

# Turn

Mark 8

February 4, 2018

## **DAY 1: The identity of Jesus**

1. In the middle of the book of Mark, the story of the life and ministry takes a sudden shift. We've seen His miracles, His teaching, His heart, and the divine character in human flesh. He taught and fed the masses, yet had personal ministry with some of the most downcast and outcast people of His time.

2. But now, the gospel story begins to narrow down toward the end of His life, and moves toward the cross.

3. In this week's passage He highlights two of the most important things He's said.

- a. "I am a king, but a king going to a cross; (His identity)
- b. If you want to follow Me, you've got to come to the cross too." (our new identity)

*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?"*

4. The identity of just who Jesus is crucial. Was He just a man, just a rabbi, just an example to follow? Was He the Messiah? Was He both human and divine?

*Mark 8:28 They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets."*

5. In Peter's response you can see the confusion of the people as to Jesus' identity.

*Mark 8:29 "But what about you?" he asked. "Who do you say I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ." <sup>30</sup> Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.*

6. "Christ" (v. 29) historically meant "anointed one." In the gentile culture it was used of the anointing of a king. In Jewish culture it was synonymous with "Messiah."

7. In this interchange, Peter technically came up with the correct answer, "Christ" but the meaning of his answer was as different as night and day. It was as wrong as wrong can be!

## **DAY 2: The certainty of Jesus mission—involving His suffering and death**

*Mark 8:31 He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again.*

### 1. “*The Son of Man must suffer*”

a. “Son of Man” was used in Daniel to describe someone “like a son of man” a divine messianic figure who comes with the angels to bring justice and righteousness to where injustice and wrong had flourished.

b. Jesus was identifying Himself as the Messiah.

c. The show stopper phrase though is that he “must suffer.” No Jewish leader at the time associated the Messiah coming with a Messiah that had to suffer. They had taken passages like Isaiah 43, 44, and 53 and did not attribute them to a Messiah. In their thinking it was preposterous that the Messiah would suffer. He was coming to fix what was wrong with the world.

d. “*Must suffer*” indicated that Jesus knew this was not only going to happen, but that it had been a part of God’s plan long before any humans existed!

### 2. Jesus said He “*must be killed...*”

3. If you had been following Jesus for three years, and knew Him to be the Messiah, how would you have reacted to this stunning verse—that he **MUST** suffer ... and **MUST** die?

*Mark 8:32 He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.*

4. Mark records that Jesus “spoke plainly” about this. There was no ambiguity, no confusion, no “what ifs” or “maybes” about His future.

5. What was Peter’s response to Jesus’ stunning words?

6. Peter also saw this as inconceivable. Would you have understood the import of Jesus’ words?

### **DAY 3: The paradox of Messiah's mission**

*Mark 8:33 But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. "Get behind me, Satan!" he said. "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men."*

1. "Rebuke" is the same word Jesus used when exorcising demons out of people.
  
2. What has Peter misunderstood?
  
  
  
3. What are we to understand about Jesus?
  
  
  
  
4. Jesus is the Messiah, but not the kind of Messiah that's in your head.
  
  
  
  
5. Everything seemed backward. Think about this:
  - a. How in the world can anyone overcome injustice by dying?
  
  - b. Who would start a two-thousand-year movement by dying?
  
  - c. Who could possibly deal with the human problem of sin by dying?
  
  - d. Who could possibly set what was wrong into right, not by ruling but by serving?
  
  - e. What kind of king would not wield kingly power but willingly lose it?
  
6. What strikes you most from today's devotional?

#### **DAY 4: The call to carry your cross**

*Mark 8:34 Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*

1. It's one thing for Jesus to go the cross, but here, He tells us that His followers must also take up their cross. What do you think that means?

*Mark 8:35 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.*

2. Here, He tells us we must lose our life if we want to find it. What does that mean?

3. Jesus went to a *physical* cross to give up His *physical* life, but in verses 34-35 He is using "cross" and "life" in a different way.

4. The Greeks had several words for "life." One word meant physical life. The word Jesus uses here is the Greek word, "psyche," which also is translated "life" but refers to our *personal* life, our psyche. He is speaking about our identity. In the following verses, He will use the word "soul" as a synonym for "psyche."

5. The world tantalizes us with all kinds of ways to "find ourselves." The pursuit of fulfillment "promises" a sense of lasting satisfaction. Instead, what often happens is some immediate satisfaction, but this begins to be elusive. Or, we crave more and more to generate the same sense of fulfillment we once found in whatever area of life we think will pay off for our fulfillment.

6. Instead of pursuing fulfillment, to what does Jesus point, in v. 35?

7. This is the paradox of being a Christian. If we make fulfillment our most important goal, we ensure that at some time, either sooner or later, we will make the startling discovery that what we thought would bring lasting fulfillment fizzled out. Conversely, when we dedicate our self to Jesus Christ, His priorities and service, when we die to immediate fulfillment, we make the startling discovery of a lasting fulfillment!

## **DAY 5: The paradox of the Christian life**

*Mark 8:36 What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?*

*<sup>37</sup> Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?*

1. The paradox of Christian living is stated slightly differently here. No matter how lucrative or glitzy the world may appear, to chase immediate fulfillment comes at a very severe cost. What do you think Jesus means by “...yet forfeit his soul?”

2. Instead of looking at the what the world offers as “treasure,” or “riches” or “fame” or “fulfillment” we would be better off to see them quite differently—perhaps as trinkets, or like the “prizes” that come out of the old bubble-gum dispensers, or like the stuffed animals at the kids’ game called, “The Claw.”

3. Why is this the case?

a. The “treasures” of this world are all temporal, while the soul is immortal.

b. The “satisfactions” of the soul are only temporary, fading, and have to be replaced by ever greater glitz and glamour.

*Mark 8:38 If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."*

4. Here, Jesus gives us a “pop test” of how much we REALLY value Him. What is the “test?”

*Mark 9:1 And he said to them, "I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God come with power."*

5. Jesus presents two fundamentally different approaches to life. They are mutually exclusive. Put into your own the paradox of the Christian life.