

### Questions for reflection, application, and discussion

1. In Matthew 16:13 Jesus asked his disciples, *“who do people say that the Son of Man is?”* This is still a big question to this day; most people know about Jesus, and therefore have some kind of opinion about him.
  - a. What answers did the disciples give about what people of that time were saying about Jesus? Is there anything we can learn from what people said about Jesus then as it relates to what people say about Jesus today?
  - b. If Jesus were to ask you, who do people today in your world say that I am, what you would say?
  - c. Many people today answer the question by saying what they believe about Jesus, while also saying that others can have a different belief that is equally valid. The key issue to them is who you think Jesus is, not who Jesus actually is. How would you respond to someone who expressed this view?
2. After hearing their response to the question about who others say that Jesus is, Jesus turned to his disciples in Matthew 16:15 and asked them, *“but who do you say that I am?”*
  - a. How do you answer that question in your own life?
  - b. This isn't a merely theological question of who do you think Jesus is, but it's a practical and personal question; who is Jesus, and what does his identity mean to your life? If someone watched your life through the week, what does your life say about who Jesus is to you?
3. The Jewish people of Jesus' day were living in longing expectation for the promised Messiah, but when Jesus came, they rejected him. They were blinded by their expectation and desire that the Messiah would be a political leader, and were unwilling to listen when Jesus presented a different picture – even from the Bible.
  - a. In what ways are people today blinded by their expectations and desires about God? What false ideas about God do people have that come from expectation and desire, rather than from God's word? What truth's about God does this blind them to?
  - b. It is easy to see how others are blinded by their preconceived ideas about God, but this is difficult to see in ourselves. Do you have any beliefs about God that are shaped more by your opinion, desires, or the culture than by the Bible?
  - c. Jesus is the Christ, the promised Messiah. What needs did he come to meet?
4. Many people affirm that Jesus was a great teacher and example, but they reject that he was God. Why is the deity of Jesus such an important truth? Can a person be a true Christian while rejecting the deity of Jesus? Why or why not?
5. Romans 10:9 teaches, *“if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”* This idea is affirmed in the Apostle's Creed, which affirms that we believe in “Jesus Christ, God's Son, our Lord.”
  - a. What does it mean to accept and confess that Jesus is Lord? Can a person believe the right things theologically about Jesus and not accept him as Lord?
  - b. Can a person accept Jesus as savior, while rejecting him as Lord, or as God of their life? Why or why not.