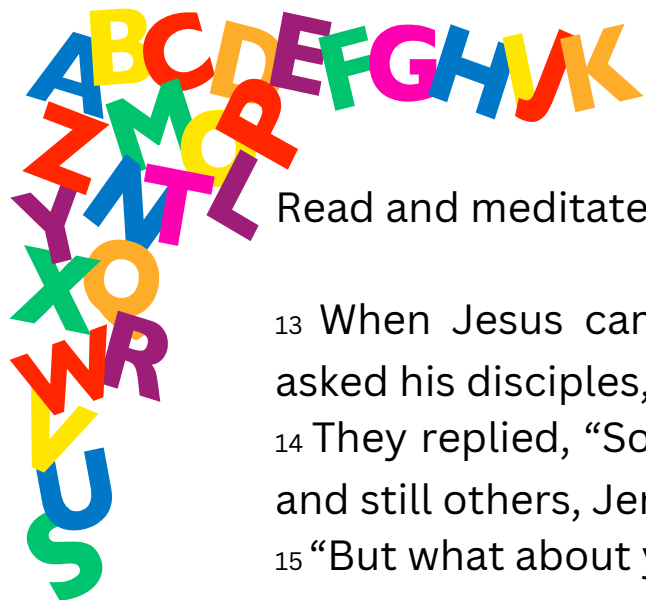




## *For Further Study*

Read and meditate on the passage below:

- <sup>13</sup> When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, “Who do people say the Son of Man is?”
- <sup>14</sup> They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.”
- <sup>15</sup> “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”
- <sup>16</sup> Simon Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” (Matthew 16:13-16)

This passage comes from Matthew’s gospel account, and it describes a conversation that Jesus had with his apprentices or disciples. He first asks them what other people are saying about him. He is interested in them engaging in a conversation with each other about the scuttlebutt throughout the region. They open up and connect Jesus with John the Baptist, who preached a very similar message. They also mention that some connect Jesus with the teaching and miraculous events of the early prophet, Elijah. Still others identify Jesus as a follower of another prophet, such as Jeremiah, whom Jesus closely paralleled.

After speaking to the disciples about what others think about him, he turns the question to them: “But what about you?” Jesus is eager for them to discuss their own perceptions. I imagine a pregnant pause came over the group. Who would speak up? Who would answer? What should they say?

Peter is the stated spokesperson in this critical conversation. He explains that Jesus is the Mashiah (Messiah in English). This statement is critical to the gospel story and becomes an important declaration to the reader, but Peter’s statement is also one of personal faith. As an apprentice of Rabbi Jesus, Peter knew the Master well and made the political decision to follow his style of Messianic hope. Peter would later deny Jesus, but in this moment he claims Jesus as his Master. How is he your Master?

### **PRACTICE:**

Consider what it means for you to follow Jesus.

