

## Jesus is the Messiah

The Gospel According to Mark Part 16

*Mark 8:27-30*

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### **Titles and Identity**

- What's an example of someone's title, that when you learn about their title, you immediately change your perception about them?
  - Manager
  - Verified on Twitter
  - College athlete
  - Single, married, engaged, dating
  - A part of this fraternity or that sorority
  - student/someone who works full-time
  - What college they attend
- When we learn about certain people's titles, we ascribe certain things to their identity. We understand them differently. Your attitude towards them is different.
- Tonight, as we continue our study of the Gospel According to Mark, we will see the title Peter confesses to Jesus, that He is the Messiah.
  - However, titles don't mean everything. Even though the disciples learn Jesus' true position and identity, they misunderstood what that meant.

### **Mark 8:27-30**

- *Mark 8:27* - Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, "Who do people say I am?"
  - Caesarea Philippi
    - The city is 25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee, a two days' journey for Jesus and His disciples,<sup>1</sup> on the border between the Holy Land and Gentile territory<sup>2</sup>
    - A city of worship
      - Caesarea Philippi was known for its cultic worship of the god Pan.<sup>3</sup>
      - Herod the Great built a temple to pay homage to the Roman emperor. And his son, Herod Philip, renamed it in honor of Caesar.<sup>4</sup>
    - "Peter's recognition that Jesus is the Christ occurs in a pagan outpost."<sup>5</sup>
    - This is the most unlikely place one would imagine that Jesus would unveil His identity as the Messiah.

<sup>1</sup> Pheme Perkins, *The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary*, vol. VII (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press 2015), 470.

<sup>2</sup> David E. Garland, *Mark: The NIV Application Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1996), 323.

<sup>3</sup> Garland, *Mark*, 323.

<sup>4</sup> Garland, *Mark*, 323.

<sup>5</sup> Garland, *Mark*, 323.

- Jesus somewhat Googles Himself. (Has anyone Googled their own name to see if there's anything about you out on the Internet?). He asks what the word on the street is about Him. He wants to know about His reputation among the people.
- *Mark 8:28* - They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."
  - The disciples say that people claim Jesus is the second coming of great figures.
    - Elijah - a great Old Testament prophet, probably one of the most famous prophets in the Old Testament.
    - John the Baptist - Jesus' cousin, the man who "prepared the way" for Jesus (*Mark 1:2-8*), and who was arrested and eventually killed for his preaching (*Mark 1:14, 6:14-29*).
      - It has already been mentioned in Mark that people thought Jesus was John the Baptist returned from the dead. Herod even believed this (*Mark 6:16*).
    - One of the prophets - God speaks through prophets to the people of God. Prophets don't just tell the future. They speak the message of God to the people of God.
  - *Mark 6:14-16* - "King Herod heard about this, for Jesus' name had become well known. Some were saying, 'John the Baptist has been raised from the dead, and that is why miraculous powers are at work in him.' Others said, 'He is Elijah.' And still others claimed, 'He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of long ago.' But when Herod heard this, he said, 'John, whom I beheaded, has been raised from the dead!'"
  - This was a great compliment. People thought Jesus was similar to great men of God.
  - N.T. Wright says this about who the disciples compared Jesus to: "fearless men of God who spoke out against evil and injustice, and brought hope to God's puzzled and suffering people."<sup>6</sup>
- *Mark 8:29* - "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."
  - Jesus gets a little more personal now. He asks the disciples, not what others think about Him, but what they think of Him. He asks, "What do you really think about me? Who am I? Who do you say I am?"
  - "The fact that Jesus even asks the disciples the question demonstrates that He has avoided providing His identity directly up to this point."<sup>7</sup>
  - Peter responds. (Peter seems to be the one who speaks up often.)
  - Peter says, "You are the Messiah." Peter believes that Jesus is the Messiah.
  - *Mark 1:1* - The beginning of the good news about Jesus the Messiah, the Son of God
  - This is the climax of the gospel so far.
  - Messiah, Anointed One, Christ

<sup>6</sup> N. T. Wright, *Mark for Everyone* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 107.

<sup>7</sup> David M. Young, *Extreme Discipleship: Following Jesus from the Gospel of Mark* (Montgomery, AL: E-BookTime, LLC, 2007), 144.

- “The Hebrew word means literally ‘anointed one’...In Greek this translates as *Christos* (Christ)”<sup>8</sup>
    - “Anointing represents God’s affirmation that the prophet, priest, or king is the divinely chosen leader of the people.”<sup>9</sup>
  - Jewish expectations for the Messiah
    - There are many passages in the Old Testament that point to the coming of God’s anointed one, the Messiah.
      - For example, 2 *Samuel* 7:11-16
    - “In the first century most Jews believed the Messiah would be a royal figure, the offspring of David, whom God would deliver from her foes. This kinglike figure would be as triumphant as David and as wise as Solomon.”<sup>10</sup>
  - “Jesus has been preaching the kingdom of God, and Peter is now convinced that he has learned the name of the king.”<sup>11</sup>
  - The disciples, at this point, now know that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah, but misunderstand what Jesus being the Messiah means.
    - Jesus does not save God’s people by overcoming the Roman occupation by military force.
    - Jesus is, in fact making a political claim here. If Jesus is King, Caesar is not.
    - He establishes God’s Kingdom through love, service, and self-sacrifice.
- *Mark* 8:30 - Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.
  - Jesus telling people to keep His true identity a secret is known as the Messianic Secret.
  - The same warning and command Jesus gives to His disciples to keep His identity a secret is the same response Jesus gives when the demons acknowledged Him as the Son of God in *Mark* 3:12.<sup>12</sup>
  - Why does Jesus want to keep His identity a secret at this point?<sup>13</sup>
    - Inappropriate time for the revealing of His identity
    - Inappropriate context for Him to reveal His identity
    - Inappropriate witnesses to reveal His identity
  - We will address this more in-depth next week. A key to understanding Jesus’ true identity as the Messiah that will suffer and die is a difficult concept for the disciples to get their minds around. “The disciples do not understand that suffering lies at the heart of Jesus’ mission. They are no more about to correctly use the titles ‘Messiah’ and ‘Son of God’ than the demons are.”<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Wright, *Mark for Everyone*, 235.

<sup>9</sup> Perkins, *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary*, 470.

<sup>10</sup> Garland, *Mark*, 324.

<sup>11</sup> Garland, *Mark*, 324.

<sup>12</sup> Perkins, *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary*, 470.

<sup>13</sup> Perkins, *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary*, 470.

<sup>14</sup> Perkins, *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary*, 470.

## Messiah

- “Messiah” video by The Bible Project
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dEh25pduQ8><sup>15</sup>
  - 5 minutes 47 seconds
- Jesus as the Messiah tells us this: Jesus is King.
  - Jesus came to announce the establishment of God’s Kingdom (*Mark 1:14-15*). And Jesus is its King. He’s King of the whole world.
- If Jesus is Lord, no one else is.
- We put our hope in Jesus, not the government, the political process (or politicians), our own abilities, money, or popularity.

## Who do you say I am?

- As we close, I want to ask you the question Jesus asked His disciples: Who do you say I [Jesus] am?
- We need to be careful to make sure we follow the correct “Jesus.”
- C. S. Lewis’ trilemma: liar, lunatic, Lord<sup>16</sup>
  - You can not say that Jesus is merely a good moral teacher. A good moral teacher would not make the claims Jesus made.
  - If Jesus was not resurrected, he was a lunatic (on the level of a man who says he’s a poached egg) or a liar.
  - But if the resurrection is true. He is Lord.
- You need to answer this question for yourself: Who do you say Jesus is?
- Is Jesus your King? Or do you just admire Him? Do you accept His teachings as a suggestion or as a command?
- Jesus is absolutely amazing. He is your King. Follow His with all you’ve got.

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<sup>15</sup> “Messiah,” *BibleProject*, YouTube Video, September 30, 2014, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3dEh25pduQ8>.

<sup>16</sup> C. S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity* (New York: HarperOne, 1952), 52.