

The Greatest Confession

Mark 8:27-33

June 30, 2013

Introduction

We have come to a place in Mark where we are at the peak of the continental divide. In North Carolina, at the continental divide, the rain flows in either two ways: to the Atlantic Ocean or to the Gulf of Mexico. Here in Mark, we see this as well. From **chapter 1 to 8:26**, Mark records evidence that Jesus is the Son of God through Jesus' teachings and miracles and signs. All the evidence points to Him being the Son of God, the Messiah; however, no one has recognized Jesus as the Messiah or as the Son of God prior to Peter's confession. We see that the Father has revealed the Son

Mark 1:11 *Then a voice came from heaven, "You are My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."*

Even the demons recognize Him, yelling out His identity several times.

Mark 1:23-24 *Now there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit. And he cried out, ²⁴saying, "Let us alone! What have we to do with You, Jesus of Nazareth? Did You come to destroy us? I know who You are--the Holy One of God!"*

Mark 3:11 *And the unclean spirits, whenever they saw Him, fell down before Him and cried out, saying, "You are the Son of God."*

Mark 5:7 *And he cried out with a loud voice and said, "What have I to do with You, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I implore You by God that You do not torment me."*

However, no humans have confessed that Jesus is the Son of God or Messiah in the gospel of Mark, until two and a half years into Jesus' ministry. From **Mark 8:27** to the end of the chapter, the disciples have identified Jesus as the Son of God and Messiah and accepted the fact of who He is. Then Jesus reveals His plans to them.

The germ of the knowledge that Jesus is the Son of God started when John the Baptist proclaimed that Jesus is the Lamb of God to his disciples in **John 1**.

John 1:32-34 *And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him. ³³I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' ³⁴And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."*

Then

John 1:35-37 *Again, the next day, John stood with two of his disciples. ³⁶And looking at Jesus as He walked, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God!" ³⁷The two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus.*

One of the disciples is Andrew who introduces Peter to Jesus.

John 1:40-41 *One of the two who heard John speak, and followed Him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. ⁴¹He first found his own brother Simon, and said to him, "We have found the Messiah" (which is translated, the Christ).*

Then Phillip

John 1:45 *Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote--Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph."*

Then Nathanael

John 1:49 *Nathanael answered and said to Him, "Rabbi, You are the Son of God! You are the King of Israel!"*

Then after being with Jesus for some time, the disciples' eyes of the heart were finally opened to see that Jesus is the Son of God, and that takes place on the stormy lake.

Matthew 14:32-33 *And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. ³³Then those who were in the boat came and worshiped Him, saying, "Truly You are the Son of God."*

They had inkling that He was divine, but after that storm, they are convinced that He is divine. God has been working on the disciples, giving them understanding of who Jesus is and recognizing that Jesus is God. This is the main reason that the disciples turned their backs on Judaism because they recognized that only Jesus has the words of life and truth. This is the reason that when the Jewish leaders were increasingly hostile to Jesus, that they stuck with Jesus throughout the whole time. Then when Jesus asks the question of who He is, they finally understood that Jesus' office as the Messiah.

Mark 8:27-33 *Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?" ²⁸So they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." ²⁹He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ." ³⁰Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him. ³¹And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³²He spoke this word openly. And Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. ³³But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."*

I. First Question

- Now Jesus went out
 - They left from Bethsaida where Jesus healed the blind man
- Caesarea Philippi
 - 25 miles north of Bethsaida at foot of Mt. Hermon
 - Where last outpost of Israel was—near the city of Dan
 - Heavily pagan area—Pan grotto in cave near by
 - Mostly Gentile area; openly hostile to Scripture and to God
- First question

Note: Jesus has spent two and a half years with the disciples, being with them 24/7. They have seen thousands of miracles, heard countless teachings. They had enough revelation from Jesus to become believers. At the same time, Galilee had enough revelation to be condemned. They have no excuse because they saw the same things that the disciples saw and heard the same things that the disciples heard.

John 12:35-37 Then Jesus said to them, "A little while longer the light is with you. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you; he who walks in darkness does not know where he is going. ³⁶While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them. ³⁷But although He had done so many signs before them, they did not believe in Him.

- Normally rabbis do not ask questions...but disciples
- Luke adds that Jesus has finished praying and asks the disciples this question
- Reflection of the question that the disciples have been asking themselves

Mark 4:41 And they feared exceedingly, and said to one another, "Who can this be, that even the wind and the sea obey Him!"

- Who do men say that I am?

Luke 9:18 "Who do the crowds say that I am?"

- Crowd = *ochlos* (**och** as in clock and **los** as in loss; ock' – los)
- Luke uses this term as an unbelieving crowd
- This is also a banter between Jesus and the disciples. The gospels give us a summary of what they said.

- Answers to the first question
 - John the Baptist

Mark 6:14 Now King Herod heard of Him, for His name had become well known. And he said, "John the Baptist is risen from the dead, and therefore these powers are at work in him."

- Elijah

Malachi 4:5-6 Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord. ⁶And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse.

- Other prophets
- All in common—they all believed that Jesus COULD NOT be the Messiah
- To the Jews, the Messiah
 - Political ruler and military power
 - Conqueror of Rome and Destroyer of Israel's enemies
 - Blessing of Israel and Prosperity of Israel
 - All these above are interpretations of the OT prophecies of the Messiah
 - None of these expectations fit Jesus in His first coming
 - He certainly did not fit their expectation as a King

II. Second Question

- Most important question to ask and answer

Note: Everybody has tried to answer this question with their own ideas, but many have given the wrong answers—as the people have said about Jesus that the disciples have heard. Today we have this discussion about who is this "historical" Jesus. We must come to the fact as the

disciples came to the conclusion...the only correct conclusion, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

- Peter's confession

- You are the Christ
 - Second time thus far in gospel of Mark that "Christ" is mentioned

Mark 1:1 *The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.*

- *Christos*—anointed; Gk for Messiah
 - Jesus is His name and Christ is His title that defines His office (Prophet, Priest, and King)
 - **The** Christ—only One Messiah...the True Messiah
- Son of the Living God

Matthew 16:16 *Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

- Why did it take them so long to recognize Him?

- They struggled with the idea that Jesus was the Messiah because He didn't fit in the Jewish doctrine of the Messiah
- Even John the Baptist was confused
- For the longest time, they had their fears and doubts that Jesus is the Messiah
- But no longer—they do not doubt who He is anymore

John 6:68-69 *But Simon Peter answered Him, "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. ⁶⁹Also we have come to believe and know that You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."*

Note: This is prior to Peter's confession of faith. This takes place right after the feeding of the 5,000 and Jesus walking on water.

- However, His plans—they really struggled with what He says until after the resurrection

- The Father's revelation

- The disciples did not come to this knowledge on their own

Matthew 16:17 *Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven."*

1 Corinthians 12:3 *No one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.*

- Do not tell

- Strong warning
- Why? They only have ½ the message—the Person
- They are missing the other ½--God's plan

III. Two Rebukes

- Teach them

- This is the theme for the next several months
- He must suffer

- Examined and sentenced to death by His own people
- He must die
- He will rise again
- All this fulfillment of Scripture

Psalms 16:10 For You will not leave my soul in Sheol, nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption.

- He taught them plainly—no misunderstandings
- Peter's rebuke
 - Peter grabs Him and tells Him that He is not supposed to die
 - Peter is trying to tell/teach Jesus what the Messiah is supposed to do
- Jesus' rebuke
 - Rebukes Peter in front of the disciples
 - He is mad!
 - Peter is aligning himself with Satan by trying to prevent His death and suffering
 - Peter was euphoric one moment, then crushed the next
- The reality of suffering
 - Peter learned his lesson!
 - Satan's way = path of glory, power, and blessing without suffering
 - God's way = path of glory, power, and blessing through suffering

1 Peter 2:21 For to this you were called, because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that you should follow His steps:

1 Peter 5:10-11 And the God of all grace, who called you to His eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will Himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. ¹¹To Him be the power forever and ever. Amen.

- The good news—Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God
 - To the disciples—bad news—He is going to die
 - But the good news is that He will rise again

The glorious news—the gospel—is that Jesus died and rose again for the salvation of all who believe in Him. Do you believe that Jesus is the Son of the Living God? The Christ that is promised in Scripture?