already are in God.*

***2 Timothy 4:6,7*** For I am already being poured out as a drink offering, and the time of my departure is at hand. **7.** I have fought

the good fight, I have finished the race, and I have kept the faith.

***Second,** our acceptance, accomplishment and achievement is not measured by the opinion of others or the standards defined by society. God never intended for us to be measured by the systems of a dysfunctional society.*

***Romans 12:** the apostle Paul instructed the new believers in Rome how to live their spiritual lives to please God.*

- ***First:** they were to surrender their everyday activities as God's spiritual worshipers.*

***Colossians 3:17** Let every detail in your lives—words, actions, whatever—be done*



in the name of the Master, Jesus, thanking God the Father every step of the way.

*(The Message Bible)*

- *Second: They were to embrace what God had done in their lives.*
- *Third: They were to associate themselves with who they were already in God.*

**Verse 1,** So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering.

Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him. **2** Don't become so well-adjusted to your culture that you fit into it without even thinking.

Instead, fix your attention on God. You'll be changed from the inside out. Readily recognize what he wants from you, and quickly respond to it. Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you. *(The Message)*

- *Culture has a way of adjusting the thinking of people to keep them from becoming who God says they already are.*

*Third: Our acceptance, accomplishment and achievement is not about doing good things; it is doing good things right.*

*Finally: Our acceptance, accomplishment and achievement is not based on worldly accumulation of wealth; rather, it is based*

*on our obedience to follow God's will for our lives.*

***Luke 12:15–21 (The Message)*** Speaking to the people, he went on, "Take care! Protect yourself against the least bit of greed. Life is not defined by what you have, even when you have a lot." *16–19* Then he told them this story: "The farm of a certain rich man produced a terrific crop. He talked to himself: 'What can I do? My barn isn't big enough for this harvest.' Then he said, 'Here's what I'll do: I'll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I'll gather in all my grain and goods, and I'll say to myself, Self, you've done well! You've got it made and can now retire. Take it easy and have the time of your life!' *20*" Just then God showed up and said, 'Fool! Tonight you die. And your barnful of goods—who gets it?'

21 "That's what happens when you fill your barn with Self and not with God."

### *What is Acceptance, Accomplishment and Achievement all about?*

*True Acceptance, Accomplishment and Achievement is the pleasure gained from becoming who we already are in God; it is being pleased with our God-given selves; it is when we are never lonely nor desire to be anyone else.*

- *Loneliness isn't the absence of affection; loneliness is the absence of direction.*

*True and lasting satisfaction in life only happens when we stop trying to live up to the expectations of society and start living according to who we already are in the plan God has for our life.*

*We have to understand there's no amount of pleasing other people that can replace the uniqueness of who we already are in God.*

*Becoming who we really are, involves knowing who we're not.*

- *The one thing distinguishing us from others is a sense of destiny.*

*Insecure people who are unsure of themselves often live life according to the philosophies of others, trying to be someone else.*

*However, when we know who we are, we are protected from confusion, frustration, self-doubt and wasted potential.*

*People with a healthy self-image know who they are; they are not easily moved or intimidated when questioned about their identity, purpose and destiny.*

**In JOHN 1:19** Now this is the testimony of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, "Who are you?" **20** He confessed (*admitted the truth*), and did not try to conceal it, but confessed, "I am not the Christ."

*Until we are firm about who we already are in the eyes of God, we will always be victims of the opinions and perceptions of others.*

**Verse 21** And they asked him, "What then? Are you Elijah?" He said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" And he answered, "No."  
**22** Then they said to him, "Who are you,

that we may give an answer to those who sent us? What do you say about yourself?"

**23** He said: "I am 'The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Make straight the way of the LORD," 'as the prophet Isaiah said."

*Notice: John knew his purpose and who he was; he never caved-in to the pressure to be someone other than who he already had become.*

*The answer to theses five questions verifies whether a person knows who they are with God.*

### **No. 1 Who Am I?**

*Can we answer this question? This is knowing about our true identity. Self-identity gives us significance and meaning for our lives.*

*Most people get off track in life because they've never answered this question of who they are.*

*We live in a world where people struggle with self-identity.*