



Where's the hub?

## You Are The Christ\_ Mark 8:29

### 1. Peter says Christ is the HUB.

- "Jesus" is the name of God's Son
- "Christ" is his title
- "Christ" is the *Greek rendering of the Hebrew title "Messiah"*
- "Christ" means "*Anointed One.*"

*Peter's identifying Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One meant the disciples believed that Jesus was the One Israel had been waiting for since the time of David—a superhuman leader who would overthrow Israel's enemies, regather God's earthly people from the four corners of the world, and make Jerusalem and Palestine the center of the world, establishing the perfect reign of God.*



### 2. "Where's the beef?" or What is a wheel without a hub?

- **Moralistic:** conformity to the rules of right conduct
- **Therapeutic:** pertaining to the treating or curing of disease
- **Deism:** The belief, based solely on reason, in a God who created the universe and then abandoned it, assuming no control over life, exerting no influence on natural phenomena, and giving no supernatural revelation.



### 3. What You Believe When You Have No Hub.

1. God created the world.
2. God wants people to be good, nice, and fair to each other.
3. The central goal of life is to be happy and to feel good about oneself.
4. God does not need to be particularly involved in one's life, except when needed to resolve a problem.
5. Good people go to heaven when they die.

## Monday, March 9<sup>th</sup> Read Mark 8:27-30

This is the “Great Confession of Peter” regarding who Jesus is. I love this scripture.

Most people do not object to the idea of a Messiah, you know, a deliverer, savior, provider, and protector. Most want a leader who is going to bring about a utopian society that will provide social justice and plenty for everyone. What people want is a Messiah who fits into the wants and passions and power structures of their world. People want their bellies full, their bodies clothed and housed, and their urges satisfied. They want the *good things* of this world. If a Messiah can give these, then people are ready and willing to accept the Messiah. Jesus deliberately set out to make sure that the disciples saw Him as God's Messiah and not man's Messiah. He had to make sure they understood God's way of salvation and utopia, that God was after victory over death and a life that lasted eternally, not just for seventy or so years. God's Messiah and salvation was not man's way of power and pleasure; it was not leaving the future to take care of.

In 8:27-30 Jesus was facing the end very, very soon and there was still much to teach the disciples. It was time for them to learn that He was building a church—an assembly of people who would be confessing Him to be the Messiah. The present passage is one of the most dramatic revelations ever made. It is also one of the most demanding questions ever asked. The answer given determines one's eternal destiny and requires a single answer: “You are the Christ.” The importance of the question and its confession is clearly seen by glancing quickly at the points of the passage.

1. [Jesus was in Caesarea Philippi \(v.27\).](#)
2. [The confession of men: He is a great man \(v.28\).](#)
3. [The confession of His disciples: He is the Christ \(v.29\).](#)
4. [The need: to learn about God's Messiah \(v.30\).](#)

Jesus left Bethsaida and travelled about the towns of Caesarea Philippi. So, what's the big deal with this town? Caesarea Philippi is a city that had a rich religious history. It had once been the center of Baal worship with at least fourteen temples in and around the city. It was believed to have within its borders the cavern in which the Greek god of nature, Pan, was born. In the beginning of its history the city was so identified with this god that it was named after the god, being called Panias. One of its most beautiful structures was the gleaming white marble temple built for the worship of Caesar. Herod the Great had built the temple in honor of Caesar when Caesar bestowed on him another country. But it was Herod's son Philip who adorned the temple with the magnificence for which it was known world-wide. It was also Philip who changed the name of the city from Panias to Caesarea, Caesar's town. He added his own name also, calling the city Caesarea Philippi.

The city proclaimed far and wide the worship of Caesar and of the gods of one's choice, that is, the worship of all except the One true and living God. It was against this dramatic yet terrible background that Jesus asked the pointed question, “But who do you say that I am?” (emphatic Greek translation). It was against this background of religion that Peter made his great discovery and confession: Jesus is the Christ, the real Messiah. As He was travelling along some road between the towns, He asked the supreme question of life—the question that determines our eternal fate.

## Tuesday, March 10<sup>th</sup> Read Mark 8:28

Many people shortchange Jesus. Many see Jesus only as a great man, a man who was highly esteemed and respected. A great guy. He was considered one of the greatest of men, but note a crucial point: these *professions* were not only untrue, they were dangerous. Why? They contained only half-truths, and people were deceived and misled by them.

**1. Some said Jesus was John the Baptist.** They professed Jesus to be a great spirit of righteousness, a spirit that was willing to be martyred for its faith. Herod and others thought this ([Matthew 14:1-2](#)). Upon hearing of Jesus' marvelous works, Herod fancied that either John had been revived or else his spirit indwelt the man Jesus.

The common people also saw some similarity between John and Jesus: both were doing a great work for God; both were divinely chosen and gifted by God; and both proclaimed the Kingdom of God and prepared men for it. Therefore, when some looked at Jesus and His ministry, they thought Jesus was not the Messiah Himself, but the promised forerunner of the Messiah ([Malachi 4:5](#)).

**2. Some said Jesus was Elijah.** They professed Jesus to be the greatest prophet and teacher of all time, for Elijah was so considered. Elijah was predicted to be the forerunner of the coming Messiah ([Malachi 4:5](#)). Even today the Jews expect Elijah to return before the Messiah. In the celebration of the Passover they always leave a chair vacant for him to occupy. Elijah had also been used by God to miraculously feed a widow woman and her son ([1 Kings 17:14](#)); therefore, the people connected Elijah's miracle and Jesus' feeding of the multitude.

**3. Some said Jesus was one of the prophets.** They professed Jesus to be a great prophet sent for their day and time. He was thought to be one of the great prophets brought back to life or one in whom the spirit of a great prophet dwelt (cp. [Deut. 18:15, 18](#)).

Let's face it: The same false confessions about Christ exist in every generation.

- 1) He was only a great man of righteousness who was martyred for His great faith. As such He leaves us a great example of how to live and stand up for what we believe.
- 2) He was one of the greatest teachers and prophets of all time.
- 3) He was only a great man who revealed some very important things to us about God and religion. As such He can make a significant contribution to every man in his search for God.
- 4) He was only a great man, a prophet sent to the people (Jews) of His day from whom we can learn by studying His life.

**Mark 6:3**<sup>3</sup> *Isn't this the carpenter? Isn't this Mary's son and the brother of James, Joseph, Judas and Simon? Aren't his sisters here with us?" And they took offense at him.*

**John 1:10-11**<sup>10</sup> *He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. <sup>11</sup> He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him.*

**John 8:19**<sup>19</sup> *Then they asked him, "Where is your father?" "You do not know me or my Father," Jesus replied. "If you knew me, you would know my Father also."*

**Wednesday, March 11<sup>th</sup>** *Read Mark 8:29; Matt. 1:24*

The confession of the disciples was that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah. Note three facts that are stressed.

**1. The word "say"** (*eperōtaō*) means to ask, to question. It is in the imperfect tense which means that Jesus kept on asking them. The question, "Whom say ye that I am?" was extremely critical. The answer required concentrated thought and correct belief and genuine confession.

**2. The question asked is emphatic** in the Greek (in King James) : "But ye, whom do ye say that I am?" The answer to the question is critical; it is all important. It determines a person's destiny, his eternal destiny.

**3. The answer given was immediate and terse:** "Thou art the Christ," that is, the promised Messiah, the Son of the living God (cp. [Matthew 16:16](#) for the full confession. Remember Mark was Peter's disciple, and what Mark is writing shows the humility of Peter. He usually de-emphasizes the facts surrounding Peter.)

The confession is momentous, arising from a personal conviction. It is both the confession that saves the soul and the confession that lays the foundation for the church. The very life and survival of a man's soul and of the church as a whole rest upon this simple, yet profound conviction.

1. The Christ: the Messiah; the anointed One of God.
2. The Son of God: of the same being, the same substance; One with the Father.
3. Living: the source and being of life; possessing the source, energy, and power of life within Himself Jesus is the anointed One: Jesus' birth was one of the most convulsive and disturbing events in all history (cp. [Luke 2:1-24](#)).

**1. There was Mary's pregnancy**—the idea of her being an unwed mother ([Matthew 1:18](#); [Luke 1:26f](#)). Who of that day would ever believe her story? Required was a willingness to be available to God regardless of embarrassment and the opinions of family, friends, and neighbors.

**2. There was Joseph's discovery of Mary's pregnancy** ([Matthew 1:19](#)). The shock of Mary's broken trust and of personal embarrassment was more than Joseph could bear ([Matthew 1:20](#)). Required was a willingness to forget self completely.

**3. There was the child, the Son of God Himself**, being born in a smelly manger ([Matthew 1:25](#); [Luke 2:1f](#)). Required was a willingness to be humble.

**4. There was the family having to be uprooted** and moved to a foreign nation, Egypt ([Matthew 2:13f](#)). Required was a willingness to obey at any cost.

**5. There was the slaughter of all children** under two years of age ([Matthew 2:16f](#)). The heavy weight of feeling some responsibility was bound to attack Joseph and Mary. Required was a willingness on their part to bear anything.

**6. There was the visit of the wise men** showing that the foreign relationships of nations were affected ([Matthew 2:1f](#)). Required was a willingness to bear the pressure of responsibility and the demands of being in the limelight.

**7. There was the uproar of Herod's household** traumatically affecting the lives of both Joseph and Mary ([Matthew 2:7-8, 15-16, 22](#)). Required was a willingness to stand against all odds.

The disciples had a great need to learn about *God's Messiah*. Note: Jesus instructed the disciples not to share their confession with anyone else—not now. Why? Because they were just beginning to learn what God's idea of the Messiah really meant. They had to know the truth and be accurate in their preaching of the truth before they began to share. They could do irreparable harm by spreading a false concept of the Messiah. Jesus had to protect them against this error.

Confession is just the beginning of our spiritual journey. There is much to study and learn about Christ after coming to know Him personally. Note two things.

- 1) **We must be accurate in what we study.** We must make sure we learn the truth and not error .

2) **We must be accurate in what we share**, making certain that we share the truth. This necessitates time to study and grow before we begin sharing.

**Thursday, March 12<sup>th</sup>** *Read Mark 8:29-30*

What did Peter do in calling Jesus the Christ? To begin with, he did not give Jesus another name (that is, Jesus is not a first name and Christ a second name). "Jesus" is the name of God's Son, and "Christ" is his title. "Christ" is the Greek rendering of the Hebrew title "Messiah" and means "*Anointed One*." Peter's identifying Jesus as the Christ, the Messiah, the Anointed One meant the disciples believed that Jesus was the One Israel had been waiting for since the time of David—a superhuman leader who would overthrow Israel's enemies, regather God's earthly people from the four corners of the world, and make Jerusalem and Palestine the center of the world, establishing the perfect reign of God. Peter said it, but they all believed it, and had believed it for some time. They all nodded and murmured assent. Some, such as Simon the Zealot and Judas, hung everything on the political hopes this Messiah-belief inspired.

Seeing his disciples' eager assent, "Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him" ([Mark 8:30](#)). The warning was strong, almost a rebuke, because Jesus knew of the powerful forces which were aligning against him, and he did not want to force a confrontation—not yet. Having warned the disciples, Jesus set about instructing them, and in doing so taught them something which in their wildest imaginations they had never dreamed: namely, *he was to be a suffering Messiah*.

In speaking "plainly," he concealed nothing. He laid it all out. This was a detailed outline of the end. He intimately described his coming sufferings. His mention of "the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law" was an explicit reference to the three groups in the Sanhedrin who would later officially examine him, and would reject him like a counterfeit coin. Even his resurrection was mentioned, though it would remain incomprehensible to the disciples until after the glorious fact. What a nonsensical revelation it was to them at the time!

They were appalled, but they all kept their silence—all except one: "Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him" ([Mark 8:32b](#)). The language here suggests that Peter did this with an air of protective superiority, as if he may have put his arm around Jesus and with a stage whisper said, "Come here, Jesus. Of course I believe you are the Messiah, but you've got your information wrong! You've got to stop this or you'll lose all your credibility."

Now it was the Savior who was revulsed! As he spun to face Peter, he saw that the other disciples were approving of what Peter was saying. His explosive rebuke was for them as well. "Out of my sight, Satan! . . . You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men" ([Mark 8:33](#)). These were the harshest words Jesus ever spoke to a devoted, well-meaning heart!

It is true that soul-saving salvation could only come through a suffering Messiah. There was no other way. Why were the disciples rejecting Jesus as a suffering Messiah? Because the idea was completely out of sync with human reasoning. Who would ever design a method of saving the world that would include disaster, despair, and death? No one! That is why Israel misinterpreted its own Scriptures which told of the coming *suffering Messiah*. Natural reason says a Savior must come with position and power! But Jesus said if you think that way, "You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men" ([Mark 8:33b](#)).

If we are to confess Christ, we must embrace a suffering Messiah, a God no one would ever have thought of. Taking our suffering Savior into our heart and loving him may come far easier now, this side of the Cross, after his death and resurrection, but there is something more that is required. We must embrace his example as a model for living, and this is not so easy.

**Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>** *Read Mark 8:34-38*

Confessing Christ means we must follow him to crucifixion. "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'" ([Mark 8:34](#)). The Cross is for all who follow Christ. Christ leads the procession carrying his cross, and we, his followers, tread in his steps, bearing our own crosses. We march to death.

What are our crosses? They are not simply trials or hardships. It is typical to think of a nutty boss or an unfair teacher or a bossy mother-in-law as our "cross." But they are not. Neither can we properly call an illness or a handicap a cross. A cross comes from specifically walking in Christ's steps, embracing his life. It comes from bearing disdain because we are embracing the narrow way of the Cross—that Jesus is "the way and the truth and the life" ([John 14:6](#)). It comes from living out the business and sexual ethics of Christ in the marketplace and world. It comes from embracing weakness instead of power. It comes from extending oneself in difficult circumstances for the sake of the gospel.

Our crosses come from and are proportionate to our dedication to Christ. Difficulties are not an indication of cross-bearing; difficulties *for Christ's sake* are. We need to ask ourselves if we have any difficulties because we are following close after Christ.

There is a second personal effect of confessing Christ: embracing the paradox of the Cross. Jesus said further: "For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it" ([Mark 8:35](#)).

Jesus said, "Losers are keepers." This is a fundamental law of life. No one is excepted, in time or eternity. Nothing could be more opposed to the spirit of our age. The world today says, Look out for *Numero Uno*. Save yourself. Love yourself. Pamper yourself. Live for yourself." What do you listen to?