



### Session Objective

In this session, youth explore the divine nature of Christ and the incarnation. They have the opportunity to wrestle with a centuries-old question: How is Jesus both truly human and truly divine?

### Faith Statement

**Question 35.** How can Jesus be truly God and yet also truly human at the same time?

The mystery of Jesus Christ's divine-human unity passes our understanding; only faith given by the Holy Spirit enables us to affirm it. When Holy Scripture depicts Jesus as someone with divine power, status, and authority, it presupposes his humanity. And when it depicts him as someone with human weakness, neediness, and mortality, it presupposes his deity. We cannot understand how this should be, but we can trust that the God who made heaven and earth is free to become God incarnate and thus to be God with us in this wonderful and awe-inspiring way.

—*The Study Catechism: Full Version*



### Engage

Open your time together in prayer and lead a conversation based on the following questions:

- Why do we call Jesus *God* if God is Jesus' dad?
- What things about Jesus are humanlike and what things about him are godlike?
- How is Jesus fully human *and* fully divine? How is it possible to be two different things at one time?



### Explore

Read Philippians 2:5-11 and explore these questions:

- What does this passage teach us about the nature of Jesus Christ? Can Jesus' humanity and Jesus' divinity be separated? Why or why not?
- What does this passage teach us about the nature of God?
- What do we learn about the relationship between God and Jesus Christ in this passage?



### Express

Use the following questions to help the young people express what they've learned. Consider discussing the questions from Engage again to see if anyone has any new perspectives after exploring the biblical passage.

- How easy or difficult is it for you to respond to the question "How is Jesus God?" What makes it easy or difficult?
- How do you think someone who has never heard of Jesus Christ would respond to the doctrine that Jesus is both fully human and fully God?
- (*Read the Faith Statement to the participants.*) Do you agree with the way the Faith Statement responds to the question? Why or why not?



### Exit

Give each participant an opportunity to share what he or she learned from today's session. Close in prayer together, inviting each person to pray for the person on his or her left.





# Why Do We Pray "In Jesus' Name"?



### Session Objective

Many people use the phrase "in Jesus' name" as a traditional way to close their prayers to God. Why do people do this? Is there something in the Bible that tells us we should say this? Or do we just use these words out of habit? In this session, participants will explore the meaning of praying in the name of Jesus.

### Faith Statement

**Q. 99.** What is required in the third commandment?

**A.** That we must not profane or abuse the name of God by cursing, by perjury, or by unnecessary oaths. Nor are we to participate in such horrible sins by keeping quiet and thus giving silent consent. In a word, we must not use the holy name of God except with fear and reverence so that he may be rightly confessed and addressed by us, and be glorified in all our words and works.

—The Heidelberg Catechism



### Engage

Open your time together in prayer and lead a conversation based on the following questions:

- How often do you pray? When you pray, do you close your prayer with *in Jesus' name*? Why or why not?
- Are we supposed to always say *in Jesus' name* we pray at the end of our prayers? Why or why not? If we don't say it, are we still praying in Jesus' name?
- If Jesus is fully human and fully God, why don't we just pray to Jesus instead of praying in Jesus' name?
- To whom are we supposed to address our prayers? God? Jesus? the Holy Spirit?



### Explore

Read Exodus 3:13-15 and explore these questions:

- Why was it important for Moses to know God's name?
- What did God say God's name was?
- What does this passage teach us about God's name?
- Does humanity's relationship with God change now that God's name has been revealed? Why or why not?

Then read John 14:13-14 and explore these questions:

- What does this Scripture passage teach us about Jesus' relationship with God?
- What does this Scripture passage teach us about our relationship with Jesus? What does this Scripture passage teach us about our relationship with God?
- How do these verses connect with the passages from Exodus 3 and with today's session question about praying in Jesus' name?



### Express

Use the following questions to help the young people express what they've learned. Consider discussing the questions from Engage again to see if anyone has any new perspectives after exploring the biblical passages.

- What reasons exist to *always* end our prayers with something like "in Jesus' name we pray"?
- What reasons exist to *never* end our prayers with something like "in Jesus' name we pray"?
- What's the most important thing to remember when responding to this session's question?



### Exit

Close in prayer, giving each participant an opportunity to share a prayer of thanksgiving with the rest of the group.





### Session Objective

In this session, youth encounter the unexpected Jesus, who was a surprising Messiah because he brought forgiveness and a new start, rather than a new earthly kingdom. Youth recall and discover names for and stories about Jesus that describe the saving work he did in his life, death, and resurrection.

### Faith Statement

God's reconciling act in Jesus Christ is a mystery which the Scriptures describe in various ways. It is called the sacrifice of a lamb, a shepherd's life given for his sheep, atonement by a priest; again it is ransom of a slave, payment of debt, vicarious satisfaction of a legal penalty, and victory over the powers of evil. These are expressions of a truth which remains beyond the reach of all theory in the depth of God's love for humankind. They reveal the gravity, cost, and sure achievement of God's reconciling work.

— *The Confession of 1967* (9.09)  
Inclusive Language Text



### Engage

Open your time together in prayer and lead a conversation based on the following questions:

- What did Jesus do that motivated his followers to follow him and to start a religion that would eventually spread all over the world?
- Why did you choose to come here today to learn about Jesus Christ?
- How and why is Jesus important in your life?



### Explore

Read Acts 10:34-43 (an excerpt from Peter's sermon to a group of Gentiles) and explore these questions:

- In this Scripture passage, what great things about Jesus does Peter share with his listeners? How would these great things have affected the world at the time?
- If you were one of the Gentiles (non-Jewish people) listening to Peter, what would you have thought about what Peter was saying to everyone?
- How does this Scripture passage respond to the question "What makes Jesus so great?"



### Express

Use the following questions to help the young people express what they've learned. Consider discussing the questions from Engage again to see if anyone has any new perspectives after exploring the biblical passage.

- What was the most significant thing that Jesus did when he was on the earth and why?
- In what ways do you live your life as a disciple of Jesus Christ? What is it about Jesus that motivates you to live in this way?
- How would you respond to someone who asked you, "Exactly what does make Jesus so great?"



### Exit

Close in prayer, thanking God for calling your group together to talk about tough questions.





### Session Objective

In this session, youth have the opportunity to put together what they have discovered about Jesus Christ in this mini-course as they articulate what they believe about him and challenge one another to share their beliefs with others.

### Faith Statement

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick, and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

—A Brief Statement of Faith (10.2)



### Engage

Open your time together in prayer and lead a conversation based on the following questions:

- Do you consider yourself a disciple of Jesus Christ? Why or why not?
- What level of importance or influence does Jesus Christ have in your life right now?
- What exactly does it mean to follow Jesus as a young person in this town/city at this time?
- What do you know for sure about Jesus?



### Explore

Read Mark 8:27-38 and explore these questions:

- How does this Scripture passage connect with the stories that precede and follow it?
- Why do you think Jesus was questioning his disciples about his identity?
- What was Peter's response to the question in verse 29? What would your response be to the same question?
- What do we learn about Jesus Christ in this Scripture passage? What do we learn about humanity's relationship with Jesus Christ in this Scripture passage?



### Express

Use the following questions to help the young people express what they've learned.

- How do you feel when someone shares their faith with you?
- If you were to walk around at school or in public somewhere with a button that read, "Ask Me About My Faith," how would you respond if someone actually asked you about your faith?
- As followers of Jesus Christ, do we have a responsibility to tell others about him? Why or why not?
- When was the last time you shared your faith in Jesus Christ with someone else?



### Exit

Give each participant an opportunity to share one new insight that he or she has after participating in this mini-course about Jesus Christ. Close in prayer together.

