



Sermon Discussion Guide

March 22 & 23, 2025

"How Did Jesus Surprise the World?"

[Luke 5:27-32](#)

"The Jesus Who's More Than We Think" is a six-week sermon series exploring the true identity of Jesus beyond cultural assumptions and watered-down beliefs. This series invites you to rediscover Jesus in his fullness and experience the transformation that comes from knowing him as he truly is.

PRAY & CONNECT

Open in prayer and invite the Holy Spirit into your conversation. Ask God for wisdom and discernment and trust him to guide you. Take time to recap the message or view it on hopeonline.tv. Did you have any ah-ha moments where you felt convicted, compelled, or inspired during the sermon? What's been on your mind this week? Have you been able to apply the message to your everyday life?

GROW

Read [Luke 4:16-30](#) – "Jesus Rejected at Nazareth"

- What emotions do you think Jesus felt when his own neighbors turned on him?
- How does this moment show that Jesus is more than just a moral teacher or prophet? Why is it significant that he claims to fulfill a 700-year-old prophecy?
- Have you ever experienced rejection because of your faith? What does this passage reveal about the cost of following Jesus?
- How do we sometimes try to conform Jesus to fit our preferences, just like the crowd in Nazareth did? What is the danger in reshaping Jesus to match our values instead of being transformed by his?

Read [Mark 1:9-15](#) – "The Baptism and Temptation of Jesus"

- What do you think it was like to hear God publicly affirm Jesus as "my dearly loved Son"?
- Why is it significant that Jesus began his ministry with baptism, temptation, and a bold public proclamation? What does it reveal about the kind of king he is and the nature of his kingdom? How does that challenge assumptions people have about Jesus?
- What does Jesus' example in the wilderness teach us about resisting temptation? What practical tools help you stay faithful when tested?
- How do you respond to Jesus' first words in Mark: "The Kingdom of God is near! Repent of your sins and believe the Good News!"?

Read [John 12:1-8](#) – "Jesus Anointed at Bethany"

- How might you have felt witnessing Mary pour expensive perfume on Jesus' feet?
- Why does Judas respond with criticism instead of awe? In what ways can focusing on practicality cause us to miss the heart of Jesus?
- How does Jesus' defense of Mary challenge conventional views of usefulness, generosity, or stewardship?
- What does this story show us about the contrast between authentic love and selfishness?

Read [Mark 8:31-38](#) – "Jesus Predicts His Death"

- What emotions might the disciples have felt hearing Jesus talk about suffering and death? Why do you think Peter rebuked Jesus?
- What does it mean that Jesus must suffer, be rejected, and rise again? How does this shape our understanding of who Jesus is?
- What do you think Jesus meant by saying we must deny ourselves and take up our cross? How is that different from cultural messages about success or self-fulfillment? What would it look like to live this out in your everyday life?
- Why does Jesus say it's possible to gain the whole world but lose your soul? Where are you tempted to chase after the world's rewards?

APPLY

Pick one of the applications below to put into practice this week ...

- This week, read one of the four Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John) with fresh eyes, asking God to help you see Jesus as he truly is—not just how others have described him. As you read, make note of moments that surprise or challenge you.
- Reflect on one area of your life where you've been asking Jesus to fit into your plans instead of following him into his. Pray about what it would look like to let him lead in that area, and take one concrete step in that direction this week.
- Spend intentional time this week praying for someone you tend to overlook, dismiss, or exclude. Ask Jesus to shape your heart with his surprising love for outsiders. If the opportunity presents itself, show that person kindness or inclusion in a tangible way.