

Who Do You Say that I Am?
Mark 8:27-38
Series: Christ Our Focus

1. Introduction –
 - a. In this chapter we arrive at the center point of the book of Mark and in a real sense, the center point of the ministry of Christ—this center point is found in verse 8:29 – Peter’s great declaration.
 - b. First half vs. second half watershed moments –
 - i. Christ is as first crisscrossing the country; now on the way to Jerusalem
 - ii. Christ was at first teaching the multitudes; now he teaches his disciples and prepares them
 - iii. After vs. 9:29 no further commands of silence or demonic exorcisms.
 - iv. The first half we see the disciples struggling with the claims of Christ while in 8:29 we have Peter’s great statement of faith.
 - v. Both halves end with a confession – Peter’s and the Centurion’s
 1. Both confessions teach that the true identity of Christ is revealed only through suffering.
 - vi. They must believe contrary to the world’s opinion
2. Verse 27 – A question
 - a. Christ asks his disciple a very stirring question –
 - i. Christ has impacted the area around him and there was no lack of opinions among the people.
 - ii. Christ had come in like a flood and effectuated a tremendous ground swell of support and criticism
 - b. Who do men say that I am?
 - i. This question requires the disciples to open up in regards to what they themselves were hearing.
3. Verse 28 – The common responses of the multitudes
 - a. Each ascribed a measure of glory and awe to Christ but none went far enough in their assessment.
 - i. Many people today consider Christ one of the greats and ascribe to him some sort of supernatural spirituality

without truly coming to the knowledge of who Christ truly is.

1. The crowd's reaction might seem like an honor but it is not.
2. Their opinion equaled an attempt to pour new wine into old wineskins.

4. Verse 29 – But who do you say that I am

- a. With the full realization that the crowd had missed who he truly was, Christ turns to his much loved disciples.
 - i. Who do you say that I am – is a very personal and searching question
 - ii. What others think of Christ ultimately does not matter.
 - iii. Christ is personal – individual
 - iv. We stand before the throne of God in a singular fashion.
- b. Peter's answer – you are the Christ
 - i. Here Peter's stunning declaration demonstrates that like the blind man in the previous story the kingdom is dawning upon the disciples' hearts.
 - ii. They, like us, cannot remain spectators any longer.
 - iii. Peter's declaration shows a high view of Scripture
 1. Faith comes from hearing and hearing the word of God.
 2. Peter confesses that Christ is the fulfillment of all the Old Testament prophecies – God has kept his word.
 3. Peter's knowledge of the Old Testament is the means by which he is able to comprehend the true nature of Christ and therefore the nature of God.

5. Side note –

- a. **Matthew 16:17-18** And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. (18) And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.
- b. Peter's confession will be the foundational truth that anchors the church to Jesus
 - i. We know him as the fulfillment of scripture and the only one true son of God.

- ii. Christ is the cornerstone of our faith and anyone that does not accept the Christ of Scripture cannot truly be saved.
 - 1. This is the centrality of Christ
 - 2. **1 Corinthians 3:10-11** According to the grace of God given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation, and someone else is building upon it. Let each one take care how he builds upon it. (11) For no one can lay a foundation other than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
 - 3. **Colossians 1:17-19** And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. (18) And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. (19) For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell,

6. Verse 30 – The same charge as before is given here

- 7. Verse 31 – Verse 31 – Christ begins to further illuminate the disciple
 - a. Christ was to suffer – all the servants of God had suffered.
 - b. Christ as messiah was prophesied to suffer –
 - i. **Isaiah 53:3-6** He was despised and rejected by men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; and as one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not. (4) Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted. (5) But he was pierced for our transgressions; he was crushed for our iniquities; upon him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with his wounds we are healed. (6) All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned--every one--to his own way; and the LORD has laid on him the iniquity of us all.
 - c. This was contrary to the Jewish expectation of a glorious king – they had denied the suffering passages
 - i. There is a danger in focusing on the parts of Scripture that appeal to us and forsaking those parts of Scriptures that we are not fond of.

1. To truly follow Christ, we must bow before the whole council of his Word.
 - d. Christ's suffering would come at the hands of the religious best.
8. Verse 32 – Peter's rebuke – it became incomprehensible for Peter to believe that God would allow his servant to suffer
- a. What is our belief system – knowledge of Christ comes with suffering.
 - b. Think about the prophets, disciples, Christ, martyrs.
 - c. There is an ungodly teaching filling the church that states that Christians should not have any suffering.
 - d. Suffering the penalty of death would be the way Christ destroyed the stronghold of Satan
9. Verse 33 – Christ's Rebuke
- a. Peter's request that Christ would not suffer would be a violation of the prophetic word.
 - b. Looking at the disciples – Peter's refutation of the prophetic word was a contagious cancer that needed to be rebuked.
 - c. Christ recognizes that although Peter's initial statement was one inspired by God, now he is speaking with a tongue inspired by hell.
 - i. At stake is the word of God – the declared Will of God
 - ii. Christ had the highest view of Scripture
 1. **Matthew 5:18** For truly, I say to you, until heaven and earth pass away, not an iota, not a dot, will pass from the Law until all is accomplished.
 - d. Setting your mind on the things of God instead of things of men
10. Verse 34 – Godliness comes through a denial of fleshy comforts and ease
- a. The crowds and the disciples must understand that suffering is part of the call
 - b. There is a cross bearing
 - c. The cross exercises a total claim on us. It calls us to allegiance and the relinquishing of self-preservation.
11. Verse 35 – truth number two
- a. To lose for Christ is to gain, to gain apart from Christ is to lose.
 - b. There is no "both" "and" choice but rather an "either" ... "or"

12. Verse 36 – What profit to gain the world
- a. The reality of heaven and hell is reflected in this statement.
 - b. Christ truly believed in hell and heaven.
13. Verse 37 – what can a man give for his soul
- a. Once in hell what would a person give up to be reprieved
14. Verse 38 – ashamed
- a. This generation is adulterous and sinful – just like prophets spoke.
 - b. If you want to please this world, live in this world then Christ will be ashamed of him
 - c. The Second Advent is promised here and in that advent the Lord will separate the true from the false.
 - d. How you live in this generation (today), will determine your standing when our Lord comes.
15. Benediction –
- a. **Matthew 25:31-33** "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. (32) Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. (33) And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left.