

Last Steps – Who is Jesus?

Good morning and welcome to CHC. My name is Pastor Bobby and I'm so grateful each of you are with us today.

If this is one of your first times, thanks for checking us out. I pray that God will lead you come and be apart of our family here at CHC.

If you're looking for perfect people, we don't have many of those. But if you're looking for some good people who love Jesus and will love you...this is the place!

Can y'all believe its March already??

It's almost Easter! For churches all across the world, this is our super bowl! Many people are open to coming to church for this special day. Let me encourage you to start inviting now. You never know how a simple invitation could change someone's life.

I'm really pumped to kick off our newest series today called Last Steps. We believe, ***Following the last steps of Jesus leads us to the first steps of new life.***

This is why over the next month we are taking a trip back to the early 30s A.D. We will look at the Last Steps of Jesus on earth and the week leading up to Easter Sunday

Today we are going to examine maybe the most critical question in the world.

This is a question we believe defines your destiny and brings purpose to you today.

Who is Jesus?

Everything in life flows from this question.

According to the scriptures everything in your life and in eternity is determined by how you answer this question.

In one way or another, you have to answer this question. I can't answer it for you. I can share what I think. I can give wisdom and knowledge of translating the Bible...but every single one of us has to answer this question.

We often hear...I know all about church, I know all about those Baptists or those Catholics...I don't want anything to do with that.

There is a big difference. I'm not asking you about church or denominations....I'm asking you, who is Jesus?

If we are able to take a step back for a moment, we realize we can't escape Him.

He pops up everywhere. Historians write about Him. Artists try to paint Him. Musicians sing about Him. Directors try to create films about Him.

Photos have been created to try and showcase Jesus: **(Show Pictures)**

- Blond hair, blue eyed Jesus
- Bodybuilder Jesus
- Short hair Jesus
- “I saw that” Jesus

There are many differing opinions on Jesus. Almost every major religion in our world today teaches that Jesus was either a prophet, good teacher, or Godly man.

It's safe to say, there is a misunderstanding of who Jesus is. This shouldn't come as a surprise because we read of some very similar times in scripture. That's where we are going to go today.

Let's go to the book of Matthew 16. The Gospels are 4 different eye-witness accounts of the life and ministry of Jesus.

An interesting fact about Matthew, whose name means "gift of the Lord," was a tax collector who left his work to follow Jesus.

We are coming into the beginning of the end for Jesus. These stories represent some of his last steps on earth. He was a boy who grew into a man. He was a carpenter. He started going town to town teaching, healing, loving the unlovable. Encouraging people to give their lives to God.

All along this journey he has had his disciples with him. These were His guys. They were his apprentices.

Stand with me in honor of the reading of Gods Word.

Matthew 16.13-16 | ¹³ **When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”** ¹⁴ **They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”** ¹⁵ **“But you,” he asked them, “who do you say that I am?”** ¹⁶ **Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.”**

Let's pray.

Jesus is having a discussion with His disciples, and He asks them this very cleverly worded question.

“Who do people say that the Son of Man is?”

It's almost like, I'm giving you the answer within the question. Now, why is this even relevant? Why does the way he framed this even matter?

Jesus often called himself the Son of Man as part of his interactions with people. Many scholars would say that this was Jesus favorite name for himself. Most often used.

The name, Son of Man, is tied back to NT and OT Scriptures. Let's look at just a couple.

When Jesus refers to himself as the Son of Man, he is referencing some 600 years before Jesus was even born. Here is one example.

Daniel 7.13-14 | ¹³ I continued watching in the night visions, and suddenly one like a son of man was coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was escorted before him. ¹⁴ He was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, so that those of every people, nation, and language should serve him.

Daniel saw glory, worship, and an everlasting kingdom given to the Messiah—here called the “Son of Man”—and Jesus applied this prophecy to Himself as He was asking this question.

1. *Son of Man* is a fulfillment of prophecy.

2. *Son of Man* is a title of humanity.

Son of Man focuses on the humanity of Christ. God called the prophet Ezekiel “son of man” 93 times. In this way, God was simply calling Ezekiel a human being. *Son of man* is simply a roundabout term for “human.” Jesus Christ was truly a human being. Look what 1 John tells us.

1 John 4.2 | This is how you know the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesses that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from God,

When He stubs His toe on a rock, it hurts.
When a briar from an Acacia tree pricks His arm, He bleeds.
And Jesus has a mom.

He came in the flesh. Jesus came as a human.

3. *Son of Man* is a title of humility.

The Second Person of the Trinity, eternal in nature, left heaven's glory and took on human flesh, becoming the Son of Man, born in a manger and “despised and rejected by mankind.” The Son of Man had “no place to lay his head.” The Son of Man ate and drank with sinners. The Son of Man suffered at the hands of men.

This intentional lowering of His status from King of Heaven to Son of Man is the epitome of humility.

There is so much just in the name of Jesus. (Jump back to Jesus asking his disciples this question.)

Who do people say the Son of Man is?

The answered him...People think you are John the Baptist (beheaded), Elijah (taken to heaven), Jeremiah (likely stoned), or some other dead prophet.

So, each person the disciples came in contact with had these crazy ideas of who Jesus is.

Think with me for a second....we think you're this guy who everyone saw get his head chopped off, but you're definitely not God or Gods Son.

After Jesus gets the answer of who everyone else thinks he is, he gets a little personal.

But you, who do you say that I am?

Let me once again emphasize the importance of this question.

Everything in your life and in eternity is determined by how you answer this question.

This sets Christianity apart from all else.

Understand this about truth and about reality.

Today in our culture reality is whatever you want it to be. Truth is whatever you feel like the truth is.

That is very dangerous and its false.

Truth is defined as that which is.

So, the question is not, who do you want Jesus to be for you.

This question cannot be based about your feelings or your emotions. The question is who Jesus is.

Logically this has to make sense. Everyone can't be right because everyone is saying different things.

So someone has to be right and everyone who is on the opposite is wrong.....or....everyone is wrong.

C.S. Lewis is a well-known author. He writes what he says are the options that we have to choose from when confronted with this question is who Jesus is.

1. **He is a liar.** (He said He was the Son of God and he purposely mislead people.)
2. **He is a lunatic.** (How can you believe you're God in flesh? You're crazy)

3. **He is the Lord.** He was and is and will continue to be who He said He was...”The Son of the living God”

Option 3 is the most scandalous.

Because the scandal of Christianity is not that Jesus is “a” savior or Jesus is “a” lord or Jesus is “a” prophet. The scandal of Christianity is that he is the Lord, the Savior, the Prophet.

And anyone who contradicts Him is wrong. That is the scandal of Christianity.

The disciples are faced with the most important question ever.

Simon Peter answered...You are the Messiah, The Son of the living God.

Messiah comes from the Hebrew word *mashiach* (MUH-SHE-AUK) and means “anointed one” or “chosen one.”

The Greek equivalent is the word *Christos* or, in English, *Christ*. The name “Jesus Christ” is the same as “Jesus the Messiah.”

Jesus told him. You are blessed! Translation – That’s correct.

Just as the disciples believed, here is what we believe.

Jesus Christ is the Son of God. He is co-equal with the Father. Jesus lived a sinless human life and offered Himself as the perfect sacrifice for the sins of all people by dying on the cross. He arose from the dead after three days to demonstrate His power over sin and death. He ascended to Heaven’s glory and will return someday to earth to reign as King of Kings and Lord of Lords.

He's so much more than a good guy.

Phillip Schaff | Speaking of Jesus, he says: **A character so original, so complete, so uniformly consistent, so perfect, so human, and yet so high above all human greatness, can be neither a fraud nor a fiction. The poet, as has been well said, would be in this case, greater than the hero. It would take more than a Jesus to invent a Jesus.**

Conclusion:

When Jesus asked this question, he wasn’t needing an answer. He was asking so that the disciples could say what they really understand and believed.

I want to leave you today with that question...**Who is Jesus?**

I hope and pray that this question will force you into a closer walk with Him. I pray that this question pushes you to dig into the scriptures to allow it to reveal who Jesus is.

If you are listening today and you don't know Jesus...Here is some great news, you can.

Knowing about Jesus is one thing, knowing Jesus personally is something different.

Jesus is a Person. To know Him is to enter into a relationship.

"Knowing" Jesus means having a relationship with Him. A Christian does not only know *about* Christ, but a Christian also knows Christ *personally*.

To know Christ personally means to get to know Him as you would a friend. In a friendship you spend time with the other person, and you have vulnerable conversations. Talking regularly is an important part of a relationship.

To know Jesus is not just to read about Him educationally, but also to spend time understanding who He is.

As we explore Jesus' last step...maybe He's calling you to your first step today.

If you're still not quite sure, that's why we are here. We would love to walk this journey with you. You do not have to go alone.