

Proper 16

Sunday between 21 and 27 August inclusive

Aim

To look at Jesus as 'the Christ'.

Readings

Exodus 1:8-2:10 or Isaiah 51:1-6

Psalm 124 or Psalm 138

Romans 12:1-8

Matthew 16:13-20

Teaching

People may ask you, 'What do you believe?' This is always a difficult question to answer. You can talk about how God made the world or tell the stories of Jesus. But in fact it is important to tell people we do not believe in creeds but in the living God. It is the fact that God is alive that is important and that we can have a relationship with him. God is always present and wants us to get to know him.

The disciples spent time with Jesus. Whenever possible he spent some time with them. They had seen miracles. They had asked, like others, 'Who is this that even the wind and waves obey him?' They were coming to the conclusion that Jesus is very special, that he is the Son of God. They were slowly beginning to see that Jesus is the Chosen One of God, the Anointed One (we would say the *appointed* one). In the Hebrew language the Anointed One is called 'the Messiah', and in Greek 'the Christ'. For a long time in their history the Jews looked forward to the time when God would send his Anointed One, when the Messiah, the Christ, would come to earth.

Now around a campfire, Jesus asks, 'Who do people say that the Son of Man is?' The disciples reply (read Matthew 16: 13, 14). This is quite impressive but Jesus wants to know if the disciples know him and truly recognise who he is (read Matthew 16:15, 16). Peter declares that Jesus is the Christ, the One who the people have longed for. This meant that Jesus was to be their deliverer and helper, to be their Saviour. The danger was that the disciples could only think in earthly terms and could not at this time understand what Jesus was about to do. But at least they recognised him as the One sent by God. It would only be after the crucifixion and the resurrection that they could see more clearly the deeper implication of calling Jesus the Christ.

It is important for each of us that we recognise the need for a Saviour and that Jesus is our Saviour. Like the disciples, we need to get to know him by spending time with him.

Activity

Encourage every member of the group to say why they call Jesus 'the Christ'.

Explore why we need a Saviour and what we need saving from. Try and avoid easy answers in single words. Remind the group you cannot talk about a person unless you really know them.

Prayer

Jesus, Son of God, Saviour,
we put our trust in you
and in your almighty power.
You are able to bring light to our darkness
and rescue us when we cannot help ourselves.
Jesus, help us to know you better
and to love you more.
Amen.

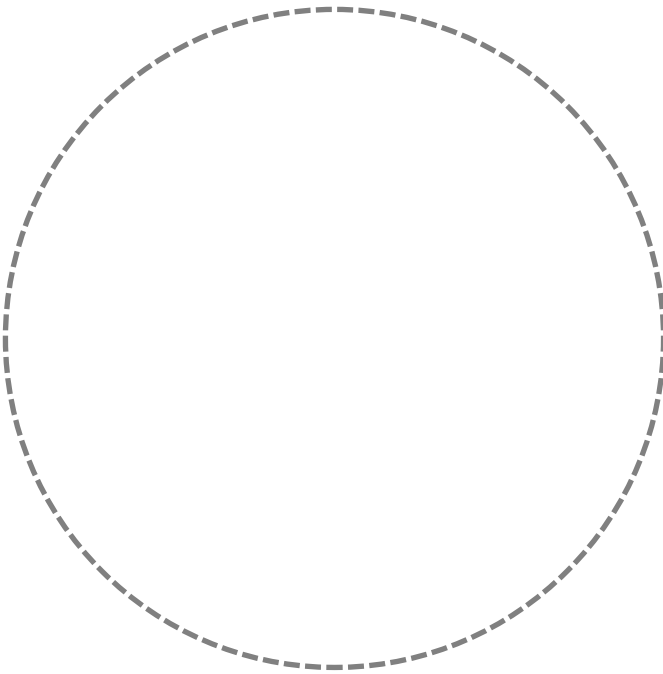
Song

What a wonderful Saviour is Jesus

Notes



Design a badge that is a sign for Jesus Christ.



Who is Jesus?

Read Matthew 16:13-16

Some said: JOHN THE BAPTIST come alive again.

But John and Jesus had been seen together.

Some said ELIJAH because they could see Jesus was sent by God. It was believed that Elijah would come again before the Christ came.

Jesus asks, 'But YOU, who do YOU say that I am?' . . . Can you answer this?

Peter says, 'You are the MESSIAH.' The word in Greek for MESSIAH is CHRIST – that is, God's 'Chosen One who is to be the Saviour'.

Peter also calls Jesus the SON OF THE LIVING GOD . . . Do you?



Jesus Christ, God's Son, Saviour



Do you know what these signs mean?
Use an arrow to link the sign with its meaning.

INRI

CHRIST

IHS

JESUS OF NAZARETH.
KING OF THE JEWS



JESUS CHRIST SON OF GOD SAVIOUR



JESUS

Pray

Jesus Christ, Son of God, Saviour, help us to know you are always with us and ready to be a friend and strength to us. Amen.