

Who is Jesus?

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Preacher: Emmanuel Kwizera

[0:00] Yeah, thank you so much, Pastor Tommy. Thank you so much, all of you, for coming. As he said, in the last 10 years, since 2006 up to 2016, I have been very close to Pastor Tommy and also for Laura.

We worked together for that project as we forgive a documentary film. And what I can testify, I'm a survivor of genocide. I lost 100 people during the genocide, killed.

I was 17 during the genocide. But after genocide, I was totally confused about God, about where I was going during the genocide, how God can allow genocide to happen in a Christian nation. Among all these discussions, but I praise God, because finally I gave my life to Jesus Christ. I started a journey of healing and reconciliation. But what I want to testify is that one of the key tools that God used to heal our country, Rwanda, as we forgive a documentary movie was a part of it. We have seen people really healed and also changed by the power of the gospel through that movie. Thank you so much, Pastor. Thank you so much also for your support and your significant role in that project.

[1:19] Thank you so much, Pastor. So I'm called Emmanuel Kuzera. Kuzera means faith. I'm from Rwanda, as I have already mentioned. But now currently I live in Kenya, Nairobi, where I work as International Mission Director of African Evangelistic Enterprise.

I'm married. I have three children. The oldest, she's eight. The second one, he's six. And the youngest, she's one and a half. So I praise God for my wife and my children, but also I praise God for the whole thing that God is doing in my country, Rwanda, and the ministry I'm doing in terms of evangelism of the cities of Africa.

So the message of this afternoon, I want to reflect on Matthew chapter 16, verse 13 up to verse 20. The question that Jesus asked his disciples. When you read Matthew chapter 16 from verse 13 up to verse 20, Jesus asked his disciples two questions.

The first question is on verse 13. When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippine, he asked his disciples, who do people say the Son of Man is?

[2:34] Now, this afternoon, I want just to help you or to encourage you or to just cause a kind of reflection about this question that Jesus asked his disciples.

Who do people say I am? Who do people say the Son of Man is? Now, when you ask this question about who is Jesus, even now when I'm preaching about that question, who is Jesus, with my French accent in English.

You know, I speak French. English is my fourth language. So I try English in my French accent. Now, when you ask people, who is Jesus, as a message, I'm sure that some of you can think like, hmm, this is not really a question you can ask some people, mature disciples of Christ.

Some of the people have been in the church for many years to ask who is Jesus. But let me tell you, this question about who is Jesus looks like very simple.

It looks like a question for the Sunday school, for the children, but it's something very important for our generation, and it's a very key question that I want all of us to ask, who is Jesus?

[3:53] That's why Jesus Christ asked his disciple, who do people say I am? With my experience as an evangelist, because I'm an evangelist, I work with the African Enterprise as an evangelist.

In the last, I think, 15 years, I've been doing evangelism. I keep asking the same question different people. Trust me, I keep asking this question several people.

Who is Jesus? Even now, in Washington, D.C., I can ask you the same question. Who is Jesus, according to you? Who is Jesus to you? I travel a lot because of my job, my kind of career I do.

I travel in Africa. I travel in Europe, in Australia, in America. But most of the time, because I'm an evangelist, I have a heart to share the love of Jesus Christ. Whenever I'm sitting in a plane, when

I'm flying anywhere with someone next to me, somehow I try to create a kind of conversation. You know, it's a blessing to be an African guy sitting in a plane, because everyone is asking a question, oh, where are you coming from? I say, I'm from Africa. Where are you going? I'm going to Washington, D.C.

[5 : 03] When someone is asking me those kind of questions, it's a great opportunity for me to share about Jesus. Because the more you ask me questions, the more I will finally ask you, do you know Jesus?

Because it's easy to say, oh, I'm going to Washington, D.C. I'm going to speak in a Christian gathering. And then I say, oh, by the way, do you have a church?

I say, no, I don't have a church. And then I keep asking, do you know who is Jesus? Now, it's very interesting, believe me, that many people in this world, especially this generation, they don't know really who is Jesus.

When you ask that question, wherever you are, in America, in Europe, in Asia, in Africa, South Africa, Nigeria, Nairobi, Jakarta, Indonesia, when you ask people, who is Jesus?

You will be very surprised about several responses and the kind of confusion people have in their mind about who is Jesus. I totally believe that's why Jesus asked his disciples, who do people say I am?

[6 : 11] Let me ask this question. Who is Jesus here in Washington, D.C.? Who is Jesus in your department? Who is Jesus in your neighborhood? Who is Jesus to you?

Now, listen to me. When Jesus asked that question, now people, no, Peter replied. He said, some said you are John Baptist. Others said you are Elijah.

Others still think like you are Jeremiah. There's even others who are saying you are one of the prophets, which is clear that even during the time of Jesus Christ, people were confused.

They were saying, ah, I think he's Jeremiah or I think he's John Baptist. I think he's one of the prophets. Now, it's clear that people, during the time of Jesus Christ, they were having a lot of confusion, a lot of the definition of who is Jesus.

Allow me to ask you again, who is Jesus in this generation? Now, listen to me how some people, they reply to me when I ask who is Jesus. I have met with several people in a different occasion, on WhatsApp, on Facebook, on internet, even just my friends talking.

[7 : 23] Some of them, when you ask them, who is Jesus? Some people, they will say, oh, Jesus, he's a religious figure. I'm not interested in the region, but I think he's a religious guy somewhere in Middle East and with a lot of confusion, especially in the western part of the world.

Most of the young people, when you ask them, I mean, young is not children, I mean, teenagers, 25, 35 years, when you ask them, who is Jesus? They will say, he's a religious guy, he's a religious leader.

He's the same, like Mahatma Gandhi, he's like, let's say, name it, he's, even some people say like, Jesus Christ, he's a good star. It's like, he's a star.

There's other people, who will tell you that Jesus, I think I have heard my dad, talking about Jesus. I don't know who he is, but I think my dad, when I was very young, he told me about Jesus.

Others, we confuse Jesus and the culture. In Africa, many people, some people, not a lot of them. Some people, when you ask them, who is Jesus? They will tell you, Jesus, he's a Western civilization.

[8 : 37] It's like a Western culture. Now, others, they think, it's a, it's a, it's a, a theological debate. It's like a debate. You know, Jesus is a debate. Now, others, we have so many things.

Others, they think it's a myth. It's not a reality. Others, it's a dream. I have even met with some people who say, Jesus, he's a good philosopher. He's a philosopher. It's like a kind of philosophy. And then others, they will say like, Jesus, yeah, he's a good man. He's a good guy. You know, these days, people, they like say, oh, he's a good guy. Say, Jesus is a good guy. But let me tell you that today, this afternoon, this question, who is Jesus, is a question that Jesus is asking his church. Who is Jesus in our generation? Is he a Buddha? Is he a good prophet? Is he a good man? Is he a religious figure?

Is he a theological debate? Who is Jesus? Jesus, I'm not sure if you know it, but in Africa, during the Christmas, we have what you call Christmas tree.

[9 : 43] You know, we make a Christmas tree. And then we have something in the French, we call it Père Noël, or Father Christmas. Now, most of the young people, kids, when you ask me, who is

Jesus?

You will be surprised. They confuse Jesus and Father Christmas. They think like Jesus is a guy with a red robe, who brings some gifts during the Christmas day.

It's very sad that we are living in a generation. We are living in a time where people, they don't know really who is Jesus. Now, Jesus, he asked the second question, verse 15.

He asked, who is Jesus? Who do people say I am? And then verse 15, he asked, what about you? Who do you think I am? Who do you say I am?

Now, let me just reflect a little bit about these two questions. The first question was, who is Jesus outside of the church? Who is Jesus outside of the believers?

[10:44] Of course, outside of the church, they were confused about who he is. And then Jesus asked the second question. Now, what about you? What about you?

Others, they think I am Elijah. Others, they think I am Jeremiah. Others, they can think like I am a philosopher. Others, they can think like it's a myth, or it's a movie, or it's what?

And then Jesus said, what about you? Which is now a question for believers, for the church today?

When you read those two questions, you will understand that the church, we have a calling, we have a mission, to preach, to share, to let people know who he is.

But also, that question belongs to you, who are sitting in this church. I am a son of a pastor. I was born in a Christian family. My dad was a pastor in a preceptorian church.

My grandfather was a pastor. His grandson was a pastor. His grandchildren was a pastor. That's the four. My auntie, she's a pastor now.

[11:53] I have two aunties of my family. In my family, we have seven pastors. You can imagine my family now. But, I didn't know who is Jesus.

Until I gave my love to Jesus Christ. Until I have my personal relationship with Jesus Christ. It doesn't matter, it doesn't matter that I was born in a Christian family.

Because Jesus, he asked his disciples, what about you? Do you know who I am? Who do you say I am? That's why Peter said, you are the Christ.

You are the son of God. You are the Messiah. Amen. Amen. Now, this afternoon, I want to encourage you just to reflect on those two questions. Jesus wants to know who he is according to you.

Who is Jesus to you? Who is Jesus? I like the story of Paul. You know, in the Bible, you read a lot of stories. I like stories in the Bible.

[12:51] I don't like to share other stories. I like stories in the Bible. So let me share one story about Paul, who used to be Saul. You remember there's a story in the Bible, in the book of Acts, of Apostles, chapter 9, from verse 1 up to verse 20.

Now, the Bible talks about the guy called Saul, the guy called Saul who ended up becoming Paul. Now, before Saul to meet with Jesus, he was fighting against Christians.

He was killing them. he was busy with just fighting the disciples of Jesus Christ. Even everyone who confessed about Jesus. But one day, one day, Saul met with Jesus.

The Bible says in the book of Acts, chapter 1, he met with a light from heaven. He was just walking to Damascus, busy with killing people, busy with trying to fight against Jesus.

And then he met with Jesus. The Bible says a light from heaven flashed around him. And then, when Saul was just falling down, he heard a voice.

[14:01] He said, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? And then, I like the question, Paul, Saul, asked Jesus. He said, who are you, my Lord?

Now, here, we see now Saul, which is now Paul in the Bible, he was asking another question. You know, the first two questions in the gospel according to St. Matthew, it was Jesus who was asking who I am.

But now here, in the book of Acts, chapter 9, we see now Paul, Saul, he was asking, who are you, my Lord? My prayer for American society or American community, for my prayer for Africans, my prayer for Europe, my prayer for the church today, I want to encourage you to ask this very powerful question.

Who are you, my Lord? Who are you, Jesus? Even tonight, I want to encourage you, when you will go home, just take like a five minutes before to sleep or ten minutes, just pray, Lord, I know you want to know who you are in this world, but even myself, I have a question.

Who are you, my Lord? Because Paul, Saul, he asked that question. And then it's very interesting, very interesting. When Paul wrote to a Corotians, when Paul wrote a letter to Corotians, chapter 1, chapter 1, chapter 1 from verse 15, 15 up to verse 20, now here we see Paul, who asked, who are you, my Lord?

[15 : 41] Now here, Paul, he's now going to tell us who is Jesus. I want to ask you to really, to hear very careful who is Jesus.

In a book of, in a letter, that letter, Paul wrote to Corotians, he said, chapter 1, verse 15, Corotians chapter 1, verse 15, he said, Jesus, Jesus, is the image of the invisible God.

He's the firstborn over all creation. Who is Jesus? The firstborn, he's the image of the invisible God. He's the firstborn over all creation. Second, Paul said, Jesus, in him, all things were created in him, in Jesus.

Jesus, Jesus, is not Mahatima Gandhi. I love Mahatima Gandhi. I love non-violence. I read a lot. Actually, I have my degree in political history, but I have read a lot about Mahatima Gandhi.

[16 : 47] I love Mandela. I love Martina Ruther King. I love all these big men who have changed, who have done their best to change the world. But let me tell you, Jesus, is not Mahatima Gandhi.

Jesus, is not a philosopher. Jesus, is not a debate. Jesus, he's the son of God. He is the image of the invisible God. The Bible says, in him, all things were created.

Listen to me. Things in heaven and on the earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or power or rulers or authority. The Bible says that all things have been created through him and for him.

That's so powerful. Everything you see in this world, the Bible says, all things have been created through him and for him.

Let me tell you something, that one day you will be accountable, accountable to your life, to your finances, to your skills, because the Bible says everything, everything you see has been created through him and for him.

[17 : 59] By the way, let me tell you something very interesting. The church of Jesus Christ does not have any mission. Let me repeat again.

We don't have a mission. The church is the mission of Jesus Christ. Let me make it clear. A church, you know, the body of Christ, we are not here to try to figure out what to do.

No. It's not like a company where you sit together and then you start to figure out what am I going to do. The church, of course, the church has a mission because I need also to be very careful, not just to confuse yourself, but the church is the mission of Jesus Christ.

We don't have agenda. We are already an agenda of Jesus Christ because the Bible says, in him, everything has been created through him and for him, including our skills, including our capacities, including everything we have, have been created through him and in him.

Verse 17, it is said, he is before all things and in him all things hold together. I like that one.

[19 : 12] Unfortunately, I don't have American accent. I'm not sure if you're here to hold. Holding, it's like, you know, here I can hold my tablet like this. Now, the Bible says, Jesus, he is before all things.

One day, Jesus told his disciple, before Abraham, I was there. This man is very powerful. He said, before Abraham, I was there.

Now, let me, let me repeat again. Before the creation, Jesus was there. If you can imagine anything about creation, either you believe any, I don't know you believe about creation, but before everything you can imagine about creation, Jesus, the son of God, the Bible said, he was already there.

But, I like this one. And then he said, in him, all things hold together. I mean, Jesus Christ, he's the guy, he's the man, he's God, who holds our economy, our social interactions, our, everything you can imagine, the whole world, the whole earth, Jesus, he holds everything together.

The Bible says, in verse 18, the Bible says, he's the head of the body, he's the head of the church, he is the beginning, and the firstborn from all among the dead.

[20 : 37] The Bible says, he is the head of the church. Let me also, a little bit, mention about that. The church, belongs to Jesus Christ. He is the head of the church, he is the firstborn.

He is the creator. He created everything, and everything created for him. You know, the church, the head of the church, I'm sorry, because I know, this is the Anglican church, we, we, we, we, we, we have, we have bishops, we have bishops, we have all kind of, you know, I'm from a preceptedian church, we have almost the same, we are sisters, we are cousins, Anglicans in the preceptedian,

so, I'm a son of pastor, I know all these levels in leadership of the church, but the Bible says, the head of the church, is not a bishop, is not a pastor, is not Emmanuel, the head of the church, is Jesus Christ.

That's why, the church, does not have any authority, to do whatever they want to do, because, Jesus, the son of God, is the head of the church. Let me repeat again my question, who is Jesus, in this generation?

Who is Jesus, on Facebook? Who is Jesus, on Twitter? Who is Jesus, in your department?

Who is Jesus, among the rich people? Who is Jesus, among the poor people? As I told you, I was born in Rwanda, I grew up in Rwanda, in 1994, I was 17, you know, I was a little bit, mature to see, I have seen everything, about genocide, 100 days, I was not a little baby, now, I have seen how God, I have changed my country, up to now.

[22 : 20] As a conclusion, most of the people, think that Africa, need money. Africa, we don't need money, we need Jesus. I encourage you, to read books, about how many billions, and billions of dollars, every day, which is very good, because it's helping us, also to develop, but I have never seen, money, changing the heart, of someone.

I have seen, I have never seen, a religious, or anything, but, with my experience, as a survivor of genocide, I have seen that, Africa needs Jesus. The whole world, we are living in a world, of fear, everywhere.

Believe me, I know you, many of you, travel a lot, but I, I travel a lot. I have been, 45 countries, through the ministry, I'm doing. Now, every time, when I'm sitting, at the airport, I can see, how we are living, in a fear, in a world of fear.

I like security, and I really pray, for the security guys, we have, God bless you so much, but, when you see people, at the airport, you can sense, that there is a problem, in this world.

When you open, CNN, BBC, and the other, folks, I don't know, how you call it, in America, when you hear news, you can see, this world, need a special message.

[23 : 43] There is a need, of Jesus. We need Jesus. We need to preach Jesus. Before to close, my sermon, I want to encourage you, to pray for Africa.

Because in Africa, we are now experiencing, another thing, which is, the prosperity gospel. Instead of preaching, about the son of God, the invisible, son of God, people, they are hearing, other messages.

Actually, I have discovered, that people, they are comfortable, to be Christians, without Christ. You will, you will, you will sense it. I can become, a very good, motivation speaker.

People can say, yeah, he's a very good guy. He's a motivation speaker. And then, other people say, we are Christian, but we don't want Christ. We don't want Jesus, in our schools. We don't want, I don't want Jesus, in my cup.

I don't want Jesus, in my family. But let me tell you, Jesus, the son of God, he's the real need. I want to encourage you. I want to encourage you. I want to encourage you.

[24 : 43] Keep thinking about, who is Jesus, according to you? When you go home, tonight, just pray, a simple prayer. Say, Lord, I have met, with that young evangelist, from Africa, with a French accent.

But, at least, I want to ask you this question. Who are you, my Lord? Just make that, kind of, intellectual exercise. Just keep reflecting, who is Jesus?

Who is Jesus? Jesus, is able to change, your life. Romans, chapter 1, verse 16, Paul says, I'm not ashamed, of the gospel, because, the gospel, the gospel of Jesus Christ, not the prosperity gospel, the gospel of Jesus Christ, the gospel of forgiveness, of our sins, the gospel of the cross, of Jesus Christ, in Gorgota, he said, I'm not ashamed, of the gospel, because, it is the power of God, that brings salvation, to everyone, who believes, to everyone, to everyone.

Actually, that's, that's my verse. As I told you, whenever I'm traveling, either I'm sitting in a plane, or when I'm sitting, anywhere, I'm not ashamed, by the gospel.

I'm not ashamed. Jesus, is not someone, that you can be ashamed, for. Jesus, he is the power. The Bible says, the gospel of Jesus Christ, is the power of God, that brings, salvation, to everyone, not who here, who believe, in that gospel.

[26 : 31] If you believe, in that gospel, your life, will not be the same. If you believe, in that gospel, of Jesus Christ, your family, will never be the same. If America, let me say it again, if America really, if we pray, and ask Jesus, to become, a saint, of this country, I can tell you, you will see, God, God, will change America, and America, will continue, to be a blessing.

If we ask Africans, to bring Jesus, as the saint, of the church, it's a very sad, preachers, churches, non-believers, Christ, is no longer, the center.

But tonight, this evening, is my encouragement. May God bless you so much. Continue to pray, for our ministry in Africa. As you can see, my passion, my motivation, I believe, that I only exist, to know Christ, and to make him known.

That's the only reason, I'm here on this earth. Without that agenda, I don't have any reason, to be here. Is it clear? But, this is also, a reality for you.

All of us, God is not calling us, to become evangelists, like Abir Graham, my mentor, but, you can be an evangelist, as a marketplace, minister.

[27 : 59] You can be a very good, successful, engineer, or a businessman, or someone, who is very good, in science, or IT, technology, but keep remember, the only, reason, you exist, is to know Christ, and to make him known.

May God bless you so much. Let's just, close our eyes, and pray. I want to ask, Pastor Tommy, to come, and the choir, maybe the singers, can sing one song, I don't know how you are going, to make it, but just, let's have five minutes, or two minutes, in a time of prayer.

Think about Jesus. Who is Jesus, according to you? I'm not talking about the church, I'm not talking about, Americans, I'm not talking about, baptism, I'm talking about, who is Jesus, according to you? Who is Jesus, in your children? Who is Jesus, in our schools, here in America? Who is Jesus, in DC? Who is Jesus? Just pray.

I know you, you are very smart. Just pray. Ask God, who are you, my Lord? Actually, even myself, I'm confused. I mean, ask that question. See, Jesus, even myself, I'm confused.

[29 : 11] Who are you, my Lord? Are you, a good idea? Or, he's ready, to talk to you. And also, I'm going to ask, Pastor Tommy, to pray for the church.

We exist, to know Christ, and to make him known, through different channels, business, preaching, radio, Facebook, your money, your company.

That's the only way, we exist. May God bless you so much. Jesus is alive. Jesus is the King of Kings. The whole world, we need Jesus. Heavenly Father, as we hear these words, we recognize that these words, this question, is really at the center, of everything.

It's the foundational question, of asking, not simply, what the world believes, about the identity of Jesus, but what do we believe, is the answer, to this question, of who is Jesus.

Lord, we pray for this church, here, Church of the Advent. Lord, we pray that these words, would convict us, and challenge us, to know once, and for all, what we believe, about Jesus.

[30 : 21] How incredibly, and deceptively, and insidiously, easy it is, to have a Christianity, without Christ. And we pray against that, we pray against, all the ways, we're tempted to do that, and to be that.

And Lord, we repent of that, and instead, we desire that you, Lord Jesus, would be at the very center, of our life together. We recognize, that this isn't a decision, that is only made intellectually, it's not made emotionally, that it has to be, a spiritual reality, that the Holy Spirit, opens our eyes, and opens our minds, and opens our hearts, as you did, the Apostle Paul, that day, on the road to Damascus.

We have to come, face to face with you, Jesus, in the power of the Spirit. And so I pray, that for all of us, who know you, Jesus, that you would remind us, afresh, of who you really are, that you are nothing less, than the Lord, the Son of the living God.

And Lord, for those of us here, who may not be sure, what we believe about you, we pray that even, as we are gathered here, your spirit would be, at work, opening, opening minds, and opening hearts, to your true identity.

We pray for, the United States of America, our country, that is being torn apart, Lord, three more, three more police officers, killed today, in Baton Rouge, Lord, we, this is a country, desperately in need, of gospel reconciliation.

[31 : 35] And as Emmanuel, invites us to do, we pray for, the African continent. We pray for Nairobi, and Kenya, where he is. We pray for Rwanda, Uganda. We pray for the whole continent, especially North Africa. Lord, we pray for, your gospel to go forth.

And we pray your blessing, on our brother Emmanuel, your protection, and empowering of him, your blessing, over his wife, and his three kids, his Lord. We pray that you would empower him, to do all that you've called him, to do in your name, and for your glory.

We pray all this, in your son's holy name. Amen.