

“Do You Believe in the Son of Man?”  
 Sermon for 25 October 2015  
 Text: John 9:35-39

When Jesus heard . . . He found him and asked, “Do you believe in the Son of Man?” That’s an extraordinary question to ask of just anyone. To assume this was anything other than a conversation opener is to go beyond what is revealed. Jesus finds this man, whose faith sparked the obedience that led to a work of God being done in him, and first off fires this incendiary question at him. And the man’s response is equally intriguing. **Who is he, sir, that I may believe in him?** The word translated “sir” here is *korios* which, contextually (given the question and the worshipful response) would be better rendered LORD. Sir suggests that the man truly doesn’t know Jesus at all. But LORD communicates that he has some awed sense of whom he is addressing. That take is, I think, amply borne out by the setting. If this is correct, then the text drives us to a conclusion: the Son of Man means LORD—even Lord God. Now, in fairness, we should allow that the **who is he** could sustain the interpretation that the man did not have any sense of Jesus’ divinity. Why not walk with that? It is the title, **Son of Man**, that undercuts this interpretation. **Son of Man** (Dan. 7:13-14 and Matt. 26: 64) was the Promised One, appointed to rule over all the nations. So, Jesus’ query could be heard as “Do you believe in the divinely anointed King of kings?”

That’s equally a good question for us. Do we believe that God has sent us Jesus to be Ruler over all? I am sure we have all heard the Prophet, Priest and King formula as applied to Jesus. And we have accepted Him as Savior and Lord and Judge. However, the compounding of these six titles, the joining of all of them together, to ascertain the fullness of Christ’s authority, rule and reign is more problematic for us in practice. In short, we are happy to allow one title to have dominance over the other five. I believe that Jesus is my personal Lord and Savior, we say, but we seldom tag on and Judge, Priest and Prophet. Or, we wonder why is it that Jesus emphasized His kingship above all other five titles in this recorded encounter. *Do you believe that I am your King sent from heaven to reign and rule over you? Do you tremble over my divine, absolute authority, fall down before my majestic royalty in worship?* Most likely, not.

*Why?* Is it because we are more familiar and very comfortable with Jesus as “Savior, and Friend to Sinners”? Perhaps we are all experiencing some slight nervousness at this point. We are rather less familiar with Jesus as Messiah because the Messiah has come and the whole anticipation piece is rather behind us religiously and historically. Yes, we think about it and sing about it and it takes a little work mentally to get there. BUT Jesus as absolute ruler, as reigning monarch—these titles, and the ideas they carry, are not so warm, fuzzy and personal as Savior. And precisely the same case could be made for Judge, Prophet and Priest. Hebrews is conversant with Jesus as our Great High Priest, but we, lacking a formal “priesthood” and favoring a priesthood of all believers don’t have the same affective response as some Roman Catholics do to the person and presence of their Pope. Still, Jesus’ work as priest in making

atonement on the cross for our sins—indeed being bodily the sacrifice that was made once for all, continues as our Priest in heaven, *making intercession for all the saints*.

**Do you believe in the Son of Man?** It's quite the question isn't it?! Well, do you? And if we do, what difference does it make? This: there would be a growing body of evidence of Jesus' authority over all we are. Every part of us and every department of our lives would be increasing as proof that we are loyal subjects of our King, our Lord and Savior and Judge, Prophet and Priest. His reigning over us would have many effects, many observable results. The choices we make, the decisions, priorities and values we hold would all bear the impress of His signet ring. Our lifestyle, although unique and personal to us, would be marked by a godward-ness, a devotion common to all. There are many ways to express godliness (or ungodliness) so I am not suggesting a cookie cutter approach. Rather I am praying for each of our lives to be themed by wonder, worship and adoration of our King, the Son of Man. Looking to Christ in everything and loving Christ above all things makes us one—despite an apparent and outward differentness.

My identity—more caught up in Him, more like Him day by day.

My purpose—more taken with obedience to Him and His goals , His mission.

My style—both courageous and compassionate, humble and grateful.

He makes me who I am and works through me His good will and pleasure.

People would see my freedom from works dependency, from striving and busyness. That instead of trying to out do others or to please everyone, I am determined to please one Someone and to be content. They would see the coherence of my life, its focus and direction, its pursuit of excellence. They would see, if they had the eyes to see, a persevering faith, a deepening faith and a manifesting faith: an outward expression of the deep workings of grace, love, peace and joy in me accomplished by His Spirit. They would see a confidence, and a quiet tranquility—as well as a satisfaction of soul. Then they would conclude that, with some, virtue is back in fashion, that the goodness comes from redemption through Christ. And that our hope is secured not in our own strength but in the strength of our King who rules over all we are and everything that is. That we are who we are because of who He is. And He would be pleased with that. Me, too. Yes, I do believe in the Son of Man.

**Amen**