**JOURNEYING TOGETHER:** FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Session 3 of 4

# Who is Jesus?

### MEETING AIM

To see that Jesus is the Christ.

### BIBLE PASSAGE

Matthew 16:13-20

### BACKGROUND

This session plan is intended for use either in person or online, depending on how you’re meeting. Adapt the activities to fit your particular situation.

The Gospel of Matthew has been full of miraculous events up until this point. The disciples and the crowds have had plenty of opportunities to see Jesus in action. The Jewish people had been waiting for centuries for God to fulfil the promise of the coming of a Messiah (or Christ) – one who would rescue the people. The feeling is rising that just maybe, Jesus might be this person. The religious rulers are increasingly concerned about Jesus’ popularity and vexed by his criticisms of them. Midway through chapter 16, Jesus wants to know who people think he is – specifically his own disciples. Peter (who always has something to say!) responds with the truth: “You are the Messiah”. He knows Jesus is the one they’ve been waiting for.

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### GETTING STARTED – 5 mins

Welcome the young people with refreshments. If you want to use a conversation starter, try: Which person, living or dead, would you most like to meet and why?

### INTRO ACTIVITY – 10 mins

**You will need:** Post-it notes; pens

Ask everyone to write the name of a famous person or character on a Post-it note and stick to it someone else’s forehead without them reading it first. Let each person ask the group a series of questions to uncover who they are. Questions may only be answered by saying yes or no. For example: “Am I a man?” “Do I play music?” “Am I still alive?”

### BIBLE STORY – 10 mins

**You will need:** Bibles; large sheet of paper; marker pen; [‘The Messiah’ video](https://bibleproject.com/explore/video/messiah/) from the Bible Project and the means to watch it

Ask members of the group to read out today’s passage with different people reading different characters. Ask the group what they know about what Christ means. Are there any other Bible or non-Bible words that mean the same thing (eg Messiah, anointed one)? You might like to write these ideas down on a big piece of paper.

Go on to watch the video and chat about any new things that the group has discovered. What similarities are there between the words they wrote on the paper and those used on the video?

### CHATTING TOGETHER – 5 mins

Chat about the story using some of these questions. These are intended to be a starter – let the young people guide the conversation (providing you don’t go off on too many tangents!):

* What new understanding about the Messiah or Christ did you get from the video?
* What sort of person might the Jews have been expecting to be the Messiah?
* Does Jesus match up to these ideas?
* Why does Peter come to the conclusion that Jesus is the Christ?
* If Jesus asked you who *you* think he is, what would you say?

### CREATIVE RESPONSE – 10 mins

**You will need:** very large sheet piece of paper (a length of lining paper is ideal); marker pens

Ask the group to create a big piece of word art or a graffiti wall with words describing who Jesus is. Try to keep the conversation going as they do this. Why are they choosing these words? Are they the best words? What other words mean the same thing? How does Jesus show that these words accurately describe him?

### PRAYER – 5 mins

**You will need:** several different types of bread – remember to include gluten-free if necessary

Show the group how to use the Jesus prayer as a centring prayer. Explain that learning to be still in God’s presence can be a very helpful way to deepen our relationship. Be aware that stillness for some young people may be quite a challenge and perhaps give them some sort of fidget toy to keep their hands moving so their interior can become still.

1. Ask each person to find a comfortable seated position away from people who might distract them.

2. If they feel safe to do so, ask them to close their eyes, otherwise just find a spot on the floor to gaze at.

3. Teach them the Jesus prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me.

4. Encourage them to repeat the prayer silently over and over.

5. Tell them that you’ll set a timer for two minutes to let them do this. (It’s important they know how long the activity will last so they feel comfortable.)

6. If you like, you can let them feedback on how the activity was for each person.

**JENNY CHEUNG**

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