

Mark 8:22-33 - Who is Jesus, really?

Calvin, TSK, GreekLexicon, Handfuls, Rienecker, Geneva, Robertson, Poole, Barnes, Trapp, JFB, FourFoldGospel, Henry, Clarke,

Brothers and Sisters in the Lord Jesus: I will not spend much time on the miracle in our passage today as I touched on it several weeks ago. Along with the obvious (miracles show God's power and love for children) this miracle showed that sometimes Christ healed progressively 渐进地. The man's sight was partially restored after Christ's first touch, and Jesus then touched him a 2nd time to completely heal him. Why did Jesus perform this miracle progressively? He was teaching you that you have to persistently 坚持不懈地 preach the Gospel because most people don't come to faith instantly. Spiritual healing often takes time! So with that miracle out of the way, let us now then come to the main subject for today: **Dealing with the issue of who Jesus really was.**

Our headings are:

The Challenge

The Confession (认信)

The Censure (责备)

Our goals are: **That you will focus, not on your own social and political advantage, but on the persistent preaching of the Holy Gospel (福音) so men can truly find salvation in Jesus Christ.**

The Challenge: Jesus asked a challenging question

27 Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "**Who do men say that I am?**"

1. Jesus continued his mission of preaching the Gospel to those who were lost and preparing his disciples to continue preaching the Gospel all over the world.

In order to safely do so, Jesus took his disciples to Caesarea Philippi, not the Caesarea along the Mediterranean coast. This was the northern most part of Israel, in the mountains. Jesus knew that neither Herod nor the Jewish (犹太人的) leaders would not bother him here as it was isolated (偏远的).

2. In order to properly prepare his disciples to preach, Jesus wanted to make sure they understood the center of the Gospel: He. He knew that no one could be saved without knowing and believing in him: Who he was and what he would do.

3. So he first challenged his disciples to see if they knew that he was the center of the Gospel by asking: "Who do men say that I am?"

4. Lessons:

a. There are many who claim to believe in Jesus but they believe nothing more than that he existed and maybe that he was a reasonably good man. That is a lie. Half a truth is a lie. This is a dangerous area of compromise.

b. So learn to ask this question when you are evangelizing (among others: Who do you think Jesus is?) This will quickly expose the need for the Savior and open doors for more instruction.

The Confession: The Disciples answered the question

28 So they answered, "John the Baptist (施洗约翰); but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." 29 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "**You are the Christ.**"

1. The disciples said that some of the Jews believed that Jesus was John the Baptist, others, Elijah, others Jeremiah (probably because of his tears) and others still, that Jesus was one of the old prophets reincarnated (复活的).

2. Jesus then asked the disciples about their personal views: Who did they personally think he was?

It was one thing what others thought, but Jesus wanted to know if his disciples had gotten the message. He wanted to know if they thought he was a good man, maybe a prophet, or maybe an Old Testament prophet reincarnated, like the Jews thought.

3. Peter's answer, as a sinner who had met the Savior, was clear: "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

Matthew's account gave the details that are not present in Mark. In Peter's answer...

a. He acknowledged Jesus was Christ – Messiah (弥赛亚, 受膏者). Peter was identifying the work Jesus came to do. He was anointed (被膏抹) to be prophet, priest, and King for his children.

b. He acknowledged that Jesus was the Son of the Living God – not a son by adoption as we – but Son by nature. This proved Christ's Divinity (神性).

4. But how would Peter have known Jesus was "Christ" and the "Son of God?"

He would have known his Bible – the Old Testament. Consider a passage that would have proved that point to Peter.

Daniel 9:25 "Know therefore and understand, That from the going forth of the command To restore and build Jerusalem Until Messiah the Prince, There shall be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; The street shall be built again, and the wall, Even in troublesome times. 26 "And after the **sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off**, but not for Himself; And the people of the prince who is to come Shall destroy the city and the sanctuary (圣所). The end of it shall be with a flood, And till the end of the war desolations (荒凉) are determined.

With proper calculation, you will find with precision that Daniel was speaking of Jesus. And of course the **Son of God** appeared to the Hebrew boys in Nebuchadnezzar's fire. (Also Daniel's account.)

And then consider the New Testament unquestionable evidence of the Messiahship and Sonship of Jesus.

John 11:27 She said to Him, "Yes, Lord, I believe that **You are the Christ, the Son of God**, who is to come into the world."

Acts 8:37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that **Jesus Christ is the Son of God.**"

1 John 5:1 **Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God**, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.

Luke 2:26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that **he would not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.**

Jesus confirmed that Peter's testimony (见证) did not originate in himself but that this doctrine (教义) was revealed to him by the Holy Spirit.

Matthew 16:17 Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, **but My Father who is in heaven.**

30 Then He **strictly warned** them that they should tell no one about Him.

5. Jesus then warned his disciples not to talk about the fact that he was the Christ, the Son of God, publicly.

a. Jesus did not want too much talk about him being Messiah to avoid political complications (复杂性). If many people started calling him "Messiah" he would be perceived as a threat to the Romans. Rome did not want to see their rule threatened.

b. Jesus did not want too much talk about him being Messiah to avoid religious complications from the Jewish establishment. The Jewish leaders would have lost their might and money if people started following Jesus.

So Jesus avoided those terms, until when he was ready to die, terms that could be

misconstrued (误认为) as a revolutionary (革命的) movement. Later, however, this doctrine was the foundation of what the disciples would preach.

Acts 2:36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has **made this Jesus, whom you crucified (钉十字架), both Lord and Christ.**"

Jesus was killed for claiming to be the "Son of God" as the Jews understood this title "Son of God" was Divine title. (Mark 14).

6. Lessons:

a. While the world thinks of Jesus as a good man who set a good example for you to follow, you must realize that Jesus is much more. (This is how a truth can be a lie.) Jesus was the eternal Son of God, anointed as prophet, priest, and king to redeem the lost and give them the assurance of a heavenly home. It wasn't a privilege (特权) to be called "a really, really, good man" when one was a Divine being.

b. Jesus as the Christ is the foundation for the church. This testimony is the Rock on which the church is built by God. Peter wasn't the Rock. Christ's person (位格) and work were the foundations of the church.

c. Only those who confess that Jesus is the Christ are blessed by God. Jesus said this to Peter in Matthew's account.

d. This testimony (that Jesus is the Christ) is the only basis for evangelism (福音工作).

e. It took years for the disciples to get this message from Jesus directly. Imagine how much greater effort you have to make to make sure your children get this message.

The Censure

31 And He **began to teach them** that the Son of Man must **suffer many things**, and **be rejected** by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and **be killed**, and after three days rise again.

1. Jesus then explained the work he had to do as Christ (He did not come to mainly do miracles as the people wanted.):

a. He would suffer. This meant the Jesus was not surprised when the Jews and Romans hauled him to be crucified. This was part of the determined act of God.

b. He would be rejected by the chief priest and scribes – people who should have defended (抗辩) and protected him.

c. He would be killed.

d. He would be buried.

e. He would triumphantly (得胜地) rise from the dead on the 3rd day.

2. Earlier in his ministry (事工) Jesus was particularly vague (含糊的) about his coming suffering and death as the disciples would have been distracted by that thought, but as his life drew to a close he was unequivocal (清楚明白的) about his coming suffering.

Look at an example of that vague language.

John 2:19 Jesus answered and said to them, "**Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.**" 20 Then the Jews said, "It has taken forty-six years to build this temple, and will You raise it up in three days?" 21 But **He was speaking of the temple of His body.** 22 Therefore, **when He had risen from the dead, His disciples remembered that He had said this to them;** and they believed the Scripture and the word which Jesus had said.

32 **He spoke this word openly.** And Peter took Him aside and **began to rebuke Him.**

3. Peter however openly rebuked Jesus' talk of suffering, dying, and being buried.

Peter did this because he had an incorrect view of what he thought would happen. Peter felt that as one of the leaders of the disciples he had a duty to stop the Lord's pessimistic (消极悲观的) talk, not knowing that Christ's suffering was the only thing that brought optimism (乐观主义) to the world. **This is what ignorance of the Word of God can do.** (Ever heard the phrase "Cleanliness is next to godliness? That is not in the Bible.) One commentator (解经家) said: "None are madder than they that are **wise without the word of God.**" Another one said: "Peter was **strongly possessed with a fond conceit 自负 of an earthly kingdom.**..." So Peter sinned. He was not a "perfect" pope... **Peter was later corrected by Paul also for a false lifestyle.**

Galatians 2:14 But when I saw that they were not straightforward about the truth of the gospel, **I said to Peter before them all,** "If you, being a Jew, live in the manner of Gentiles (外邦人) and not as the Jews, **why do you compel Gentiles to live as Jews?**

Later, Peter told Jesus that he would never leave him though all the other disciples left him. **But he did.** With all Peter had heard, and with all the miracles he had seen, Peter chose to doubt the words of Jesus, or at least, ignore them.

33 But when **He had turned around and looked at His disciples,** He **rebuked Peter,** saying, "**Get behind Me, Satan!** For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."

4. Jesus then strong censured (批评) Peter for rebuking him.

Peter was acting like the Devil. Peter moved from being the true confessor (**You are the Christ,** Son of the Living God) to representing Satan (You must not suffer and die on the cross, **just like Satan tried to short circuit**避开 the cross at the 3 temptations试探.). He moved from **godly leadership to leading men astray.**

Peter didn't care for godly things but for human things – a human empire (帝国), rather than the spiritual kingdom.

The world needed Jesus to be the Christ who would redeem them from sin and make them into children of the Most High God, but Peter was thinking of removing the Romans and making Israel into the most high nation. In short, Peter longed for the human and temporal (世俗的) kingdom over the spiritual and Divine kingdom.

5. Lessons:

a. False doctrines make you do foolish things. Study doctrines. Sounding intelligent doesn't make you wise. Consider how many developed the false theory of Jesus' imminent (即刻的) return...think of how that caused them to change their lives...and not thing strategically (战略性的). That hurts the church.

b. Teach doctrines. It is a better use of time in the long run (从长远的角度).

c. Christ's kingdom is spiritual. Christ's kingdom is founded upon his shed blood. So Christ's kingdom is focused on who Jesus is and what he did on the cross. When a church is focused on diaconal ministry执事的事工 (as good as that is) then it has failed. When a church focuses on a preacher...and it is **his** ministry, then the church has failed.

Conclusion:

The disciples were challenged by Christ as to who he was. They knew! He was Christ, the Son of the Living God. He was not just some prophet. As a result of knowing and believing that fact, they were sent out to persistently and consistently (前后一致地) teach that Word. (See the link with the progressive miracle that took place at the beginning of this section today!)

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Let the focus of your life – what you believe and how you live – be on Jesus Christ, who taught you the Word of God, who died as a sacrifice (献祭) for your sins, and who rules over you that not a hair can fall from your head without his permission.

2. Let the focus of your evangelism be on who Jesus is! Do not focus on felt needs of the lost. Do not focus on sports or friendship to evangelize! Do not focus on getting people “involved” in church. Focus on telling them who Jesus is and what he has done.

Finally: Do you personally know this Christ? Have you asked him to take your sins and count them as his own? Have you asked him to give you new life? Without knowing him, you will die in your sins and go to hell.