

Life of Christ

Who Am I?

Matthew 16:13-26

Younger Verse

“You’re the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Matthew 16:16

Older Verse

“You’re the Christ, the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”
Matthew 16:16

Lesson Goals

Learn that Peter showed great faith by saying he believed in Jesus
See that Jesus started preparing His friends for His death and resurrection
Understand that followers of Jesus must listen to what God wants for them

Welcome Time

How does it feel when you answer a question and your teacher says, “Right! Good job.” What about if you give a wrong answer? Today we will learn how Peter gave a good answer and then a not-so-good answer.

Bible Story

*Please note: This portion of the lesson is given to help in teaching the lesson. Please read through the story and read it in the Bible before teaching it. Do **NOT** read from this piece of paper. Instead, make a note sheet and place it next to the story in the Bible.*

Jesus wanted His disciples to have more faith in Him. He warned His friends about the religious leaders. They did not believe that Jesus was God’s Son. Instead, they looked for ways to get Jesus in trouble. Jesus wanted to be sure His disciples had a strong faith in Him and knew who He was. One day, He asked His friends, “Who do people say that I am?”

The disciples told Jesus that some people said He was John the Baptist, some said Elijah, and others said Jeremiah or one of the other prophets. Then Jesus said, “Who do YOU say I am?”

Simon answered, “You are the Christ, the Son of God.” Simon had answered correctly! He showed great faith by speaking what he believed. Jesus also told Simon that God had helped him to know the truth about who Jesus was.

Simon got a new name that day. Jesus said that Simon’s faith was solid, like a rock. So his new name, Peter, meant “rock.” Jesus told Peter that nothing could take his faith away from him. And Jesus knew that Peter would become a strong leader of His church. He would help many people enter God’s kingdom.

The Bible says that after that time, Jesus started telling His disciples what was going to happen to Him. He told them He was going to suffer and die. But He also told them that He would raise back to life three days later.

It must have been difficult for His friends to hear about how He would suffer and die. Peter took Jesus aside and told Him that He did not want Jesus to die. Peter did not yet understand God’s plan for Jesus to die to save people from their sins.

Jesus scolded Peter for what he said. He told Peter that he wasn’t seeing things the way God wanted him to. He needed to see that, even though it was difficult, it was

part of God's plan to save people.

Jesus also told His friends that if they wanted to follow Him, they would have to stop thinking about themselves and what they wanted. Instead, they needed to think about what God wanted for them. Another way to think about this is that we have to let go of what is in our hands so that God can give us something better. God cannot use us for His plans until we let go of our own. And that takes faith.

Do you have faith in God? Faith means believing and trusting in something that you cannot see. It took faith for Peter to speak out about his belief in Jesus. And it takes faith for us to say that we believe in Jesus. But that is the way to have eternal life. "If you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in you heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved (Romans 10:9).

Review Questions

1. Jesus' disciples told Him who others said He was. What did the other people say about Jesus? (He was John the Baptist or one of the prophets)
2. When Jesus asked who His disciples said He was, how did Peter answer? (You are Christ, the Son of God)
3. When Jesus said that he would have to suffer and die, what did Peter say? (That he didn't want Jesus to die.)
4. Jesus told His disciples that they would have to do what to follow Him? (Forget about what they wanted and obey God.)

Prayer Time

Thank God for His Son, Jesus Christ, who came to earth to save us from our sins. Pray that we will have faith to follow Him and obey Him.

Life Application

When Peter said Jesus was the Christ, he got an A+. He was exactly right and he showed his faith that Jesus was the Son of God. But not long after that, Peter messed up when he told Jesus that he didn't want Him to die. Jesus had to correct Peter and teach him more about God's plan.

Sometimes in our lives, we have faith in Jesus, but we don't always accept what He wants us to do. Like Peter, we may want the "easy way out." But Jesus said that to be His follower, we would have to forget about ourselves. That means putting others first. It is not always fun, but it is always the right thing to do. And in the end, we will be glad we obeyed God.

Planning for Next Lesson
On the Mountain with Jesus
Matthew 17:1-9

Preschool Lesson for Who Am I?

Jesus wanted to make sure His followers knew who He was. One day, He asked His friends, “Who do people say that I am?”

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Here’s a song to go with the lesson. It is to the tune of “Where is thumbkin?”

Who is Jesus? Who is Jesus?
Do you know? Do you know?
He is God’s Son and He loves us.
It’s the truth. It’s the truth!

Hands-on Activities For Who Am I?

Play a fun game of “Who am I?” with the kids. Let them take turns choosing a character and letting others guess who it is. If needed, you can write objects on index cards or tape pictures to cards for each person to use.

Ask the kids to make a picture telling who Jesus is to them. Each person can draw a picture of what they think of Jesus or they can write words that describe who Jesus is to them.

Give everyone a blank sheet of paper. Ask them to draw a picture of who they are, not necessarily what they look like, but WHO they are. Compliment each person on their work of art.

Take a picture of each person with a camera. Assemble 4 craft sticks into a square to use as a picture frame. Glue fun things around the sticks like puzzle pieces or little objects that describe the person. Promise to bring developed film next week so that the kids can put their pictures in the frames. (Teachers: if you make double prints, you have a set of pictures for yourself to pray for each child daily.)

Jesus gave Peter the name “Rock.” Peter’s nickname made him feel good and let him know that he would one day do some important things. Sure enough, after Jesus went to Heaven, Peter helped many people know who Jesus really was—God’s Son. Do you have a nickname or a word that describes you? Think of GOOD nicknames for the kids to encourage them and give them hope for what they can do in the future.