

Matthew – The Identity of Jesus
March 23, 2025

As you join this discussion, let the Holy Spirit guide you. Share your thoughts and reflect on the message. Work through the guide by reading Scripture and answering a few questions.

Open Up:

- If you had to describe Jesus using only three words, what would they be?

Read Together:

Matthew 8:27

The men were amazed and asked, "**What kind of man is this?**..."

Matthew 16:13-14

When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "**Who do people say the Son of Man is?**" They replied, "**Some say** John the Baptist; **others say** Elijah; **and still others**, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Matthew 16:15

"But **what about you?**" he asked. "**Who do you say I am?**"

Matthew 16:16-17

Simon Peter answered, "**You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.**" Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven."

Matthew 16:20

Then he ordered his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

Matthew 16:21-23

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that **he must go to Jerusalem and suffer** many things at the hands of the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that **he must be killed** and on the third day be raised to life. **Peter took him aside** and began to **rebuke him**. "Never, Lord!" he said. "**This shall never happen to you!**" Jesus turned and said to Peter, "**Get behind me, Satan! You**

are a stumbling block to me; you do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns."

Matthew 16:24-25

*Then Jesus said to his disciples, "Whoever wants to be my disciple must **deny themselves and take up their cross** and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will find it."*

Discuss Together:

- Jesus asks his disciples who people say he is. What are some ways people today describe Jesus?
- Why do you think there are so many different opinions about him?
- Jesus directly asks his disciples, "Who do you say I am?" How would you personally answer that question?
- How has your understanding of Jesus changed over time?
- Peter struggled with the idea that the Messiah would suffer. Why do you think this was so difficult for him to accept?
- In what ways do we also resist the idea of suffering as part of following Jesus?
- Jesus tells Peter that he has human concerns rather than God's concerns. What common "human concerns" compete with God's purposes in our lives?

Action Item:

- Reflect on Jesus' question: *Who do you say I am?* Take time this week to journal or pray about how your understanding of Jesus shapes your daily life. What is one way you can live differently because of who he is?