

Sermon Notes

Practical Lessons for Understanding the Word of God



Understanding Who Jesus Is

KEY PASSAGE: Matthew 16:13-17 | **SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES:** Genesis 1:26 | Matthew 16:23; 19:14
Mark 8:33; 10:14, 46-52 | John 6:35; 10:11; 14:6; 15:5 | Acts 4:12 | 2 Corinthians 5:17 | Philippians 2:11

SUMMARY

Who is Jesus?

That's a question every Christian should be able to answer correctly and confidently, yet many of us feel totally inadequate to explain who He is. We've been saved and baptized, we attend church regularly, and even give to the ministry of the church. But if someone questions us about Jesus, sometimes we are at a loss for words. Since the world is filled with many opinions and misconceptions regarding Jesus' identity, we as believers must be prepared to give an accurate answer to anyone who asks us about Jesus. And the only source for absolute truth on this matter is God's Word.

SERMON POINTS

After quizzing His disciples about who other people thought He was, Jesus then inquired, "But who do you say that I am?" (Matt. 16:15). Simon Peter answered for all of them, saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (v. 16). Peter didn't figure this out by himself; God the Father revealed it to him, just as He will for us as well (v. 17).

What difference does it make who Jesus is?

To become a Christian, we must know who Jesus is. Then once we have received Him as our personal Savior, knowing Christ will have the following effects:

- **It will mold our character.** We are progressively changing into Christ's likeness.
- **It will impact our beliefs.** Jesus works in our minds, giving us assurance and altering our perspectives, convictions, and judgments to align with His.

- **It will influence our lifestyles.** According to 2 Corinthians 5:17, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away." Our former ways no longer fit our new identity in Christ. Now our lifestyles will reflect His righteousness.
- **It will determine our eternal destiny.** This is the ultimate reason why knowing Jesus is so important. Our eternal destination of heaven is determined by our relationship with Him as our Savior.

How would you describe Jesus?

- **His beginnings.** His birth was prophesied seven hundred years before He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin in Bethlehem. But Jesus existed long before His birth. When God said, "Let Us make man in Our image" (Gen. 1:26), He was signifying the work of the Trinity in creation. Man was made in the image of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Clearly, Christ's beginnings signify that He is unlike any other person who's ever been born.
- **His names.** Jesus is called by many names in Scripture—King of Kings, Lord of Lords, Prince of Peace, Savior, Emmanuel, Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God—and these are just a few. Since all His names add depth and meaning to our understanding of who Jesus is, we must never stop learning what they reveal about Him.
- **His attributes.**
 - **Jesus is deity.** The Son of God came into this world in human flesh, but He never ceased to be God. Although He limited the use of His divine attributes at times, He was still omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent.
 - **He was human.** While being fully God, Jesus was at the same time a sinless man who came to show

us the Father and die as a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins.

- **Jesus was a man of love.** He taught about love, but more importantly, He demonstrated it throughout His life and with His death.

How did Jesus describe Himself?

- **The Good Shepherd** (John 10:11). Christ loves and watches over us as a Shepherd providing for our needs and protecting us from danger.
- **The Bread of Life** (John 6:35). Jesus feeds us spiritually so we can grow and become more like Him, walking in His way and will.
- **The Vine** (John 15:5). We are the branches, and Jesus is the vine. Just as sap runs from a vine to the branches, so the life of Christ flows in us through His Spirit who indwells us.
- **The Way, the Truth, and the Life** (John 14:6). The only way to receive eternal life is to believe in Jesus.

Jesus led an extraordinary life.

Although He never wrote a book, the Bible is all about Him. He never composed a song, but many have been written praising Him. Jesus never built a house, but He promised to prepare a place for us in heaven (v. 3). He healed multitudes yet never had a medical degree. And even though He traveled less than a hundred miles from home, He impacted the entire world. Jesus wasn't a soldier, but His truth brought down empires.

Christ's life was a display of love, mercy, and compassion. He was never too busy to help people in need, and He welcomed and loved children when other people thought they were unimportant. Even on His way to Jerusalem during His last few days on earth, He paused to heal a blind beggar who called out to Him (Mark 10:46-52). Even though the crowd told the man to be quiet, Jesus heard his cry and gave him sight. In the same way, Jesus hears us when we cry out to Him. There is no problem too big for Him to handle, and He's never too busy or preoccupied to listen to our prayers.

Jesus truly is like no one else. Herod couldn't kill Him. Satan couldn't trap Him. Death couldn't

destroy Him, and the grave couldn't hold Him. So why are we sometimes quiet? Why don't we proclaim Him more often to the world? The more people denounce, disbelieve, or criticize Christ, the stronger our relationship with Him should grow and the more willing we should be to tell others about Him. After all, His is the only name by which people can be saved (Acts 4:12).

What was Jesus' mission?

The Son of God came into the world for several reasons.

- He came to reveal the Father.
- His primary purpose was to die on the cross, giving His life as a payment for our sins.
- He also came to be resurrected. Christians serve a living God, not one who is still in the grave.
- He came to teach truth, build His church, and assure us that we too will have life after death.
- Today He sits at the Father's right hand interceding for us.

How should we respond to Jesus?

- Trust Him for our salvation.
- Submit to Him as our Lord.
- Serve Him faithfully.
- Share Him with others.

RESPONSE

- How confident are you about sharing your faith? What would keep you from boldly telling people who Christ is and what He's done in your life?
- How confident do you feel about your knowledge of Jesus and your ability to clearly and confidently explain who He is?
- How has your understanding of Jesus increased since you first believed in Him as your Savior?

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