

Matthew 16:15

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

Analysis

Jesus personalizes the question: 'But whom say ye that I am?' The shift from 'men' to 'ye' demands personal commitment, not merely reporting others' opinions. Salvation requires personal faith in Christ, not secondhand religion. Reformed theology emphasizes that each person must individually trust Christ—there's no salvation by proxy or tradition. This question confronts every generation: intellectual acknowledgment of Christ's existence differs radically from personal faith in His lordship and deity.

Historical Context

After hearing various popular opinions, Jesus requires His disciples to declare their own conviction. In first-century Judaism, messianic expectations ran high but were politically focused. Jesus' question cuts through speculation to demand personal verdict. The disciples had traveled with Jesus, seen miracles, heard teachings—now they must confess who He is.

Related Passages

John 15:13 — Greatest form of love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. Can you articulate your personal faith in Christ beyond what you've been taught?
2. How has your understanding of Jesus deepened through personal encounter?
3. What difference does personally confessing Christ make versus knowing about Him?

Interlinear Text

λέγετε αὐτοῖς Ὑμεῖς δὲ τίνα με λέγετε εἶναι
He saith unto them ye But whom that I He saith am
G3004 G846 G5210 G1161 G5101 G3165 G3004 G1511

Additional Cross-References

Luke 9:20 (Parallel theme): He said unto them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter answering said, The Christ of God.

Matthew 13:11 (Parallel theme): He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given.

Mark 8:29 (Parallel theme): And he saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ.