



Prince of Peace Church

13th Sunday After Pentecost, August 23, 2026

“Who do you say Jesus is?”

Scriptures for Reference: Matthew 16:13-20

- 1. Cultural Projections:** In verse 14, the crowds reduced Jesus to familiar, comfortable roles (John the Baptist the moral reformer, Elijah the power broker, Jeremiah the critic). In what ways does modern culture—and even the church—reduce Jesus to a functional "life coach" or "cultural mascot" to suit personal preferences?
- 2. Heart Diagnosis:** Jesus turns to the disciples in verse 15 and asks, "But who do you say that I am?" While we may speak orthodox answers ("Jesus is Lord"), what do your daily anxieties, calendar, or financial choices reveal about who you functionally trust as Lord?
- 3. Sovereign Grace:** Jesus reminds Peter in verse 17 that his confession was not an intellectual achievement ("flesh and blood"), but a gift of divine grace from the Father. How should this truth shape our attitude toward skeptics, doubters, or those who view Jesus differently than we do?
- 4. The Assault on Death:** In verse 18, Jesus declares that "the gates of hell shall not prevail" against His church. How does the sermon's visual of Jesus on the Cross—standing between the darkness of hell and His people—change how you view His power over your deepest fears and mortality?
- 5. The Undomesticated Messiah:** Why did Jesus strictly charge the disciples to keep His identity silent at this point (v. 20)? How does His refusal to be co-opted by popular political or military expectations challenge how we represent Him to the world today?
- 6. Ultimate Security:** Contrast the fear-driven worship at Pan's Grotto with the image of Revelation 22:1–3, where the throne of the Lamb is the source of the River of Life. Where in your life are you relying on "worldly Augusteums" (career, politics, self-reliance) for security, and how does resting in Christ's unshakeable kingdom set you free?