

INTRODUCTION

“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” When Jesus walked the earth, He once asked His disciples what people around town were saying about His identity. Jesus was healing people and teaching with authority in the synagogue. So many were wondering who He was. The disciples reported that some thought highly of Jesus, believing Him to be John the Baptist or Elijah or another one of the prophets. These comments were nice but offensive because they were wrong. If disciples of Christ want to be unleashed to operate in power in this world, they must get it right when it comes to who Jesus is.

“But who do you say that I am?” Jesus’ second question to His disciples begins with the contrasting conjunction *but*, indicating that the disciples’ answer to who Jesus is should be different than the world’s answer. Peter answered correctly, saying that Jesus is the Christ—the Messiah, the Savior, the Anointed One from the Old Testament—and He is the Son of the living God, which means deity in bodily form. As Christ, He delivers us; as God, He owns us. If we do not know who Jesus is, we cannot participate in His future paradise or His kingdom agenda for the world. Disciples need to be clear and definitive on who Jesus is.

The church is built on the foundation of Christ and on believers who know the reality of who Christ is. Like Peter, believers who believe the same thing about Jesus become a massive formation of rocks or stones, and the gates of Hell cannot prevail against them. These believers will be given the keys to the Kingdom. Disciples who have come to the right conclusion about Christ will have the backing of the kingdom to oppose the enemy. If we want the backing of the Kingdom and we want to participate in God’s current program and His future paradise, then we need to do one thing—stand firm in knowing who Jesus is!

GETTING STARTED

1. When have you said or heard someone else say something nice but offensive and wrong?
2. What is the “word around town” today about who Jesus is?

LET'S GET PERSONAL

1. Who do you say Jesus is? Why does this answer matter to your daily life?
2. How have your beliefs about Jesus been impacted by the culture? If they have not been impacted by culture, what gives you confidence in your beliefs?
3. What is an area in your life where you have felt attacked by the enemy?

TAKE THE NEXT STEP

1. When someone asks what you believe about Jesus and why, how will you respond? This week, take time to meditate on the Scriptures from this message to help you solidify your answer.
2. How can you take a stand starting now against the gates of Hell? What kind of support from Christian community do you need to help you stand firm?
3. Want to dig deeper? Take a look at the following passages: Genesis 1:26; Exodus 3:14; Psalm 2:7; Isaiah 9:6; Micah 5:2; Matthew 16:13-19; 28:19; Mark 1:22; 4:41; John 1:14, 29; 7:15; 8:56-59; 14:6, 8-9; 1 Corinthians 3:11; Ephesians 2:20; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:16; 2:9.

RENEW YOUR MIND

"He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'"

Matthew 16:15-16