

“My Soul Longs For You O God” Worksheet 3

Who Do You Say That I Am?

The names and titles used for Jesus in the Gospels have often been a starting point for exploring His identity. The proper name, **Jesus**, in Hebrew means “God saves.” Remember that names in the ancient near east were often intended to express the identity of the person. Hence, Simon’s name was changed to Peter, rock, to signify that he was the rock upon which the Church would be built. The name Jesus signifies both identity and mission – “God saves.”

The title **Christ** comes from the Greek translation of the Hebrew “Messiah,” or anointed. This title signifies one consecrated for a divine mission. This anointing was given in the Old Testament to priests, kings, and prophets. The awaited Messiah who would definitively establish the kingdom of God, was to fulfill the hope of Israel as priest, prophet, and king. As we heard, Jesus accepted this title from Peter, but also told his disciples not to tell anyone about Him. Their contemporaries were awaiting a Messiah in the political sense, that would save them from foreign domination. Christ, however, linked His identity as Messiah to His Passion and cross, that is, our salvation from sin.

Jesus is also called **“Son of God.”** In and of itself, this does not signify that Jesus is divine. In the Old Testament angels, the children of Israel, and kings are all called sons of God. But in the New Testament, this title takes on a unique significance. At both the baptism of Jesus and the transfiguration, the voice of God the Father calls Jesus his “beloved Son,” and Christ is also called the only son of God (Jn 3:16). Only in light of the death and resurrection of Jesus does the full meaning of this title become clearer.

Finally, Jesus is called **“Lord.”** In the Greek translation of the Old Testament, the divine name YHWH was often rendered by the Greek Kyrios – Lord. Lord becomes the more common divine name. The confession of the Church that Jesus is Lord is an affirmation that the adoration and glory belonging to the Father are also due to Jesus His Son.

“Jesus knew and loved us each and all during his life, his agony and his Passion, and gave himself up for each one of us... He has loved us all with a human heart...”(CCC 478).

“Jesus is fully God and fully man. As a man, he was like you in all things except sin. For our sake, he suffered, died, and rose from the dead. How does all this help you to relate to Him?”

“Who do you say that I am?” is Jesus’ question to his disciples. Peter answers, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God”. (Mt 16:16). How would you answer Jesus question- “who do you say that I am “?”

Reflection—We Sometimes Forget

God is love: “Divine Love,”
 and in Christ that love is revealed.
Christ gives us the Spirit of Love,
 and in this One God,
 these three Loving Persons
 form a perfect Trinity.
God who is Divine Love is very near to us
 and we to Divine Love.
It is as close as a breath,
 a smile,
 a turn of the head.
And yet...
 we sometimes forget,
 or focus on the riches of this world
 or allow indifference to overtake us
 or remain in ignorance about our deep desires,
 or follow bad example through sin,
 or ignore God’s invitation
 or even outrightly reject God
 or – and this is perhaps the most insidious-
 hide from God in fear and shame
God however does not abandon us,
 or reject us
 or shift the divine focus of attention.
God is always calling us to seek the divine heart,
 to find life and happiness.
And on our part, our human part,
 what is required of us?
Simply that we open our hearts to God,
 that we allow ourselves to be loved,
 that we place ourselves in such a place
 that we can hear the voice of the Holy One
 which never ceases echoing in our depths.
And for those who do seek God
 with a pure heart and deep desire,
 there are certain ways of coming to know
 the Divine Source of Life.
There are ways of approaching God,
 of coming to see God,
 which make us rather certain of God’s existence.
We can’t prove that God is there,
 in the same way we prove something in science.
But we can see with the inner eye,
 hear with the inner ear,
 and touch God in our own hearts
 and in this, we can be certain: God is. (Bill Huebsch)