

## Who is Jesus – Jesus is the Messiah – Mark 8:27-33

### FBC Nacogdoches – Sunday, August 4, 2019 – A.M. Message

---

#### Message Description

— To some, Jesus is a teacher, a fountain of wisdom. To others he is a source of inspiration. Some see him as a prophet; some say Jesus is Lord; and some dismiss him altogether. In this message we will look both at the question of the identity of Jesus and at why our personal choices in this matter determine our ultimate destiny. We will learn how many people are 90% correct about the identity of Jesus and 100% wrong at the same time. We will learn along with the disciples when Jesus taught them what it meant that he was the Messiah.

#### Introduction

- One of the biggest questions in the world is “Who is Jesus?”
  - That question separates and defines.
  - Separates Christianity and...
    - Faiths...
      - **Islam**
        - Jesus is only a prophet, second in importance to Muhammad.
      - **Judaism**
      - **Jehovah’s Witnesses**
        - Jesus was not God in the flesh.
        - Jesus was Michael the archangel who became man.
      - **Mormons**
        - Jesus is literal son of God, product of sexual relations between God and Mary
      - **New Age Movement**
        - Jesus is an avatar, a way-shower to the cosmic Christ consciousness which culminates with declaring that the human being is divine.<sup>1</sup>
    - Each of those faiths to one degree or another recognizes Jesus but believes something very different about Jesus than the Bible teaches.
      - The difference in the faiths is the difference in Jesus views.
  - How an individual answers the question personally separates authentic Christians and...
    - Expressions of faith...
      - **Cultural Christians**
      - **Nominal Christians**
      - **Temporal Christians**
      - **Pop-psychology Christians (self-help Christians)**
    - Those in each of those categories would likely agree with a theological statement about the deity of Jesus.
      - But their lives would speak a truth about Christ different from how the Bible instructs.
  - This question cuts and divides.
    - This is THE question: Who is Jesus?
- Well, on one occasion Jesus led his disciples right to the heart of pagan worship, the world-wide center of pagan worship, Caesarea Philippi.
  - And there in the shadow of the pagan temples, with the smell of incense offered to false gods, within sight perhaps of the high places of child sacrifice...
  - He asked the question, “*Who do you say that I am?*”
    - It’s a short but compelling story with suspense, surprise, and even a plot twist at the very end.
- Read **Mark 8:27-33**.
  - **27-28**
    - The walk from Bethsaida would have taken all day.
      - Twenty-five miles due north.
      - Bethsaida is on the North East corner of the Sea of Galilee.
        - **If we use last week’s analogy and we see the Sea of Galilee as the loop around Nacogdoches, then Bethsaida would be about where Nacogdoches High School is.**
    - Jesus had gained some notoriety.
      - He knew people were talking about him.

- So, he asks the question, “*Who do people say that I am?*”
- The disciples indicate that there were many opinions floating around.
- **29** — Jesus directs the question personally.
  - In the Greek the word for ‘you’ appears twice.
  - The NIV and the CSB capture the emphasis of the Greek text.
    - **Mark 8:29a** | “*But what about you?*” he asked. “*Who do you say I am?*” (NIV11)
    - **Mark 8:29a** | “*But you,*” he asked them, “*who do you say that I am?*” (CSB)
- Peter answers for the group and he answers correctly.
  - “*You are the Messiah.*”
  - The Gospel of **Matthew** adds an important comment about his answer.
    - **Matthew 16:17** | *Jesus responded, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven.”* (CSB)
      - Ultimately the identity of Jesus is not something you work out in your head, but it is something the Spirit of God reveals to you.
- **31** — Jesus walks through his role...
  - Suffer
  - Be rejected
  - Be killed
  - Be resurrected
- **32-33** — Plot twist...
  - Oddly Peter who just rightly identified Jesus now rebukes him.
    - That surprises me.
    - If you believe he is the Messiah, then why would you go against him?
      - That is a question we could ask ourselves every day!
  - Another thing to note about this is how the Bible does not shy away from including embarrassing words and actions by the disciples.
    - Just wait until next week when we get to **Mark 9-10**.
    - Now, who wrote down the Bible?
      - The disciples.
      - This is just one of many evidences of the veracity of the Bible.
      - If this were myth, propaganda, or bed-time stories, the disciples wouldn’t have made themselves look so bad.
        - They would have cleaned some of this up.
        - Why did they not?
          - Life is messy.
          - They just recorded the truth of what really happened.
            - Messes and all...
    - Jesus’ response is just as unexpected as Peter’s rebuke...
      - It is a reminder that all of us could be used by evil forces to derail the work of God if we are not careful.
        - If Peter was used by Satan, you (and I) can be too.
        - I see this all the time...
- With this passage as our investigative material, let us look at the identity of Jesus from three perspectives.

## The Identity of Jesus

### I. Who does the world say Jesus is?

- When Jesus asked this question of the disciples, they reported that in their culture, the prevailing opinion is that Jesus was some resurrected or reincarnated religious guy.
  - **Mark 8:28** | *They answered him, “John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, one of the prophets.”* (CSB)
    - They seemed to realize that Jesus was...
      - Significant...
      - On the good side...
      - Religious/spiritual
      - Wise teacher
      - Mouthpiece of God

- But they were wrong.
  - They were 90% correct.
    - Jesus was significant, on the good side, religious/spiritual...
  - But they were 100% wrong!
    - If we don't see Jesus as the Messiah (Savior, Lord), we've missed the whole point!
- In our culture, the same thing happens.
  - Jesus is...
    - An example for living a life of love and self-sacrifice
    - A great teacher
    - A kind soul
    - Opinion leader
    - *(This is especially true in academia.)*
  - **Mohandas Gandhi** said Jesus should be respected and revered as a...
    - Martyr...
    - Embodiment of sacrifice...
    - Divine teacher...
    - Good example...
    - But not as a Savior for our sins.
  - Jesus is respected by most, but he is not rightly honored by many.
- **C. S. Lewis**
  - **Twentieth century writer, professor, intellectual, former atheist...**
    - **Author of...**
      - **Chronicles of Narnia**
      - **Mere Christianity**
      - **Screwtape Letters**
    - **Close friend of JR Tolkien (Lord of the Rings)...**
  - **Lewis' Trilemma...**
    - *"I am trying here to prevent anyone saying the really foolish thing that people often say about Him: I'm ready to accept Jesus as a great moral teacher, but I don't accept his claim to be God. That is the one thing we must not say. A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic — on the level with the man who says he is a poached egg — or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God, or else a madman or something worse. You can shut him up for a fool, you can spit at him and kill him as a demon or you can fall at his feet and call him Lord and God, but let us not come with any patronizing nonsense about his being a great human teacher. He has not left that open to us. He did not intend to. ... Now it seems to me obvious that He was neither a lunatic nor a fiend: and consequently, however strange or terrifying or unlikely it may seem, I have to accept the view that He was and is God."* [**Mere Christianity**]
- What did Jesus say?
  - *I have the authority to forgive sins.*
  - *I existed before the creation of the world.*
  - *I have the power to heal and to resurrect.*
  - *I control the wind and the waves.*
  - *I will bring myself back to life after crucifixion.*
  - *I will be the judge of the world.*
  - *I am God.*
- So, you can say he is...
  - A liar...
  - A lunatic...
  - Lord...
- But you can't say he is merely...
  - A good teacher, model human, kind soul...
- Being complimentary of Jesus is still wrong...
  - "Jesus is a good spiritual teacher and example for love and self-sacrifice" is as damning as "Jesus is a crazy man."

- Many people are 90% right and 100% wrong.
- So, Jesus clarifies the issue, his identity, with the disciples...

## II. Who does Jesus say Jesus is?

- **Mark 8:31** | *Then he began to teach them that it was necessary for the Son of Man to suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, be killed, and rise after three days. (CSB)*
- In this verse we see the heart of the identity of Jesus.
  - Jesus will suffer, die, be resurrected.
- Jesus didn't come to teach, heal, model a moral life...
  - Jesus came to die.
  - This explains so much confusion and controversy...
    - Jesus kept meeting with the wrong people: tax collectors and sinners.
    - Jesus often avoided the crowds.
    - Jesus often didn't allow his miracles to be seen by mass audiences.
    - Jesus avoided connections with the religious or political power figures.
    - Jesus didn't attempt to defend himself before those who condemned him to crucifixion.
- Listen to how Jesus says this...
  - **Luke 19:10** | *For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save the lost. (CSB)*
  - **John 19:30** | *When Jesus had received the sour wine, he said, "It is finished." Then bowing his head, he gave up his spirit. (CSB)*
    - Jesus said he came to save the person lost in his sin.
      - When that had been done on the cross by giving his life for our sins, he said, "**It is finished.**"
- What does this truth mean to us?
  - If Jesus' life was a cross-focused life, then our faith must be a cross-focused faith.
- What I mean is that our faith, our Christianity must not primarily be about...
  - Jesus makes life easier.
  - Jesus answers prayer for my sore toe.
  - Jesus gives me a better marriage.
  - Jesus helps me do better on my test.
  - Jesus is my good luck charm, a value-add, a bonus, a helper...
- Our faith must be a cross-focused faith!
- But there is the constant temptation to put ourselves in the center of the universe and embrace a faith that is primarily about our satisfaction.
  - **Let me show you your tendency to make yourself the center of the universe...**
    - **When someone shows you (or you see on the internet), a group photo that you are in...**
      - **What is the first thing you look at (or for)?**
        - **Yourself!**
      - **At my previous church, we had a photo hanging on a wall that used individual photos of everyone in the church to form a larger picture of some scene (don't remember the scene). People were fascinated by it. But when people got up close where they could see the individual photos, what was the first thing everyone looked for? Their own photo.**
        - We have this tendency to put ourselves in the center of everything.
          - Everything is first about us.
          - This attitude is contrary to a cross-focused faith.
  - Look at what Peter said and how Jesus characterized his thinking...
    - **Mark 8:32** | *He spoke openly about this. Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. (CSB)*
    - **Mark 8:33** | *But turning around and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! You are not thinking about God's concerns but human concerns." (CSB)*
    - Peter had expectations of standing next to Jesus as he rose in popularity, influence and power.
      - "**Human concerns...**"
  - What does a cross-focused faith look like? What does it mean to have a cross-faith? A faith characterized by the cross?

### A. Confession (Sanctification)

- Confession of sin will be a regular aspect of prayer and worship if we have a cross-focused faith.
- Why is this so?
  - Because a cross-focused faith recognizes that the most important thing is not...
    - How do I feel?
    - Will I get the job I want?

- Will we win the big game?
- What's my financial situation?
- The cross-focused faith recognizes the most important thing is...
  - Sin against a holy God
- A confession-less faith is not a cross-focused faith.
  - We should daily confess our sins.
  - Confession should be our preparation for worship.
- David's confession is a model of the cross-focused attitude we should have...
  - **Psalm 51:3** | *For I am conscious of my rebellion, and my sin is always before me. (CSB)*
  - **Psalm 51:4** | *Against you—you alone—I have sinned and done this evil in your sight. So you are right when you pass sentence; you are blameless when you judge. (CSB)*
  - **Psalm 51:6** | *Surely you desire integrity in the inner self, and you teach me wisdom deep within. (CSB)*
  - **Psalm 51:7** | *Purify me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. (CSB)*
  - **Psalm 51:17** | *The sacrifice pleasing to God is a broken spirit. You will not despise a broken and humbled heart, God. (CSB)*

## B. Sanctification

- I decided to omit this point for time.

## B. Worship

- A cross-focused faith will create a hunger and thirst for worship.
- Why is this so?
  - Because it puts God at the center of our faith not self at the center.
  - It is easy to get into the mindset that our faith is for us.
    - I follow Christ because it helps me.
    - I follow Christ because it makes me happy.
    - I follow Christ because he answers prayer.
    - I follow Christ because I enjoy the friendships that affords me.
    - I follow Christ because it keeps me from hell.
  - All of that is true, but that's not why we follow Christ.
    - We follow Christ because he is worthy!
    - We follow Christ because he is due our honor and praise.
  - A cross-focused faith will recognize this and keep the focus on Jesus through worship.
    - Want to see a picture of real worship?
      - Read **Revelation 5:6-14**.
      - What is the focus? CHRIST.
- Why should we be faithful to worship?
  - Why...
    - Why should we find a way to be here for an hour each week?
    - Why should our presence here be one of the highest priorities in our lives?
  - Because he is worthy!
    - And we have a cross-focused faith.

## C. Evangelism

- When we have a cross-focused faith, we understand the most important thing is whether a person has trusted in Christ and his sacrifice on the cross for the forgiveness of sins.
- When we have a cross-focused faith, the most important fact about everyone around is whether or not they know Christ.
- When we have a cross-focused faith, we understand that what people need most in life, we have: The good news of Christ.
- When we have a cross-focused faith, we are compelled to tell people the good news.
  - And tell people the right good news...
    - They don't first need our armchair psychology.
    - They don't first need our relationship advice.
    - They need the gospel!

## III. Who do you say Jesus is?

- Jesus turned the question personal in **Mark 8:29a**.
  - **Mark 8:29a** | *"But you," he asked them, "who do you say that I am?" (CSB)*

- Notice again the double use of the word “*you.*”
- This phrasing accurately portrays the Greek.
- That is the most important question.
  - Who do you say Jesus is?
- There is only one answer, but it looks different depending on where you are standing.
  - **From inside the faith...**
    - Who is he to you?
      - Good luck charm?
      - Concierge? Butler?
      - Counselor?
      - Or is he the one who rescued you from your sins by dying?
        - **The one who jumped on the hand-grenade for you...**
    - Your walk will look distinctively different depending on who he is to you.
      - Prayer life will look different...
      - Worship faithfulness will look different...
      - Sanctification will look different...
      - The purpose of the church will look different...
        - Not primarily fellowships, traditions, comforts, and preferences...
        - Rather...
          - Evangelism
          - Honoring the Lord
  - **From outside the faith...**
    - This event is recorded in more than one gospel.
    - In the Gospel of **Matthew**, we see that Jesus responds to Peter’s confession...
      - **Matthew 16:17** | *Jesus responded, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven. (CSB)*
    - What did Jesus mean by saying this was revealed?
      - The Holy Spirit convicts us of our sin and points us to Jesus.
      - You don’t come to Jesus because you get all your questions answered.
        - *As important as questions are...*
          - *If you have questions about your faith, let us help you answer them.*
      - You come to Jesus because you embrace what the Lord puts on your heart.
        - The fool says in his heart, no god (**Psalm 14:1**).
          - **Psalm 14:1** | *The fool says in his heart, “There’s no God.” They are corrupt; they do vile deeds. There is no one who does good. (CSB)*
          - The fool chooses to say there is no god.
        - The wise man embraces what he knows is true.
        - The wise man runs to the God who loves him.
    - If you are outside the faith...
      - Who do you say Jesus is?
        - How?
          - Believe
          - Surrender

## Conclusion

- In the **Matthew** account, Jesus goes on to talk about how he will build his church (his people) around the answer to this question.
- Jesus took the disciples to Caesarea Philippi to say this.
  - The center of paganism and sin...
  - **The Shanghai of the ancient world.**
  - **The San Francisco & Las Vegas of the Middle East.**
    - **What happens in Caesarea Philippi stays in Caesarea Philippi...**
- To say that with all the distractions, opinions, worldviews, false religions, vane philosophies...
  - What ultimately matters is your answer to the question, “Who do you say that I am?”

---

## Outline Ideas

- #1: The Identity of Jesus
  - Who does the world say Jesus is?
    - Close doesn't count...
    - Complimentary is still wrong...
      - "Jesus is spiritual" is as damning as "Jesus is a crazy man."
    - C.S. Lewis quote about liar, lunatic, Lord...
  - Who does the Bible say Jesus is?
    - **Mark 8:31**
    - Savior not...
      - Bonus
      - Good luck charm
      - Helper
    - No Christianity without the cross...
      - Peter's rebuke
    - What does it mean to have a cross-faith? A faith characterized by the cross?
      - Confession
      - Sanctification
      - Evangelism
        - People don't need help. They need Christ.
  - Who do you say Jesus is?
    - Not revealed by flesh and blood (**Matthew 16:17**) ...
      - This isn't a matter of getting all of your questions answered.
    - The fool says in his heart, no god (**Psalms 14:1**).
    -

## Thoughts

- Why was it "necessary" (**8:31**)?
- Why did Peter react so strongly (and negatively) to Jesus' assertion (**8:32**)?
- Jesus' harsh rebuke was aimed at Peter's attempt to take the cross away from the focus.
- People are still confused about "who is Jesus?"
- From confusion to confession...
  - Then back to confusion then to clarity...
- Why does Jesus take the disciples to Caesarea Philippi to start this last phase of his ministry?

## References

- **Matthew 16:17-19** | *Jesus responded, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but my Father in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it. I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will have been loosed in heaven."* (CSB)
- **Psalms 14:1** | *The fool says in his heart, "There's no God." They are corrupt; they do vile deeds. There is no one who does good.* (CSB)

## General Notes

- With this study we now come to the middle of the book of Mark, which is also the intersection toward which the theology of the first half of the Gospel converges and from which the dynamic of the second half of the Gospel comes. It is the turning point of the Gospel and from it all events move toward Jerusalem, the betrayal, the whipping post, and the bloody Cross.<sup>ii</sup>
- This event is a watershed event in the Gospel of Mark. The miracle stories that affirm the power, authority, and deity of Jesus cease. From this point on the emphasis is the crucifixion. Mark's Gospel changes from a focus on who He is to His great redemptive act (i.e. what He did).<sup>iii</sup>

## Notes on Geography

- Caesarea Philippi was located at the southern base of the majestic Mount Hermon<sup>iv</sup>
- Caesarea Philippi lay twenty-five miles due north of Bethsaida, a full day's walk from the latter site.<sup>v</sup>
- The slopes of Mount Hermon are shared by modern Israel, Syria, and Lebanon.<sup>vi</sup>

- By Jesus' time, Baniyas is a province of the Roman Empire and the site of a magnificent marble temple built in honor of Caesar Augustus, the emperor of Rome. Even though **Caesarea Philippi appears to be out of the way on Jesus' journey to Jerusalem**, it stands as the religious fortress of the pagan world which challenges His Godhead.<sup>vii</sup>
- Baniyas is the contemporary name of the site and it preserves the original Paneas (also Panias). The letter "p" does not exist in Arabic; its substitute is "b."<sup>viii</sup>
- The city was also **famous for its sanctuary to Pan** (from which the city gained the name Caesarea Panias). Half man and half goat, Pan was revered as the guardian of flocks and nature and worshiped in a grotto at the foot of Mt. Hermon next to the cave from which one of the three major tributaries of the Jordan River gushes forth. It is here in the outer regions of paganism and even hostility to Judaism that Jesus is first proclaimed Messiah!<sup>ix</sup>
- Caesarea Philippi constituted a rebuilding and enlargement of the ancient city of Paneas by Philip the tetrarch. Paneas was the site of a grotto dedicated to the god Pan. When Herod the Great acquired Iturea, he built a temple in Paneas and dedicated it to the emperor Augustus. When Herod died and Philip succeeded him as the Roman client-king, he renamed the city for the emperor and for himself. The qualification "of Philip" was a necessity in order to distinguish the city, which was about twenty-five miles north of Lake Galilee, from the Caesarea on the Mediterranean Sea, which was built by Herod the Great and also named for Augustus. The city enjoyed a most beautiful setting at the foot of Mt. Hermon and beside some gushing springs that constitute one of the sources of the Jordan River.<sup>x</sup>
- On the escarpment north of Paneas is the cave described by Josephus: 'In the mountains there is a beautiful cave, and below it the earth slopes steeply to a precipitous and inaccessible depth, which is filled with still water, while above it is a very high mountain. Below the cave rise the sources of the River Jordan' (*Ant. XV:364*). Nearby is another small cave with a beautiful niche.<sup>xi</sup>
- **The Gates of Hell in Terrestrial Geography**<sup>xii</sup>
  - These cities and their Rephaim inhabitants are mentioned by name in Canaanite (Ugaritic) cuneiform tablets. The people of Ugarit believed the Rephaim were the spirits of dead warrior-kings. They also believed that the cities of Ashtaroth and Edrei were the entryway to the Underworld—the gates of Sheol. Also, during Israel's divided kingdom period, Jereboam built a pagan religious center at Dan—just south of Mount Hermon—where the Israelites worshiped Baal instead of Yahweh.<sup>xiii</sup>
  - For the disciples, Bashan was an evil, otherworldly domain. But they had two other reasons to feel queasy about where they were standing. According to Jewish tradition, **Mount Hermon was the location where the divine sons of God had descended from heaven—ultimately corrupting humankind via their offspring with human women** (see Gen 6:1–4). These offspring were known as Nephilim, ancestors of the Anakim and the Rephaim (Num 13:30–33). In Jewish theology, the spirits of these giants were demons (*1 Enoch 15:1–12*).<sup>xiv</sup>
  - To make the region even spookier, Caesarea Philippi had been built and dedicated to Zeus. This pagan god was worshiped at a religious center built a short distance from the more ancient one in Dan—at the foot of Mount Hermon. Aside from the brief interlude during the time of Joshua through Solomon, the gates of hell were continually open for business.<sup>xv</sup>

#### Notes on 8:27-28

- **Jesus takes the Twelve north for a time of private instruction. Caesarea Philippi is an unlikely location for the first human proclamation of Jesus as the Messiah. It represents the outer regions of paganism, idolatry, and hostility to the Hebrew faith.** We are at a crucial turning point.<sup>xvi</sup>
- Jesus **asked** the disciples what **people** were saying about Him. Often Jesus' questions were springboards for new teaching.<sup>xvii</sup>
- **Caesarea Philippi** was some 25 miles (40 km) north of the Sea of Galilee, and had been a center of the worship of Baal, then of the Greek god Pan, and then of Caesar (see note on Matt. 16:13).<sup>xviii</sup>
- Jesus was no ordinary rabbi and did not ask the question simply to get information. He used it as preliminary to his second question (v. 29).<sup>xix</sup>
- It is **remarkable the number of different opinions the people held about Jesus, though the same situation probably exists today.** That some thought He was John the Baptist is especially perplexing, since John and Jesus had been seen publicly together. They were quite different in personality and ministry (Matt. 11:16–19), so it seems strange that the people would confuse them.<sup>xx</sup>
- These were **favorable assessments to be sure. Each is positive and affirming, much like those who today would applaud Him as a great moral teacher, the example all should emulate. They honor Him but misrepresent Him. They applaud Him while denying who He really is.** This inescapable question demands an accurate and acceptable answer. "Who do people say that I am?"<sup>xxi</sup>

- Popular and trendy views of Jesus must always surrender to the clear and consistent witness of Scripture. James Edwards is right: “The categories of John the Baptist or Elijah or one of the prophets are no closer to the real Jesus than are the various ‘Jesus’ figures of historical criticism or Enlightenment rationalism or feminism or Aryan and racist theories or the Jesus Seminar or the various sociological models in our day” (*Mark*, 248). Resist the trends! Stand on the Word against these faulty assaults! Personally, publicly, and even proudly declare your allegiance to Jesus proclaiming He is the Son of God, the Messiah, the One and Only Savior of the world. <sup>xxii</sup>

#### Notes on 8:29

- The **answer every person gives to this question will determine his or her eternal destiny.** <sup>xxiii</sup>
- “You” is emphatic in Greek because the pronoun is fronted (i.e. put first in the sentence). <sup>xxiv</sup>
- Jesus now directs the question at the disciples. His use of *hymeis* (“you”), the emphatic pronoun, is particularly important. **NIV catches this nuance by repeating the “you”:** “But what about you?... Who do you say I am?” In other words Jesus is asking, “Who do you, my most intimate and trusted friends—in contrast to the other people who neither know me nor understand me—think I am?” <sup>xxv</sup>
- The Greek word *Christos* (“Christ”) translates the Hebrew *māšîaḥ* (“Messiah”) and means the “Anointed One” of God. In the OT the word is used of anyone who was anointed with the holy oil, as, for example, the priests and kings of Israel (cf. Exod 29:7, 21; 1 Sam 10:1, 6; 16:13; 2 Sam 1:14, 16). The word carries with it the idea of chosenness by God, consecration to his service, and endowment with his power to accomplish the task assigned. <sup>xxvi</sup>
- The Greek word “Christ” translates the Heb. “Messiah,” meaning “to anoint.” <sup>xxvii</sup>
- A “synergism” is a working term of science which describes a breakthrough in human knowledge when pieces of information suddenly come together in a surprising new discovery. The invention of the laser beam is an example. Forty years ago, only Buck Rogers possessed a laser beam in his ray gun. Scientists predicted that the laser would pass from fiction to fact sometime toward the close of the twentieth century. Their prediction, however, was upset by decades when accumulating knowledge and advancing technology during the 1960s synergetically converged to produce the formula for the laser beam twenty or thirty years ahead of its time. Today, the laser is a beneficial instrument for medicine and a deadly weapon for the military. Whenever the Spirit of God touches the mind of man, there is the synergism of revealed truth. How else can we explain Peter’s response to Jesus’ question, “*But who do you say that I am?*” (v. 29). <sup>xxviii</sup>

#### Notes on 8:30

- **tell no one.** Jesus’ messianic mission cannot be understood apart from the cross, which the disciples did not yet understand. <sup>xxix</sup>

#### Notes on 8:31

- **“the Son of Man must”** This shows that Jesus clearly understood His mission and its cost (cf. Mark 10:45). <sup>xxx</sup>
- Christ’s death is necessary because the eternal, messianic rule of God begins with atonement for sin, i.e., the sacrifice that will bring about reconciliation between God and man. <sup>xxxi</sup>
- Why did our Lord say “must”? Did he mean that he was unable to escape suffering, that he must die by compulsion of a stronger power than his own? Impossible. This could not have been his meaning. Did he mean that he must die to give the world a great example of self-sacrifice and self-denial, and that this, and this alone, made his death necessary? Once more it may be replied, “Impossible.” There is a far deeper meaning in the word “must” suffer and be killed. He meant that his death and passion were necessary in order to make atonement for human sin. Without shedding his blood, there could be no remission. Without the sacrifice of his body on the cross, there could be no satisfaction of God’s holy law. He “must” suffer to make reconciliation for iniquity. He “must” die, because without his death as a propitiatory offering, sinners could never have life. He “must” suffer, because without his vicarious sufferings our sins could never be taken away. In a word, he “must” be delivered for our offenses, and raised again for our justification. <sup>xxxii</sup>
- *Exegesis dei* (9:11, 13:7, 10, 14, 14:31) ‘it is necessary,’ ‘it is needed’: the verb denotes compulsion of some sort. What this compulsion is only the total context can indicate. <sup>xxxiii</sup>
- **rise again.** **Jesus always mentioned His resurrection in connection with His death** (cf. 9:31; 10:34; Matt. 16:21; 17:23; 20:19; Luke 9:22; 18:33), making it all the more incomprehensible that the disciples were so slow to understand. <sup>xxxiv</sup>

#### Notes on 8:32

- His brash outburst expressed not only presumption and misunderstanding, but also deep love for Jesus. <sup>xxxv</sup>

- Like Satan at the temptation in the wilderness (Matt 4:9-11), Peter offers Jesus the crown without the cross. He thinks he has a better plan than God does.<sup>xxxvi</sup>

### Notes on 8:33

- It is only Peter's thought, not him personally, that Jesus rejects as satanic.<sup>xxxvii</sup>

### Notes on Matthew 16:16

- Peter also adds the adjective "living," a characteristically Jewish way of referring to God to distinguish him from lifeless idols and also a reminder that only Yahweh has life in himself which he can impart to others.<sup>xxxviii</sup>

### Notes on Matthew 16:18

- In light of the massive rock scarp against which Caesarea Philippi was built and into which were hewn images of dead gods and goddesses, Jesus may have been using *petra* to refer to the worldviews represented in that rock face. They appeared to be insurmountable but, here, Jesus was declared to be *the* Living God. In other words, this encounter represented a stinging condemnation of all forms of pagan worship. This is even more dramatic in light of the layers of religious history that had accumulated here.<sup>xxxix</sup>
- The rock which Jesus referred to in this passage was neither Peter nor Himself; it was the rock on which they were standing—the foot of Mount Hermon, the demonic headquarters of the Old Testament and the Greek world. We often presume that the phrase "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" describes a Church taking on the onslaught of evil. But the word "against" is not present in the Greek. Translating the phrase without it gives it a completely different connotation: "the gates of hell will not withstand it." It is the Church that Jesus sees as the aggressor. He was declaring war on evil and death. Jesus would build His Church atop the gates of hell—He would bury them.<sup>xl</sup>

<sup>i</sup> <https://carm.org/false-jesus>

<sup>ii</sup> R. Kent Hughes, *Mark: Jesus, Servant and Savior*, vol. 1, Preaching the Word (Westchester, IL: Crossway Books, 1989), 199.

<sup>iii</sup> Robert James Dr. Utley, *The Gospel according to Peter: Mark and I & II Peter*, vol. Volume 2, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 94.

<sup>iv</sup> Elaine A. Phillips, "Peter's Declaration at Caesarea Philippi," in *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels*, ed. Barry J. Beitzel and Kristopher A. Lyle, Lexham Geographic Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Mt 16:13–Lk 9:20.

<sup>v</sup> James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2002), 245.

<sup>vi</sup> Elaine A. Phillips, "Peter's Declaration at Caesarea Philippi," in *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels*, ed. Barry J. Beitzel and Kristopher A. Lyle, Lexham Geographic Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Mt 16:13–Lk 9:20.

<sup>vii</sup> David L. McKenna and Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *Mark*, vol. 25, The Preacher's Commentary Series (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1982), 170.

<sup>viii</sup> Elaine A. Phillips, "Peter's Declaration at Caesarea Philippi," in *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels*, ed. Barry J. Beitzel and Kristopher A. Lyle, Lexham Geographic Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Mt 16:13–Lk 9:20.

<sup>ix</sup> James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2002), 246.

<sup>x</sup> James A. Brooks, *Mark*, vol. 23, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1991), 134.

<sup>xi</sup> Avraham Negev, *The Archaeological Encyclopedia of the Holy Land* (New York: Prentice Hall Press, 1990).

<sup>xii</sup> Michael S. Heiser, *I Dare You Not to Bore Me with the Bible*, ed. John D. Barry and Rebecca Van Noord (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press; Bible Study Magazine, 2014), 118.

<sup>xiii</sup> Michael S. Heiser, *I Dare You Not to Bore Me with the Bible*, ed. John D. Barry and Rebecca Van Noord (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press; Bible Study Magazine, 2014), 118.

<sup>xiv</sup> Michael S. Heiser, *I Dare You Not to Bore Me with the Bible*, ed. John D. Barry and Rebecca Van Noord (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press; Bible Study Magazine, 2014), 118.

<sup>xv</sup> Michael S. Heiser, *I Dare You Not to Bore Me with the Bible*, ed. John D. Barry and Rebecca Van Noord (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press; Bible Study Magazine, 2014), 119.

<sup>xvi</sup> Daniel L. Akin, David Platt, and Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Mark* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2014).

<sup>xvii</sup> John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck and Dallas Theological Seminary, *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: An Exposition of the Scriptures* (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1983-), Mk 8:27.

<sup>xviii</sup> Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1910.

<sup>xix</sup> Walter W. Wessel, "Mark," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 693.

<sup>xx</sup> Warren W. Wiersbe, *The Bible Exposition Commentary*, vol. 1 (Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1996), 139.

<sup>xxi</sup> Daniel L. Akin, David Platt, and Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Mark* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2014).

<sup>xxii</sup> Daniel L. Akin, David Platt, and Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Mark* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2014).

<sup>xxiii</sup> John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997), Mk 8:29.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Robert James Dr. Utley, vol. Volume 2, *The Gospel According to Peter: Mark and I & II Peter*, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2001), 94.

<sup>xxv</sup> Walter W. Wessel, "Mark," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 693.

<sup>xxvi</sup> Walter W. Wessel, "Mark," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Matthew, Mark, Luke*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1984), 693.

<sup>xxvii</sup> James R. Edwards, *The Gospel according to Mark*, The Pillar New Testament Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI; Leicester, England: Eerdmans; Apollos, 2002), 249.

<sup>xxviii</sup> David L. McKenna and Lloyd J. Ogilvie, *Mark*, vol. 25, The Preacher's Commentary Series (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Inc, 1982), 171–172.

<sup>xxix</sup> John Jr MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville: Word Pub., 1997), Mk 8:30.

<sup>xxx</sup> Robert James Dr. Utley, *The Gospel according to Peter: Mark and I & II Peter*, vol. Volume 2, Study Guide Commentary Series (Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International, 2000), 95.

<sup>xxxi</sup> Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1910.

<sup>xxxii</sup> J. C. Ryle, *Mark*, The Crossway classic commentaries (Wheaton, Ill.: Crossway Books, 1993), 120-21.

<sup>xxxiii</sup> Robert G. Bratcher and Eugene Albert Nida, *A Handbook on the Gospel of Mark*, UBS Handbook Series (New York: United Bible Societies, 1993), 262.

<sup>xxxiv</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1477.

<sup>xxxv</sup> John MacArthur Jr., ed., *The MacArthur Study Bible*, electronic ed. (Nashville, TN: Word Pub., 1997), 1477.

<sup>xxxvi</sup> Daniel L. Akin, David Platt, and Tony Merida, *Exalting Jesus in Mark* (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2014).

<sup>xxxvii</sup> Crossway Bibles, *The ESV Study Bible* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway Bibles, 2008), 1910.

<sup>xxxviii</sup> Craig Blomberg, *Matthew*, vol. 22, The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1992), 251.

<sup>xxxix</sup> Elaine A. Phillips, "Peter's Declaration at Caesarea Philippi," in *Lexham Geographic Commentary on the Gospels*, ed. Barry J. Beitzel and Kristopher A. Lyle, Lexham Geographic Commentary (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press, 2016), Mt 16:13–Lk 9:20.

<sup>xl</sup> Michael S. Heiser, *I Dare You Not to Bore Me with the Bible*, ed. John D. Barry and Rebecca Van Noord (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press; Bible Study Magazine, 2014), 119.