

“Son of Man”  
Mark 8:31  
(Preached at Trinity, February 15, 2012)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

**Disclaimer:** These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. After completing the dialogue with His disciples regarding His identity and Peter’s great declaration, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" Jesus goes on to describe His ultimate mission.  
**Mark 8:31 NAU** - "And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."
2. This statement was shocking to the disciples because at this point they still held to the Jewish concept of the Messiah – one who would set up an earthly kingdom and rule His people with righteousness and justice.  
In fact, it was so shocking that Peter assumed Jesus was mistaking and actually rebuked Him – **Verse 32**
3. Tonight I want to direct your attention to Jesus’ use of the title, “Son of Man.”  
What is meant by this title?
  - A. Some answer this question simplistically by describing the unique nature of Christ as having two natures. He is both God and man. Many have struggled with the dual nature of Christ. Many today see Jesus as a good man or even a great prophet. The Muslims will allow that Jesus was a great prophet but deny adamantly that He is God.  
Jesus is described in the Bible using two titles: Son of God and Son of Man, one pointing to His deity, the other pointing to His deity.
    1. In His divinity He is the “Son of God” - used in 43 times in the NASB.
      - a. We were introduced to the term at the very beginning of Mark’s Gospel  
**Mark 1:1 NAS** - "The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God."
      - b. It was the angel’s declaration to Mary  
**Luke 1:35 NAS** - "And the angel answered and said to her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God."
      - c. It was the declaration of the centurion who witnessed the crucifixion:  
**Matthew 27:54 NAS** - "Truly this was the Son of God!"
      - d. As the Son of God Jesus was the second person of the Godhead, the eternally begotten One that came forth from the Father.
    2. In His humanity He is the “Son of Man” - is found 84 times in the NT, all but four being in the Gospels.

- a. This is a favorite expression of Jesus in describing Himself. He seldom referred to Himself as the Son of God but often referred to Himself as the Son of Man. And it is interesting that, with the exception of Stephen in Acts 7:56, others never referred to Him by this name. It never appears in the letters.
  - b. As the Son of Man He was born of a virgin, conceived of the Holy Spirit. He was fully human—the second Adam.
  - c. All that pertains to human nature was applied to Christ except for sin.
- B. Tonight I want to set before you that this is far too narrow a definition. Jesus didn't use this title simply because He was a man. In fact, by using it Jesus intends to distinguish Himself from all other men. It is a Messianic title with its roots in human-divine figure prophesied in Daniel
4. As I pointed out, Jesus used this title of Himself over 80 times. Tonight I want us to examine this great title more carefully.
- A. It is important for you to be filled with the knowledge of who the Son of Man is.
- 1. Don't forget our Lord's question to His disciples.  
**Matthew 16:13 NAU** - "Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He was asking His disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"
  - 2. Many have been confused and confounded by this title  
**John 12:34 NAU** - "The crowd then answered Him, "We have heard out of the Law that the Christ is to remain forever; and how can You say, 'The Son of Man must be lifted up'? Who is this Son of Man?"
- B. Do you know Him? Who is this "Son of Man?"  
Jesus' use of the title can be divided into three different categories:
- I. Jesus used it to describe BOTH His humanity and His deity
  - II. Jesus used it to describe His suffering, death, and resurrection
  - III. Jesus used it to describe the power of His coming as the Righteous Judge
- I. Jesus used it to describe BOTH His humanity and His deity
- B. As we might expect, this speaks of His humanity – He is the Son of Man  
But with this title we come face to face with the purpose of His incarnation. The Son of Man points to the humiliation of Christ – His servanthood, His humanity
- 1. He left His place in glory to take upon Himself the flesh of humanity.  
The divine kenosis - κενόω  
**Philippians 2:5-8 NAU** - "Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, <sup>6</sup> who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, <sup>7</sup> but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, *and* being made in the likeness of men. <sup>8</sup> Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."
  - 2. Jesus became man that He might become our Savior – a perfect substitute to bear our sins. But the title "Son of Man" means much more than a designation of His humanity.

- B. Jesus primarily used this title to refer to His deity.
1. We should notice that Daniel portrayed this “Son of Man” as one coming from the clouds of heaven.  
**Daniel 7:13-14 NAU** - "I kept looking in the night visions, And behold, with the clouds of heaven One like a Son of Man was coming, And He came up to the Ancient of Days And was presented before Him. <sup>14</sup> "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples, nations and *men of every* language Might serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed."
  2. The Son of Man was one with a heavenly origin who was given an eternal rule.
  3. When Jesus referred to Himself as the Son of Man He was announcing that He was the Messiah.
    - A. At first He chose His words carefully often making implicit declarations to veil His identity because His time had not yet come. The name “Son of Man” was sufficiently vague that He was never attacked on the basis of this alone.
    - B. As we see in this passage in **Mark 8** Jesus had to gradually train His own disciples concerning the true nature of His identity.
    - C. When the time was right He announced His identity clearly and explicitly and all knew the meaning of the name.  
**Mark 14:61-62 NAS** - "Again the high priest was questioning Him, and saying to Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son of the Blessed *One*?" <sup>62</sup> And Jesus said, "I am; and you shall see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of Power, and coming with the clouds of heaven."  
 There is no doubt that Jesus was referring to Himself as the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy.

II. Jesus used it to describe His suffering, death, and resurrection

- A. The Son of Man was the one sent as the Deliverer of His people
  1. The “Son of Man” is the suffering servant who came to redeem His people  
**Matthew 18:11 NAU** - "*For the Son of Man has come to save that which was lost.*"  
**Mark 10:45 NAU** - "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."
  2. The “Son of Man” is the humble servant endowed with the power of forgiveness  
**Matthew 9:6 NAU** - "But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins "-- then He said to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your bed and go home."
  3. At the very heart of this passage before us is Jesus is the Son of Man who would die for His people  
**Matthew 20:28 NAU** - "just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."

B. But the Son of Man would also be victorious in His mission  
**Mark 8:31 NAU** - "And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

1. There was never any doubt as to the purpose of Christ and the success of His mission

**Matthew 20:18-19 NAU** - "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem; and the Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and scribes, and they will condemn Him to death, <sup>19</sup> and will hand Him over to the Gentiles to mock and scourge and crucify *Him*, and on the third day He will be raised up."

2. Jesus is now upon His throne in glory

a. Stephen saw a vision of Him

**Acts 7:56 NAU** - "Behold, I see the heavens opened up and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God."

b. The Apostle John also saw Him

**Revelation 1:13-15** - "and in the middle of the lampstands / saw one like a son of man, clothed in a robe reaching to the feet, and girded across His chest with a golden sash. <sup>14</sup> His head and His hair were white like white wool, like snow; and His eyes were like a flame of fire. <sup>15</sup> His feet *were* like burnished bronze, when it has been made to glow in a furnace, and His voice was like the sound of many waters."

III. Jesus used it to describe the glorious King who will return in His glory as the Righteous Judge

A. The Son of Man is the suffering Savior but He is also the glorious King

1. He has fully accomplished His work as our Redeemer and now we await His glorious return

**Matthew 25:31 KJV** - "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory:"

**Matthew 26:64 KJV** - "Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, Hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven."

**Matthew 16:27-28 NAS** - "For the Son of Man is going to come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and will then recompense every man according to his deeds. <sup>28</sup> "Truly I say to you, there are some of those who are standing here who shall not taste death until they see the Son of Man coming in His kingdom."

**Mark 13:26-27 NAS** - "And then they will see the Son of Man coming in clouds with great power and glory. <sup>27</sup> "And then He will send forth the angels, and will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the farthest end of the earth, to the farthest end of heaven."

**Conclusion:**

1. The Son of Man has come to save His people from their sin. The Son of Man will come to judged all men before His judgment seat. The Son of Man reigns both now and forever.
2. The question is before you: "Who do you say that the Son of Man is?" This is a very personal question. Who is He in your life? Is He your Savior? Is He your King? Is He the Lord of your life?
3. Looking to the Son of Man is of the essence of salvation.  
**John 3:13-16 NAS** - "And no one has ascended into heaven, but He who descended from heaven, *even the Son of Man*.<sup>14</sup> "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, *even so must the Son of Man* be lifted up; <sup>15</sup> that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life. <sup>16</sup> "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."
4. Have you trusted your soul to the Son of Man?  
Are you serving the Son of Man? Are you following the Son of Man now? Are you testifying of the Son of Man now?  
**Mark 8:38 NAU** - "For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will also be ashamed of him when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."