KINGDOM of HEAVEN

A SERIES IN THE BOOK OF MATTHEW

Community Group Material
Matthew 16:13-20
Week of 10th of March
Who do YOU say I am?

WARMUP

This week we are focusing on Peter's declaration of Jesus being the Christ, and the son of the living God. People can identify Jesus as being many things, but most of our human descriptions can only reduce the fullness of his identity. Even when we recognize him fully, the way we live often does not demonstrate this.

Give each person a piece of clay or playdough.

Ask them to make something that represents what God means to them in their everyday life.

Take some time to let each person explain their model. Most people will recognize that a piece of clay can't fully represent all that God is. Acknowledge the truth in their depictions, but also the incompleteness.

Ask about:

- a life situation where they see this aspect of God in action
- Is there an area of their life where their belief does not translate into action?

[With thanks to Margie Gertzen for the creative idea]

Leader preparation:

Prepare to lead the group by reading through Matthew 16:13-20, and the notes on pages 17 and 18.

The passage this week contains a great illustration of a teaching technique used by Jesus: Sometimes when you want to ask your group about issues—especially when they might think that you won't approve of some common answers, it can be helpful to ask "*what do <u>people</u> think / say / believe about this*". This can allow people to discuss all kinds of opinions that they may hold to only loosely.

At other times, it is better to ask "*what do <u>you</u> think / say / believe etc*". This helps us to target the heart in a specific way.



Read Matthew 16:13-20

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Who do YOU say I am

After reading the passage, discuss these questions:

- What were some of the answers to Jesus' question in verse 13?
- Some of these answers make more sense to us than others. In what way do they all fall short of Jesus' identity?
- What are some things that people around us who are not Christians believe about Jesus?
- In what ways do these beliefs rob Jesus of his true identity?
- Who do YOU say that Jesus is?
- How does this affect your life?
- Is there a bible verse that you hold onto that expresses the way that Jesus makes a difference to you?
- Are there any areas of your life where Jesus does not have the impact he should? How do you think he would like to be worshipped in that part of your life?

You might like to remind the group of the Christology on the right. Each of these roles is part of who Jesus is. Identifying him as the Messiah is critical to us worshipping him fully in our lives.



The Christology of Matthew

Christ / Messiah (1:1)

Son of David, King (1:1, 2:2)

Saviour (1:21)

Immanuel (1:23)

Final Judge (3:11-12)

Son of God (3:17)

Teacher (7:28-29)

Lord (8:2,6)

Son of Man (8:20)

The Servant (12:18)

Prophet (13:57)

The Church

On Sunday we celebrated the way Jesus introduced the foundation of the church in this conversation.

- What is the difference between the local church (such as RUC) and THE CHURCH as Jesus describes it here? Are they the same or different?
- Do you feel that you are part of this work that Jesus is doing? Have you asked him to guide you and help you to be involved?
- Do you participate in things that God is doing in our church so that we can benefit from your gifts? Do you pray regularly for Jesus to grow our church?

A Prayer for the Church

Lord Jesus

You are the Messiah, the one chosen from the beginning of the world to rescue us; the one whose coming was foretold by the prophets, the one who promises healing, wholeness, and justice.

You are the Son of the Living God, the all powerful, all knowing God. You mirror His character in every expression of yourself.

Thank you for your love for us, your church.

Thank you that you yourself are building your church, that no power can stand against it.

Thank you that you use us to grow your church. Help us to be faithful to follow you and to proclaim you every day and everywhere we go.

Thank you that you bring light into the darkness through the church that you are establishing.

End off by praying as a group for Rosebank Union Church— our part of the church established by Jesus and the disciples.

