

## 7th Grade New Testament (Gospels)

**Lesson Plan:** Caesarea Philippi Confession (Matthew 16:13-28)

**Learning Goals:** Students should be confronted with the same question as Peter and the disciples: “Who do you say that Jesus is?” Students will evaluate their own answers to this question.

**Question:** Who does the world say that Jesus is? (Or Alternative Activity)

Prayer

Discuss Question on board.

Activity: “Name-Draw Showdown”

Item needed: A large blanket

Divide the class into two teams. Have two people stand on chairs and hold a large blanket on either end so the blanket serves as a wall between the two groups. The blanket needs to be touching the floor and still be taller than any person in the groups so the students on either side of the blanket can’t see each other. With the blanket held up between the two groups, each group is to silently pick one person to stand at arm’s length from the blanket. The leader should count to three, and the people holding the blanket then drop it. The two people facing each other are to shout the name of the person facing them. The first one to say the name correctly earns a point for the team. the blanket will go back up and the teams will pick two new people. Repeat this several times.

Follow Up Questions:

- What makes people freeze up when they’re under pressure to say a person’s name?
- Whose names were easiest for you to say? Which names were the hardest?
- What embarrassing experiences have you had when you did not know or you forgot someone’s name?

Show video of “Man on the Street” in NYC

**Read Matthew 16:13-28** (Mark 8:27-9:1; Luke 9:18-27)

### Caesarea Philippi

- Named in tribute to Caesar
- Many rulers were fond of doing this - therefore there were many Caesarea’s
- City founded by Philip the Tetrarch (three rulers)
- Caesarea Philippi was located 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee and was the center of the worship of the pagan god Pan (of earth). There were many religious options in this city and this is why the context of Peter’s declaration is so huge.
- City located at the foot of Mt. Herman (tallest mountain in that part of the world - 9,100+ ft.)
- Gentile city - important to emphasize Jesus’ universal ministry (not only for the Jews)
  - distinctive of Matthew’s Gospel - universal character

**Jesus first question: Who do people say that the Son of Man is?**

- John the Baptist
- Elijah the prophet
- Jeremiah
- one of the prophets

**Who does the world say that Jesus is?** *(Have students brainstorm some answers to this question - the answers below might help guide discussion.)*

- Prophet
- Good moral teacher
- Hoax
- Mad Man
- An Enlightened Being
- Myth/Legend/Fairy Tale

**Jesus was setting them up for the real question:**

- Who do YOU say that I am?

**Peter's Response:**

- You are the Christ (Messiah)
- Revealed to him by the Holy Spirit, not by man's wisdom

**On this rock...**

1. Reference to Peter (*petros* from *petra* - rock) = Roman Catholic Church; Peter becomes bishop of Rome, apostolic authority granted to successors (pope); frequently depicted with a ring of keys in his belt (authority)
2. Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah
3. On the physical rock on which they were standing

**Secrecy motif**

- Not tell anyone because it was not his time yet

**Teaching on his death/resurrection**

- from here Jesus points his face toward the cross (when his time and mission would come)
- Peter objects (irony); becomes a messenger of Satan (temptation of a cross-less messiah); not Satanic possession but Peter being a messenger
- "suffering Messiah" would not fit into their preconceived ideas of Jesus' ministry and authority

**Call to Discipleship**

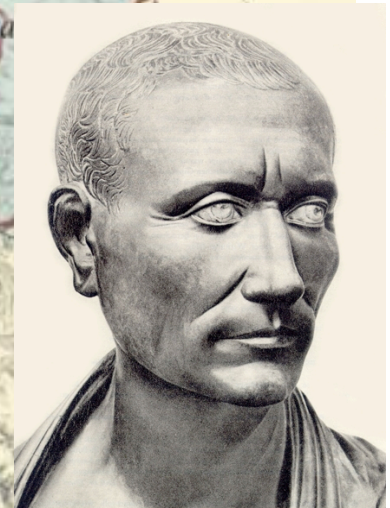
- To be Jesus' disciple means that we have to follow in his footsteps, which also lead to the cross
- A daily decision to die to ourselves so that we can follow after Christ
- What will it cost us? Everything.

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**Lesson Summary/Review:**

Students should review and highlight the following vocabulary terms and concepts from this lesson in their notes:

- Caesarea Philippi
- Mt. Herman
- Messiah
- Who does the world say that Jesus is? Who did Peter say Jesus is?
- What are the three options we talked about in class for Jesus' statement "on this rock I will build my church?"
- Why did Jesus say to Peter, "Get behind me Satan?"



Philip the Tetrarch