

Matthew 16:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

Analysis

Jesus' question 'Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?' introduces the crucial identity question. The phrase 'Son of man' (from Daniel 7:13) carries messianic implications while emphasizing His humanity. This question forces confrontation with Christ's identity—the central issue of Christianity. Reformed Christology emphasizes that right understanding of Christ's person is foundational to salvation. Various opinions about Jesus (as there are today) all fall short unless one recognizes His deity and messianic office.

Historical Context

Caesarea Philippi, built by Philip the Tetrarch, contained temples to Caesar and Pan. Asking about His identity in this pagan religious center emphasized the contrast: who is Jesus amid competing claims? The location's idolatry made the confession of Christ's deity more pointed. Popular opinions (John the Baptist, Elijah, Jeremiah) showed people recognized Jesus' prophetic authority but missed His divine nature.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

Study Questions

1. Who do you say Jesus is, beyond religious labels or opinions?
2. How does cultural confusion about Christ's identity affect your witness?
3. What makes accurate Christology essential to Christian faith?

Interlinear Text

Ἐλθὼν δὲ ὁ Ἰησοῦς εἰς τὰ μέρη Καισαρείας τῆς
came **When** G3588 **Jesus** **into** G3588 **the coasts** **of Caesarea** G3588
G2064 G1161 G2424 G1519 G3313 G2542

Φιλίππου ἡρώτα τοὺς μαθητὰς αὐτοῦ λέγουσιν Τίνα
Philippi **he asked** G3588 **disciples** G846 **say** **Whom**
G5376 G2065 G3101 G3004 G5101

με λέγουσιν οἱ ἀνθρώπου εἶναι τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ
that I **say** G3588 **do men** **am** G3588 **the Son** G3588
G3165 G3004 G444 G1511 G5207

ἀνθρώπου
do men
G444

Additional Cross-References

Daniel 7:13 (Parallel theme): I saw in the night visions, and, behold, one like the Son of man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days, and they brought him near before him.

Matthew 9:6 (Parallel theme): But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house.

John 5:27 (Parallel theme): And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.

Matthew 8:20 (References Jesus): And Jesus saith unto him, The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.

Matthew 12:8 (Parallel theme): For the Son of man is Lord even of the sabbath day.

Matthew 13:37 (Parallel theme): He answered and said unto them, He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man;

Acts 10:38 (References Jesus): How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.

Acts 7:56 (Parallel theme): And said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God.

Mark 8:38 (Parallel theme): Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.

Mark 10:45 (Parallel theme): For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.