



## ***THE BIG IDEA***

Jesus is God.

## ***THE BIBLE***

Matthew 16:13-16; Mark 2:1-12;  
II Corinthians 5:17

**WHAT?** *What are we talking about today?*

### **DISCUSSION**

- **What's one funny reason you've had to ask someone for forgiveness?**
- **Is it easier for you to forgive someone, or to ask someone for forgiveness?**
- **What do you think forgiveness means? Let's define it.**
- **Talk about a time you needed someone to forgive you. What happened?**
- **When someone has forgiven you, how do you know it?**

**SO WHAT?** *Why does it matter to God and to us?*

### **WE'RE TALKING ABOUT WHO JESUS IS.**

- We've all had experiences with forgiveness. Maybe you're thinking right now about a time that you . . .
  - Were forgiven.
  - Forgave someone.
  - Chose not to forgive someone.
- Maybe you're struggling right now to forgive, or ask for forgiveness from, someone else.
- Because forgiveness is something we often need to give, as well as receive, I want to learn from someone today who knows a lot about forgiveness – Jesus.
- Whether you have been in church your whole life or this is your first time here, we all have an idea of who Jesus is. We think of Jesus as a nice guy, a teacher, a carpenter, a guy who walks on water . . . but whatever you think of Jesus, we want to take a couple weeks to talk about Him. Who is He *really*?

### **REFLECTION | Who is Jesus?**

- **So who is Jesus? Who do you say Jesus is?**
- *Ask students to write their answer down on their card and then put it somewhere safe (and take a picture of it with their phones, if they're prone to losing things).*
- **Who would people at your school say Jesus is?**



### **SCRIPTURE** | Matthew 16:13–16

- People have always had questions about who Jesus is. When Jesus was still here on earth, He knew people were wondering who He was, so one day, He asked His friends and followers what they thought.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Matthew 16:13-16 together.*
- The disciples responded with a whole list of possible answers to Jesus' question. According to them, people thought Jesus was John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah, or one of the other prophets. In other words, **people thought Jesus was a good teacher or religious leader.**
  - If you're not sure what a "prophet" is, it's simply a person who speaks to and for God.
  - In a sense, these people were right — Jesus does, in fact, speak to and for God. But they weren't *exactly* right.
  - Jesus isn't just another prophet who speaks to and for God. **Jesus is God!**
- After His disciples answered His question, Jesus asked another question. This time, He didn't want to know what other people thought about Him — He wanted to know what His closest friends thought about Him. Who did they think He was?
- Peter said He believed Jesus was two things:
  - **THE MESSIAH.** *Messiah* is a word used to talk about someone who would save God's people — we'll talk more about this next week.
  - **THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD.**
- This is a big statement! If someone told you they believed you had come to save the world because you are the daughter or son of all-powerful deity . . . well, you'd probably assume you were on a YouTube prank show. In Jesus' case, though, *it was true.*

### **SCRIPTURE** | Mark 2:1–12

- But I know it can be hard to believe, understand, or defend the statement that Jesus is God. So today I want to share a story that I think will help you answer the question, "Is Jesus *really* God?"
- Imagine what it would be like if this story happened right now, in this room, right now.
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *Read Mark 2:1-12 together.*
- Jesus had just returned from a preaching tour in Galilee — He was basically a celebrity, so people flocked to see Him. The room was completely packed out.
- At this point in Jesus' ministry, He had already healed a ton of people from sickness, paralysis, blindness — even death. He had a reputation as a miracle-worker.
- Having heard about Jesus, this paralyzed man wanted to see Jesus in hopes that he too might be healed.
  - In an act of total desperation, courage, and maybe stupidity, this guy's friends decide to try something reckless. They couldn't get to Jesus through the front door, but they thought they might be able to go through the roof.
  - While Jesus was teaching, these men climbed on top of the house, tore a hole in the roof, and lowered their friend down toward Jesus.



- I'm guessing this man was so excited to finally see Jesus. He was probably thinking, "Finally, I'm going to be healed! Yes!" And then . . . Jesus says, "I forgive you!"
- Uh . . . that's great and all, but **forgiveness wasn't really what the paralyzed man was after. He wanted to walk again!**
- Why did Jesus offer this man forgiveness? Had this man done something to offend Jesus? Was it that whole dropping-through-the-roof thing? No! This was much bigger than that.
- A few minutes ago, I said that, when you hurt someone, **the only person who can forgive you is the person you harmed**. By offering forgiveness to this man, Jesus is letting us know that he had done something to harm Jesus – but what?
  - To understand that, you need to understand this: because God created everything (you, me, the world, and everyone in it) anytime we harm ourselves, others, or the world we live in, we harm the God who created them.
  - So all sin is really a sin against God. That time you cheated on a test, punched your brother, or talked back to your parent? Yeah, those were sins against God. That's the bad news.
  - But here's the good news: because every sin is a sin against God, God has the authority to forgive every sin.
- So, when Jesus tells this man his sins are forgiven, He's making a big statement. He's saying, "I'm not just a good teacher. My authority comes from God, because I am God."
- And then, to prove His point, Jesus told the paralyzed man to get up and walk, healing him completely – not just spiritually, but physically too.

So who is Jesus? This story, and Jesus' own words, make it pretty clear. **Jesus is God.**

### DISCUSSION

- **When God has forgiven you, how do you know it?**
- **Read II Corinthians 5:17. How was this true for the paralyzed man? How is it true for us today?**
- **How does Jesus' ability to forgive show that he is God? What about His ability to heal?**
- **Aside from Jesus' ability to heal and forgive, how else can we know Jesus is God?**



**NOW WHAT?** *What does God want us to do about it?*

**DISCUSSION**

- Let's say for a second that you're not sure Jesus is God. What do you think it would take for you to be able to confidently say that you believe He is?
- Since Jesus is God, what does it mean for...
  - Our faith?
  - Our lives?
  - How should our lives be different?
- Why does it matter whether or not Jesus is God?
- If Jesus is God, then what's one thing you're going to do in response?

**RESPONSE** | If & Then

- I have one more question for you to answer. But this time, I don't want you to bring your answer to the front. This one is for you to hang onto.
- Let's assume Jesus is God, like He claimed to be. We've talked about what we *can* or *should* do differently if Jesus is God. But here's my question: **if Jesus is God, then what will you do about it?**
- **INSTRUCTIONS:** *With the instrumental music still playing, challenge students to finish this sentence on one sticky note: "If Jesus is God, I will . . ."*
- If Jesus really is God, then it should change everything about our lives and our faith. Maybe knowing Jesus is God has already changed your life, or maybe you're not sure what you think about that just yet.
- No matter where you are in your journey of faith, I hope this week you hear and consider how this one claim can change your whole life if it's true: **Jesus is God.**
- If it's true, it means everything. So here's my question to you: who do you say Jesus is? And if He is who He claims to be, how could it change your life?

**PRAY**

Ask for prayer requests. Pray for what's going on in the world around us. Pray for peace, patience, and that God would use this situation for His glory.