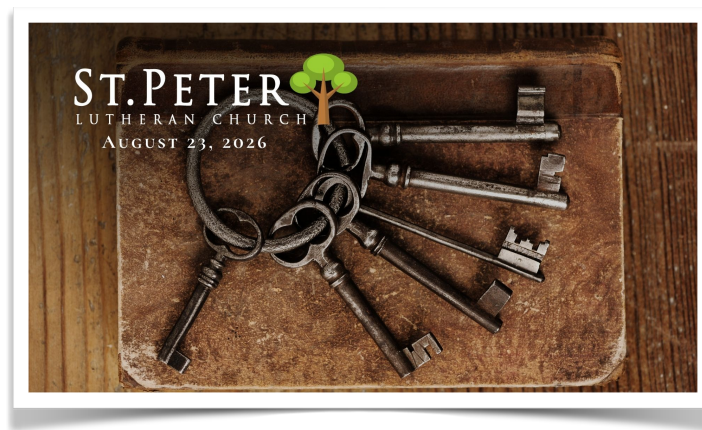




Who Do You Say I Am

A Five-Day Devotional

August 24 - August 28, 2026

Some questions have simple answers; others have the power to change everything. In Matthew 16, Jesus asks His disciples a question that reaches beyond information and into the heart: “Who do you say that I am?”

Peter's answer becomes the confession upon which the church is built: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This week, we will consider what that confession means for us—not simply as something we say on Sunday, but as a truth that shapes how we live, trust, repent, worship, and extend forgiveness.

We will also consider the beautiful truth that faith is God's gift, salvation rests entirely on His grace, and Christ has entrusted His church with the responsibility of proclaiming forgiveness. The more clearly we see who Jesus is, the more clearly we understand who we are—and the more confidently we can live as His people.

Monday, August 24

Who Do You Say Jesus Is?

“But who do you say that I am?” — Matthew 16:15, ESV

Jesus' question moves from what other people think to what His disciples believe. It is one thing to know what people say about Jesus. It is another thing entirely to confess who He is for yourself.

Peter answers boldly: Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. He is not simply a wise teacher, a moral example, or an inspiring historical figure. He is Lord. He is the One who saves, the One who speaks with authority, and the One who calls us to trust Him with our whole lives.

Pastor Chris reminded us that the church stands on this confession. Everything we do—worship, preaching, serving, fellowship, and mission—flows from the truth that Jesus is exactly who He says He is. If Jesus is merely an example, we can admire Him from a distance. But if He is the living Son of God, then our lives must respond to Him.

Peter's confession invites us to make the question personal. Who is Jesus to you? Not merely who does your church say He is, or who did your parents teach you He is, but who do you confess Him to be?

Reflection

If you had to describe who Jesus is to you in one honest sentence, what would you say?

Prayer

Jesus, help me see You clearly and confess You faithfully as Christ and Lord. Let who You are shape who I am and how I live. Amen.

Tuesday, August 25

Faith Is a Gift

*“For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven.”
— Matthew 16:17, ESV*

After Peter confesses Jesus, Christ makes something important clear: Peter did not arrive at this truth simply through intelligence, effort, or personal insight. The Father revealed it to him.

Faith is not something we manufacture by trying harder to believe. It is a gift of God. That truth should produce humility rather than pride. We cannot boast that we somehow figured God out; we give thanks that God opened our eyes to see Christ.

This is also good news when faith feels fragile. There may be seasons when questions arise, circumstances shake our confidence, or God seems distant. In those moments, we don't have to manufacture perfect certainty. We can ask God to strengthen the faith He has already given us.

This changes the way we view other people, too. When someone struggles with doubt or sees faith differently than we do, our response should not be arrogance. We can pray for them, listen to them, and remember that faith itself is God's gracious work.

Reflection

Where is your faith feeling fragile right now, and how might remembering that faith is God's gift change the way you approach that struggle?

Prayer

Father, thank You for the gift of faith. When my trust is weak, reveal Christ to me again and strengthen my heart to believe and follow Him. Amen.

Wednesday, August 26

Grace, Not Performance

“For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God.” — Ephesians 2:8, ESV

Grace changes everything because it reminds us that our relationship with God is not built on our performance. We are saved by grace through faith, not because we have managed to become good enough, spiritual enough, or consistent enough.

This truth frees us from both pride and despair. When we are doing well spiritually, we cannot take credit for God's work in us. When we stumble, we don't have to conclude that God has abandoned us. Our salvation rests on Christ's finished work, not on the fluctuating quality of our performance.

Grace also gives us freedom to repent honestly. We don't have to hide our failures from God because He already knows them. We can bring our sin into the light, receive His mercy, and continue forward. Repentance isn't an attempt to earn God's love; it is a response to the love He has already shown us.

When we truly understand grace, gratitude begins to replace striving. We obey not because we are trying to convince God to love us, but because we already know that He does.

Reflection

Where are you most tempted to measure your relationship with God by your performance instead of resting in His grace?

Prayer

Gracious God, thank You that my salvation rests on Jesus and not on my performance. Help me receive Your grace, repent honestly, and live with grateful confidence. Amen.

Thursday, August 27

A Church That Opens the Door

"I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." — Matthew 16:18, ESV

Jesus doesn't simply reveal who He is; He tells His disciples what He is building: His church. The church belongs to Christ, and He gives His people a serious and hopeful calling—to proclaim His truth, call people toward repentance, and announce the forgiveness Christ has won.

The "keys of the kingdom" remind us that the church does not invent forgiveness. We receive the authority Christ gives and faithfully deliver His Word. When the church announces forgiveness to the repentant, it opens the door Christ has opened. When it calls people away from sin, it does so because sin destroys and Christ desires something better for His people.

That makes the church more than a place we attend. It is a community entrusted with the gospel. Through worship, preaching, Scripture, prayer, and the Sacraments, God continues to speak His promises to His people.

This calling requires both courage and compassion. We should never be afraid to speak the truth, but neither should truth become an excuse for withholding mercy. Christ calls His church to be a place where sin is taken seriously, and grace is proclaimed boldly.

Reflection

How can you help make your church a place where people encounter both the truth about sin and the transforming mercy of Jesus?

Prayer

Lord Jesus, strengthen Your church to speak Your truth with courage and Your mercy with compassion. Help us faithfully proclaim the forgiveness You have won for us. Amen.

Friday, August 28

Receive Forgiveness, Give Forgiveness

"If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them." — John 20:23, ESV

After His resurrection, Jesus entrusted His church with the ministry of forgiveness. This is not an abstract theological idea. It is a gift Christ intends His people to hear, receive, and proclaim.

Pastor Chris emphasized the comfort of knowing that forgiveness is something Christ gives to His repentant people. We don't have to wonder whether God is willing to forgive when we come honestly before Him. Jesus has already accomplished our salvation, and His church continues to speak that good news into the lives of sinners who need to hear it.

Receiving forgiveness should also change the way we live. People who know they have received mercy become people who extend mercy. That doesn't mean ignoring sin or pretending harmful behavior doesn't matter. It means refusing to let resentment, pride, or unforgiveness become the defining forces in our relationships.

As we close this week, return to where we began: Who is Jesus? He is the Christ, the Son of the living God. He is the One who gives faith, saves by grace, builds His church, and speaks forgiveness to His people. The more firmly we hold that confession, the more confidently we can live from it.

Reflection Question

Is there someone you need to forgive—or a forgiveness from Christ that you need to stop doubting and simply receive?

Prayer

Jesus, thank You for the forgiveness You freely give. Help me receive Your mercy without hesitation and extend that same mercy to others. Make me a faithful witness to Your grace. Amen.

Thank you for spending your week with us. Sunday's Coming!