



# THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK

Week 25: Mark 8:27-33

Until this point in the story no-one, including the disciples, really knew who Jesus was despite witnessing all of the healings, exorcisms and other miracles. In this week's passage we see a dramatic shift in Peter's belief as he realises and confesses Jesus to be the long awaited Messiah (the Christ).

## 1. At The Very Center Of Christianity Is The Claim That Jesus Is The King

- Read Mark 8:27-30

The Scriptures foretold about the King who would come to restore all things. The promises began in Genesis 3:15 and were developed all the way through the Old Testament. Having been oppressed for generations, the Jews were all waiting in hope for the Messiah to come and to free them from their political struggles once and for all. The disciples knew that Jesus was unique and special but they had not considered him to be the Messiah because he was not "kingly" in appearance or stature. But at this point, Peter suddenly realised that Jesus was in fact the Messiah, despite his expectations of a strong political figure. His sudden awareness was brought about by the revelation of God (Matthew 16:17).

- ❖ Q: Why did the disciples not realise that Jesus was the promised Messiah?
- ❖ Q: Why is it important for us to know that Peter only realised who Jesus really was when God revealed it to him?
- ❖ Q: What impact should this have on our lives?

## 2. At The Very Center Of Christianity Is The Claim That Jesus Is The King Who Had To Give Up His Crown To Go To The Cross

- Read Mark 8:31-32

Jesus then claimed to be the 'Son of Man', the Messiah. This alone would have shocked his disciples but he then went on to say that as the Messiah, he would need to *suffer*. This would have made no sense to them at all. In their minds he was coming to end all suffering, oppression and injustice and so hearing Jesus speak like this made Peter incensed. However, he was wrong. The Messiah was going to deal with all of these things, but not through political freedom. Instead he would achieve this by taking the suffering and sin of the world onto himself and dealing with it once and for all. Tim Keller explains that Jesus had to die in this way because it was a legal, personal and cosmic necessity:

- I. A Legal Necessity – Someone always pays when wrong is done. Either the wrong-doer or the victim pays the price. Jesus paid the price for our forgiveness. He has done it already. We either accept his payment for it, or we will continue to pay for our sin for the rest of our lives and into eternity.
- II. A Personal Necessity – We all need unconditional love, and yet we cannot give that to others perfectly. Only Jesus can give us the unconditional love that we really need. He demonstrated it on the cross by giving himself up completely, gaining absolutely nothing from us in return.
- III. A Cosmic Necessity – Jesus had to die and shed his blood because without it there can be no forgiveness of sin (Hebrews 9:22). The way he was killed demonstrated that true nature of our world, and the people in power who we pin all our hopes on. Jesus showed us through his death that the world will never be changed by sinful humanity but only by him. In dying himself, he took our great enemy (death) and took its hold and its sting from us, so that those of us in Christ will no longer face death as the ultimate threat. Realising this should radically change the way we view life. Jesus taught that we should give away power instead of holding onto it and that we should want to give up our rights and our very lives instead of trying to hold onto them (Matthew 16:25).

- ❖ Q: Why was Peter so incensed at the fact that as the Messiah Jesus would need to suffer?
- ❖ Q: Why did Jesus need to suffer? Why did he not just die of old age?
- ❖ Q: Do you really view Jesus' love for you as unconditional? Why is that such a hard concept for us to grasp?
- ❖ Q: How did Jesus' death deal with our death?
- ❖ Q: How should Jesus' suffering and death cause us to live our lives?



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### 3. At The Very Center Of Christianity Is A Bunch Of Messed Up People, Saved By Grace Who Set Their Minds On The Things Of God

- Read Mark 8:32-33

Peter did not understand why Jesus had to suffer and instead of continuing to believe what Jesus said, he chose to accuse Jesus of speaking foolishness. This accusation against Jesus was inspired by Satan and so Jesus rebuked Peter for doing that. However, Jesus did not reject Peter. It was for Peter's good that he be challenged and corrected him. This was also not Peter's only moment of unbelief, and yet Jesus did not give up on him. He continued to rebuke, correct and train him.

- ❖ Q: How does it challenge you in your own life to know that Peter, having just had the most profound revelation from God, was still able to listen to and follow Satan's temptations within the shortest space of time?
- ❖ Q: In what ways do we struggle with the same temptations that Peter did in this story?
- ❖ Q: Why is it encouraging knowing that Jesus rebukes sternly but loves unconditionally?

### 4. At The Very Center Of Christianity Is The Claim That Jesus Is The King Who Had To Go Give Up His Crown, But Who Is Now Seated On A Throne And Returning Soon

- Read Daniel 7:13-14

<sup>13</sup>“I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. <sup>14</sup>And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. <sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *The Holy Bible: English Standard Version*. (2001). (Da 7:13–14). Wheaton: Standard Bible Society.