



The Scrolls

Helping **CENTRAL BIBLE CHURCH** Families Belong, Become and Go Beyond V22 N44 November 15, 2020

KING JESUS

“It’s Who You Know”

Mark 8:27-30

THIS WEEK’S CORE COMPETENCY

Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners, and rose from the dead.

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.”

Hebrews 1:3



Who is Jesus?

According to the Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark, and Luke—Jesus and his disciples go to Caesarea Philippi, and on their way, Jesus asks them the *ultimate question*, that is, the question that leads to the *ultimate answer* to the meaning of life: “Who do you say I am?” (Mk 8:29). The disciples recognize that their world is divided in its answer to Jesus’ preliminary question, “Who do people say I am?” (v. 27). “Some say, John the Baptist; others say Elijah, and still others, one of the prophets,” they report (v. 28; cf., Mt 16:14; Lk 9:19). Our world is divided in its opinion of Jesus, too. Some things never change.

In an attempt to answer Jesus’ preliminary question, as far as people today are concerned, I discovered that the vast majority of Americans believe that Jesus was a real person. In its 2015 research, the Barna Group reports: “Jesus Christ has made a cameo in hundreds of pop culture places, from *The Da Vinci Code* to *South Park*. But, although the character of Jesus has certainly been fictionalized, satirized and mythologized over the centuries, the vast majority of Americans still maintain that he was a historical figure. More than nine out of 10 adults say Jesus Christ was a real person who actually lived (92%). While the percentages dip slightly among younger generations—only 87 percent of Millennials agree Jesus actually lived—Americans are still very likely to believe the man, Jesus Christ, once walked the earth.”

But that doesn’t mean an equal number of Americans believe that Jesus was God. Only about half believe that. Again the Barna Group reports: “The historicity of Jesus may not be in question for most Americans, but people are much less confident in the divinity of Jesus. Most adults—not quite six in 10—believe Jesus was God (56%), while about one-quarter say he was only a religious or spiritual leader like Mohammed or the Buddha (26%). The remaining one in six say they aren’t sure whether Jesus was divine (18%). Millennials are the only generation among whom fewer than half believe Jesus was God (48%). About one-third of

young adults (35%) say instead that Jesus was merely a religious or spiritual leader, while 17 percent aren’t sure what he was. In each older generation, the belief in Jesus as divine is more common—55 percent of Gen-Xers, 58 percent of Boomers and nearly two-thirds of Elders (62%) believe Jesus was God” (“What Do Americans Believe About Jesus: 5 Popular Beliefs,” barna.com/research/what-do-americans-believe-about-jesus-5-popular-beliefs/).

Similar findings are reported by LifeWay’s research. However, LifeWay emphasizes the inconsistencies in Americans’ stated beliefs. For example, a clear majority of Americans (72%) say they believe in the doctrine of the Trinity, namely, that the one true God exists in three Persons—Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Yet most also believe that Jesus was *merely* a great human teacher and the Holy Spirit is an impersonal force. LifeWay reports: “Half of Americans (52%) agree Jesus was a great teacher, but not God. Slightly more than half (55%) believe Jesus is the first and greatest being created by God, which runs contrary to the historical Christian belief that Jesus is eternal as God the Son (“Americans Hold Complex, Conflicting Religious Beliefs, According to the Latest State of Theology Study,” lifewayresearch.com/2020/09/08/americans-hold-complex-conflicting-religious-beliefs-according-to-latest-state-of-theology-study/). More recent research indicates that more than half of Americans (52%) and *nearly a third of evangelicals* (30%) believe Jesus was a good teacher but *not* God (Christian headlines.com/contributors/michael-foust/driftin-away-from-scripture-30-percent-of-evangelicals-say-jesus-was-not-god-poll-shows.html).

In the face of such widespread muddled theological thinking, it’s important for disciples to answer the ultimate question correctly. Peter gives that correct answer, the answer Jesus approves: “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God,” Peter says (Mt 16:16), to which Jesus replies: “Blessed are you Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven” (v. 17).



EXAMINE GOD'S WORD

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?"*

28 *They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."*

29 *"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"*

Peter answered, "You are the Messiah."

30 *Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.*

Cf., parallel passages

Matthew 16:13-16

13 *When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"*

14 *They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."*

15 *"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"*

16 *Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God."*

Luke 9:18-20

18 *Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say I am?"*

19 *They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life."*

20 *"But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?"*

Peter answered, "God's Messiah."

After reading the text, practice your Observation skills by noting the following:

- Circle "Caesarea Philippi" in v. 27.
- Underline "John the Baptist" in v. 28.
- Underline "Elijah" in v. 28.
- Underline "one of the prophets" in v. 28.
- Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 29.
- Circle "you" in v. 29.
- Underline "Messiah" in v. 29.
- Circle "warned" in v. 30.

What one word would you use to describe the TONE of this passage? (i.e., stern, joyful, cautious, etc.)

What word or idea stands out to you in this passage?

What one thing you do not understand in this passage?

Try to summarize the THEME of this passage in one word. If you were going to describe these verses, you might say, "This text is about _____."



DIG DEEPER

Answer the questions to help you apply the passage and prepare for discussion

1. Mark places Peter's confession at the very center of his Gospel. What does that indicate to you?
2. "Who do people say I am?" is a *timely* question at this point in Jesus' ministry. How so?
3. Some speculate that Jesus is "John the Baptist." Explain the origin of that misguided notion (see Mk 6:14-16).
4. Others speculate that Jesus is "Elijah." What makes that more conceivable (see Mal 4:5-6)?
5. Still others speculate Jesus is "one of the prophets." Jesus is a prophet (Mk 6:4), so what's wrong with this answer?
6. "Who do people say I am?" is a *timely* question for disciples today. How would you answer it?
7. Explain the *contrast* in verse 29 (see note on v. 29).
8. "Who do you say I am?" is also a *timely* question for disciples today. How would you answer it?
9. Mark limits Peter's answer to "You are the Messiah" (cf., Mt 16:16). Read Mark 15:39 to explain his *literary* reason for doing so.
10. **Discussion:** Disciples today might answer Jesus' question, "You are the Savior." Talk whether that's a better answer than Peter's.

Commentary On The Text

Mark has placed Peter's confession, "You are the Messiah" (8:29), smack dab in the middle of his Gospel. In the first half of his book, Mark substantiates his opening claim that "Jesus is the Messiah" (1:1); in the second half, he describes Jesus' messianic mission and details what it takes to be his disciple. On Mark's literary design, one commentator writes: "The passage has been deliberately positioned as the turning point in the narrative. At 8:27-30 the evangelist takes up the most important emphasis of his narrative: the messiahship of Jesus. After some eight chapters of public ministry, highlighted by a series of astounding miracles, Jesus is now recognized by the spokesman of his followers as the Messiah. After this recognition Jesus begins to speak of his suffering and death. Mark 8:27-30 in a certain sense is both the conclusion of the first half of the Gospel and the introduction of the second. Jesus' authoritative teaching and person have led to a confession of his messiahship. Now he may begin to explain what that messiahship entails" (Craig A. Evans, *Word Biblical Commentary, vol. 34B, Mark 8:27-16:20*, 10).

Nearly three years into his ministry (see chart in *The NIV Study Bible*, 1636-37; cf., H. Wayne House, *Chronological and Background Charts of the New Testament*, 102), Jesus and his disciples go to Caesarea Philippi, which Philip built and made the capital of his predominately Gentile territory. On the way, Jesus asks the Twelve, "Who do people say I am?" It is a timely question following his extensive ministry in and around Galilee. The disciples' answers indicate little change of opinion over the past three to six months since Herod Antipas had beheaded John the Baptist (Mk 6:14-29). About Jesus at that time, "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'" (vv. 14-15). While all of these answers have a positive connotation and the ring of religiosity, they all fall short of the truth. As one commentator explains: "Most put Jesus in the pigeonhole of prophet figure, maybe even John the Baptizer or Elijah . . . Whether the people believed that God sent him to announce doom and gloom or doom and dawn, they at least believe God sent him. These people have not hit on the truth, however. Jesus is more than just another in a long line of

messengers God has dispatched to the people . . . Peter moves to the head of the class by giving the answer that makes sense of all that they have witnessed: 'You are the Christ' (8:29)" (David E. Garland, *The NIV Application Commentary: Mark*, 323).

Mark 8:27-30 is about the identity of Jesus, and since Peter identifies him as "the Messiah" (v. 29), clarifying the meaning of the term Messiah is paramount – paramount, too, given a popular misconception afoot in that day. In the first century, most Jews believe that the Messiah will be a descendant of David, who will deliver Israel from her political enemies. Some contemporary texts focus on the scope of his sovereign rule; others on the scope of his military prowess. All look forward to the time when he ascends his father's throne, destroys sinners, purges Jerusalem of Gentiles, gathers the twelve tribes of Israel, and inaugurates God's worldwide kingdom (Ps 110:1; Da 9:25-26; Pss Sol 17:21-25). And it would appear people in Jesus' day are right in what they affirm but wrong in what they deny – the disciples, who share in much of popular expectation, are too. You see, people in general – Peter and the other disciples notwithstanding – deny the Son of Man will be rejected, suffer and die, and three days later rise from the dead (v. 32). The very idea of a Messiah who is rejected by religious leaders and who dies on a cross is unimaginable. But this is, in fact, what happens, and herein lies the paradox. On the one hand, Jesus is the Messiah *destined to rule*, but on the other, he is the Messiah *destined to die*. His mission includes both: giving himself as a ransom for many (10:45) and reigning over Jacob's descendants forever (Lk 1:33). It's a paradox that can only be resolved by the resurrection, but the disciples are slow to get it. "Lofty visions of majesty fill up their eyes and the noise of cheering crowds plugs up their hearing so that Jesus' teaching about suffering and death flies in one ear and out the other. It's all a muddle to them" (Garland, 325).

And if the disciples don't get it, Peter's confession is not ready for prime time. Identifying and introducing Jesus to people as "the Messiah" will only invite confusion. The disciples are not ready to proclaim the true meaning of Jesus' messiahship. But they will be following the resurrection.

Word Studies/Notes

v. 27 *Caesarea Philippi* “Caesarea Philippi was situated on the southern slopes of Mount Hermon some twenty-five miles north of the Sea of Galilee. Earlier it was called Panion or Paneas. It was enlarged and renamed Caesarea by Philip, the son of Herod the Great (Josephus, *Ant.* 18.2.1 §28; *J.W.* 2.9.1 §168). It is distinguished from the larger and more famous Caesarea Maritima built by Herod the Great on the Mediterranean coast” (Robert H. Stein, *Mark*, BECNT, 398). “Following Alexander’s conquest, the city was refounded and called Paneas in honor of the god Pan. (Arabs call the city Banias.) Augustus later gave the city of Herod the Great, who built the famous White Temple. Still later the city was expanded by Herod Philip and was named Caesarea in honor the Roman emperor. (Agrippa II would expand the city further and name it Neronia in honor of Nero. Many cities in the Roman period were name after Roman emperors)” (Craig A. Evans, *Word Biblical Commentary*, vol. 34B, *Mark* 8:27-16:20, 13).

v. 28 *John the Baptist* “According to Mark 6:14 people were saying of Jesus ‘John the baptizer has been raised from the dead’. . . Herod Antipas speculates that ‘John, whom I beheaded, has been raised’ (6:16). Public speculation that Jesus might in some sense be ‘John the Baptist,’ whether in spirit or in some sense *redivivus* (as in Mark 6:16), pays a significant compliment to Jesus . . . Jesus’ ministry draws so much attention and is accompanied by such astonishing deeds of power that people wonder if God has raised up John to continue the work of preparation for the kingdom” (Evans, 14). “How Jesus could have been considered John the Baptist is puzzling since their careers overlapped (1:9-11; Luke 7:18-35; John 3:22-30; 4:1-2’ see Mark 6:14-16)” (Stein, 398).

v. 28 *Elijah* “Elijah is named as a possibility because of the common view that he would return at the end time (Mal. 4:5-6; Sir. 48:1-10). One way of understanding Elijah’s return was that he would personally be raised from the dead and return to Israel. For Jesus and the NT writers, however, the prophecy was understood figuratively. Someone like Elijah (i.e. John the Baptist) would return and carry out Elijah’s prophetic ministry. This is how Mark 9:11-13; Matt. 11:12-14; 17:10-13 (esp. v. 13) understand the prophecy” (Stein, 398-99).

v. 28 *one of the prophets* “‘One of the

prophets’ probably has Deut. 18:15-19 in mind. The parallel in Matt. 16:14 lists Jeremiah as a suggestion (cf. 2 Esd. 2:18). The parallel in Luke 9:19 agrees with the Markan listing. That Jesus was understood to be a prophet is clear from Mark 6:4; 14:65; Luke 7:16, 39; 13:33-34; 24:19” (Stein, 399).

v. 29 *you* “Jesus stressed ‘you’ when He asked this question. He wanted to know whom the disciples, in contrast to the multitudes, believed He was” (Thomas L. Constable, “Notes on Mark,” 2020 ed., 178, planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/mark.pdf). “In the question that Jesus asks his disciples, the ‘but’ (*de*) is contrastive and the ‘you’ (*hymeis*) is emphatic. In contrast to what people in general think, Jesus asks the opinion of his disciples, expecting a better answer” (Stein, 399).

v. 29 *Messiah* Cf., “You are the Christ” (ESV). “‘Christ’ is the English transliteration of the Greek *christos* that translates the Hebrew *masiah* meaning ‘anointed one.’ Originally this Hebrew term had a broad meaning and included anyone anointed by God, including priests, kings, and prophets. Later in the Old Testament it came to have the technical meaning of the divine Davidic king who would appear to deliver Israel and establish a worldwide kingdom (Ps. 110:1; Dan. 9:25-26). In Mark, Jesus rarely used this term Himself (cf. 9:41; 12:35; 13:21), and He never used it of Himself. Probably He avoided it because of its political connotations and the popular misunderstanding of it, but Jesus accepted the title when others applied it to Him (cf. 14:6-62; John 4:25-26)” (Constable, 178-79).

v. 30 *warned* “The predominant understanding concerning the coming of the messiah involved political and revolutionary hope of liberation from Roman rule (cf. Ps. Sol. 17-18; CD 19.10-11). Jesus needed to be careful not to stir up such false hopes (cf. John 6:15)” (Stein, 400). “At times Jesus has been so pressed by crowds that he has been forced to take unusual measures (such as teaching from a boat [4:11]) or simply to retire from public view (1:35; 6:31-32). If Jesus has gained such notoriety because of widespread belief that he is a prophet, what would happen if his messianic identity became common knowledge (as rightly asked by Gundry, 427)?” (Evans, 15).



APPLY THE TEXT

CENTRAL MESSAGE OF THE TEXT

Regardless of what others might think, believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the one sent by God to provide salvation for all and to rule over his everlasting kingdom.

CENTRAL MESSAGE FOR YOUR LIFE

(Rewrite the Central Message above to personally apply to your own life)



3 LIVING QUESTIONS

The “Living Questions” are simple questions we may ask of any text in order to apply the Bible to our life. Answer the questions below as personally as you can.

1. What does this passage teach me about God?

2. What does this passage teach me about myself?

3. What does this passage lead me to do?



FAMILY TALK

When I was young, I had a completely skewed view of who Jesus was. I thought he was a really great man who loved me unconditionally, if I worked hard enough to be good enough. Well, my friend, I could not have been more incorrect. I was misunderstanding the lessons I was learning and choosing to understand the Jesus that made sense to me. My little mind did not have the capacity to truly comprehend the grandeur of the Lord, and it definitely does not even still! However, over the years I have grown in my understanding of our almighty, kind, gracious and loving Savior. I think this is a lifelong process, and the Lord so kindly meets us in this to walk us through. We will never be able to fully understand who Jesus is because our minds simply do not have the capacity. The fun part of this is that it means we will never stop learning who our Savior is! There will never be a point where we will become bored or stagnant in our understanding, because there will always be something new to learn. On the good days and the bad, Jesus will be there and there will always be a lesson to learn from him. We must simply be open to listening when he speaks. So, ask yourself, who is Jesus to you? Have you taken time to think about this? It is a question that matters tremendously and is certainly not one you can leave to answer later. Who do you say that he is?

* This week's edition of Kids Scrolls is written by Madison Houston, Children's Ministry Intern

What Does The Bible Say?

Read Mark 8:7-30.

1. What question does Jesus ask his disciples in verse 27?
2. What is their response in verse 28?
3. Who do you say that Jesus is?

What Do You Think?

One day you will have to give an answer for who Jesus is to you. Could you do that today? Why or why not? If the answer is no, what is holding you back?

What Do You Do?

Make a list of 10 attributes of Jesus that stick out to you. Bring your list to the KidPix store to receive 2 tokens!

CORE COMPETENCY: Jesus Christ

I believe Jesus Christ is fully God/man and died for my sins.

MEMORY VERSE: Jeremiah 30:17

"Jesus answered, 'I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.'"

KidPIX COUPON

Earn 1 KidPIX Token by completing the CENTRALKids Bible Study on this page and another token by memorizing and reciting the memory verse for this week.

Questions: kids@wearecentral.org

- _____ I completed my Bible Study
- _____ I memorized this week's verse
- _____ I brought my Bible to church
- _____ I brought a friend



CHILD'S NAME

GRADE PARENT SIGNATURE

OUR CORE COMPETENCIES

CENTRAL BELIEFS

Authority of the Bible (2 Timothy 3:16-17)
I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Church (Ephesians 4:15-16)

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Eternity (John 14:1-4)

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

The Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9)

I believe the Holy Spirit convicts, calls, converts and changes me as a child of God.

Humanity (John 3:16)

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Identity in Christ (John 1:12)

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Jesus Christ (Hebrews 1:1-4)

I believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who became man, died for sinners and rose from the dead.

Life Purpose (Acts 20:24)

I believe I am a steward of God's resources and have been redeemed to participate in His Kingdom purposes for His glory.

Personal God (Psalm 121:1-2)

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Salvation by Grace (Ephesians 2:8-9)

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.



CENTRAL VIRTUES

Love (1 John 4:10-12)

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Joy (John 15:11)

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace (Philippians 4:6-7)

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself and others.

Patience (Proverbs 14:29)

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others

Faithfulness (Proverbs 3:3-4)

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Gentleness (Philippians 4:5)

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Self-Control (Titus 2:11-13)

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Grace (Colossians 3:13)

I demonstrate forgiveness, mercy and generosity to others, even when they have offended me.

Hope (1 Peter 1:3-5)

I have a growing anticipation of God's promises and my secure eternity with Him.

Humility (Philippians 2:3-4)

I choose to esteem others above myself.



CENTRAL PRACTICES

Bible Study (Hebrews 4:12)

I study the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Biblical Community (Acts 2:44-47)

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Compassion (Psalm 82:3-4)

I seek to serve the last, the least and the lost in my community.

Disciple-Making (2 Timothy 2:2)

I multiply godly beliefs, virtues and practices in others to encourage their spiritual growth in Christ.

Evangelism (Acts 1:8)

I share Jesus with others through personal proclamation and demonstration of the gospel.

Generosity (2 Corinthians 9:6-11)

I gladly give my resources to fulfill God's purposes.

Prayer (Psalm 66:16-20)

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-Mindedness (Matthew 6:33)

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts (Romans 12:4-6)

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Worship (Psalm 95:1-7)

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

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