

**Who is Jesus?
He is . . . the Christ**
(Matthew 16:13-27)

To faithfully follow Jesus, I must understand . . .

His Identity (Matthew 16:16)

Because my _____ with God is based on it
(Psalm 2:12; John 20:31)

His Authority (Matthew 16:18)

Because my _____ for God is empowered by it (Matthew
16:19; John 20:21-23)

His Example (Matthew 16:21)

Because my _____ from God is determined by it (Matthew
16:22-27)

Can I honestly say to Jesus, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.” “I bow to Your authority over me.” “Instead of following my own desires, I choose to follow You all the days of my life, including today?”

Questions to Ponder and Answer

1. What would you say is the most popular opinion of Jesus among people you know who are not Christians?
2. Peter is both a hero and a villain in this passage, both correctly identifying Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the living God, and then stoutly opposing Jesus' plan to go to Jerusalem, die, and rise again. How do you explain the contrast? What do you learn for your life and walk with the Lord from this incident?
3. The kind of spiritual authority Jesus promises to Peter in Matthew 16:19, is extended to all the apostles in John 20:21-23 and to the whole church in Matthew 18:18. How do you think this should affect the way we go about being Jesus' witnesses in our world?
4. Peter recoiled in this case from the prospect of Jesus suffering, rather than immediately entering into His Messianic glory. Later in life, Peter presented quite a different view of suffering as part of a disciple's life. Read 1 Peter 4:12-19. What advice does he give to suffering Christians? How do you react to the prospect of suffering as a Christian?
5. How would you explain the paradox Jesus presents in Matthew 6:25? ("For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it; but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it.") What practical example of this can you think of from your own experience of life and ministry?