

Media and Graphics Notes

Word of Witness Video?	Yes
Sermon Starter Video?	Yes
Sermon Notes?	There are no sermon notes on screen
Other Notes	None

Key Questions, Metadata and Outline

What is this sermon about?

This sermon is about Jesus' question for Peter - Who do you say that I am?

Why is this sermon important?

This sermon is important because it is a question we will all answer at some time in our lives.

What is the context of this sermon?

This sermon is preached the day after I drove back early from the confirmation trip to Kansas City to be in worship on Sunday. This sermon and series were developed using *The Renegade Gospel*¹ by Mike Slaughter as a guide.

What are the next action steps?

Answer Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am?"

What is the good news (bottom line)?

The good news is that God sent Jesus to show us the way, set the example and help us live as part of God's kingdom.

Metadata

1. Topic(s)
 1. Changing Lives
 2. Making Disciples
2. Sermon Books of the Bible
 1. Luke
3. Series
 1. Renegade Gospel



¹ Mike Slaughter, *Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014)

4th Sunday in Lent
Renegade Gospel - The Most Important Question
You Will Ever Have to Answer
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado
Text Online at <http://j.mp/17ES2E3>

March 15, 2015
Luke 9:18-22
Preaching Target Word Count: 1,964
Video is not available online

4. Speaker
 1. Andrew Conard
5. Tags
 1. renegade, gospel, disciple, kingdom, question, Jesus, identity.

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Table of Contents

Table of Contents	3
Luke 9:18-22, CEB	5
Response to Scripture	
Introduction	5
Sermon Starter Video	
Series Review	
Sermon Notes and Scripture Study	
Opening	6
Prayer	
Story - Important Questions	
Transition	
Rabbi Jesus	6
Jewish Education	
Phase 1 - Memorize the Torah	
Phase Two - Memorize the Hebrew Scripture	
Phase Three - Become a Rabbi's Disciple	
Examination	
Covered in the dust of your Rabbi	
Transition	
Story: Chosen for Something Unexpected	
Transition	
The Most Important Question	8
Crowds	
Peter's Confession	
Christ / Messiah - Anointed One	
Sent from God	
The Trilemma of C.S. Lewis	9
Liar	

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Lunatic

Lord

Transition

A Whole Life Commitment **10**

Jesus Paints a Picture of God

Parables of Luke 15

Lost Sheep

Lost Coin

Lost Son

Following Jesus **10**

Conclusion **11**

Good News

Call to Action

Invitation

Closing Prayer

Luke 9:18-22, CEB

18 Once when Jesus was praying by himself, the disciples joined him, and he asked them, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” 19 They answered, “John the Baptist, others Elijah, and still others that one of the ancient prophets has come back to life.” 20 He asked them, “And what about you? Who do you say that I am?” Peter answered, “The Christ sent from God.” 21 Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell this to anyone. 22 He said, “The Human One must suffer many things and be rejected—by the elders, chief priests, and the legal experts—and be killed and be raised on the third day.”

Response to Scripture

One: The Word of God for the People of God.
All: **Thanks be to God!**

Introduction

Sermon Starter Video

Play sermon starter video.

*** Start Sermon Timer ***

Series Review

Jesus didn't come to start a religion. The rebel Jesus came with a renegade gospel to start a revolution. Join First United Methodist Church in worship as we discover Jesus all over again.

Sermon Notes and Scripture Study

I invite you to open your bulletin to a place where you can take notes during the message today. Today, I hope that you will hear:

- Something new or find new questions
- Perspective on your life or something in your life that gives additional meaning to the message today.
- Guidance about how to live as a disciple of Jesus.

I invite you to write down some of the things that you hear in the sermon today and take your bulletin home as a tool to grow in your faith outside of worship. You can reflect on what you heard today, pray for people of our congregation and read scripture to prepare for worship next week.

Opening

Prayer

Will you pray with me? O God, use these words to speak good news so that as individuals and as a congregation we will fear nothing but sin, desire nothing but you and live as part of your kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

Story - Important Questions

Passport Security -

Marriage - documentation for a name change

Identification - Crime lineup

All of these are questions of identity.

The most important question you will ever have to answer is Jesus' question for Peter in the scripture for today: "And what about you? Who do you say that I am?"²

Transition

Let me remind you of the context of this question

Rabbi Jesus

"When Jesus asked his disciples this crucial question, he had already been traveling with them, daily in their presence, for approximately 18 months.

The title "rabbi" was used to describe Jesus multiple times in the New Testament. Being a rabbi in Jesus' time was a big deal. To Jewish boys, being accepted by a rabbi as his disciple represented the pinnacle of success. It was the final step in a series of education steps for Jews

Jewish Education

Phase 1 - Memorize the Torah

Most Jewish boys and girls, around the age of six, would go to school for the first time to learn the Torah. It was probably held in the local synagogue and taught by a local rabbi or torah teacher.

This first phase of education lasted until the child was about 10 years old. In this phase of education, most children would memorize the Torah and by the age of 10 have the Torah by heart—every word.

By the time they were done with this phase, most children were learning the family trade, how to manage a household or something similar. The best of the best would continue their education to the next level.

² Luke 9:20, CEB.

Phase Two - Memorize the Hebrew Scripture

In this phase, the best of the best, would memorize the remainder of the Hebrew scripture.

Genesis through Malachi. Memorized.

By the time they were done with this phase, 14 or 15 years old, most children were learning the family trade, apprenticing with their parents or building a household.

The best of the best of the best would continue on to the next level of education.

Phase Three - Become a Rabbi's Disciple

They would go to a rabbi and apply that rabbi to become one of that rabbi's disciple.

Examination

So, the process went like this: You would go to a rabbi and say, "Rabbi, I would like to become one of your disciples."

The rabbi would then grill you. He would ask questions about Torah, the prophets, about the oral tradition. The rabbi wants to know,

"Can this kid, sit in front of me?

Can this kid do what I do?

Can this kid spread my teaching?

Does this kid have what it takes?

The rabbi would fire off all these questions and if the rabbi thought "This kid is good. This kid loves God and knows the Torah, but isn't the best of the best of the best." The rabbi might say, "You obviously love God and you know the Torah, but you don't have what it takes to become one of my disciples. Go and continue learning your family trade."

If the rabbi thinks, this kid has got it.

I think this kid could do what I do.

The rabbi would say to the kid, "Come, follow me."

Covered in the dust of your Rabbi

So, as a 14 or 15 year old kid, you would leave your family, your friends, your synagogue, your village. You would devote your entire life to being like your rabbi.

Disciples followed their rabbis very closely, wanting to soak in every possible moment of learning and wisdom. As author Lois Tverberg has noted, disciples were urged to be "covered in the dust of your Rabbi." In other words, they were to follow their rabbi so closely that the dust kicked up by his feet as he walked along the road or path would coat their cloak and hair.

Jesus was their rabbi, so where Jesus journeyed, the disciples journeyed.

Where Jesus ate, the disciples ate.

Wherever and whenever Jesus slept, they slept.

Transition

Jesus' disciples, many common men and laborers, must have been particularly surprised and delighted to have been chosen.

Story: Chosen for Something Unexpected

Robot / Lead Role

Transition

The disciples were unexpectedly chosen for an honored position. They had been following Jesus for a year and a half. Then he asks them the most important question you will ever have to answer "And what about you? Who do you say that I am?"³

The Most Important Question

Through these months with Jesus, the disciples had witnessed him performing miracles and had experienced this power working through them as they themselves performed extraordinary feats. Yet, the disciples were still accountable for making a decision about Jesus' identity."⁴

The passage of scripture today is known as the confession of Peter. It is a definitive statement about Jesus' identity a turning point in the gospel stories.

Crowds

John the Baptist
Elijah
One of the Ancient Prophets

Peter's Confession

.....
20 He asked them, "And what about you? Who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "The Christ sent from God."
.....

Christ / Messiah - Anointed One

Chosen and promised
Who they have been waiting for

Sent from God

God's son

³ Luke 9:20, CEB.

⁴ Mike Slaughter, *Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014), 62-3.

The Trilemma of C.S. Lewis

C.S. Lewis, author of ... *The Chronicles of Narnia*, was an atheist until his friend J. R. R. Tolkien, author of *Lord of the Rings*, led him to Jesus. After his conversion to Christ, Lewis went on to write one of the classic Christian apologetics texts—*Mere Christianity*—in which he addressed the issue of Jesus’ divinity in this way:

A man who was merely a man and said the sort of things Jesus said would not be a great moral teacher. He would either be a lunatic—on a level with a man who says he is a poached egg—or else he would be the Devil of Hell. You must make your choice. Either this man was, and is, the Son of God; or else a madman or something worse.

In other words, Lewis said we have only three choices.

Liar

The first choice is that Jesus was a liar, which does not match the high moral integrity of Jesus’ teachings or his way of life. When Jesus asked some of his religious detractors in John 8:46, “Can any of you prove me guilty of sin?” the question was met with silence.”⁵

Lunatic

During my time as a preacher, I have visited people in the psychiatric units of hospitals. There are people who have a medical diagnosis which indicates they are not in their right mind. “Their observable character was in no way consistent with the character demonstrated in Jesus’ life.

Lord

The third and final choices is that Jesus was who he claimed to be: Lord. This argument [that Christ is who he says he is] came to be known as Lewis’s trilemma. As Lewis put it, Jesus is a liar, lunatic or Lord. He left little room for any other conclusion to be drawn.”⁶

Transition

“Jesus asked them, “And what about you? Who do you say that I am?”
Peter answered, “The Christ sent from God.”⁷

⁵ Mike Slaughter, *Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014), 59.

⁶ Mike Slaughter, *Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014), 63.

⁷ Luke 9:20, CEB.

A Whole Life Commitment

“Regardless of how we reach our response to Jesus’ key question, much more is required than simply answering “The Christ sent from God.” Responding effectively to that question requires a whole life commitment. It means acknowledging and fully embracing what Jesus was as a man and who he is as divine God.

Jesus Paints a Picture of God

Jesus is the best picture I could ever imagine of a God I want to follow. In human form, Jesus demonstrated that God is not an unconcerned, disembodied entity who is emotionally detached from our pain and suffering with us. Jesus gives flesh and reality to a God who cares, loves us deeply, and longs to win us at all costs, even to the point of death on the cross. ...

Parables of Luke 15

The parables in Luke 15 further reveal God’s heart.

Lost Sheep

Jesus first described God as a shepherd who spends hours combing the countryside for one lost sheep while ninety-nine others are safely pastured at home—a shepherd who then excitedly throws a party to celebrate once the lone lost sheep is found.

Lost Coin

Then God is a woman who has lost a coin and will not rest, laboring and searching unceasingly until the lost has been retrieved; once again there’s a party.

Lost Son

Finally Jesus told perhaps the greatest parable of all: a father welcomes with open arms a foolish and lost son (often called the prodigal son or wayward son); then once again, throws a party.

You have to love a God who is always a party in honor of someone who has done nothing to merit it. Hearing those parables, I can believe in a God who looks and sounds like Jesus.”⁸

Following Jesus

Right after Jesus asked the key question “Who do you say that I am?” and Peter responded, “The Christ sent from God,” Jesus invites them to “die to self and rise to new life in Christ each day after accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. ...

⁸ Mike Slaughter, *Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014), 69-70.

The key here is each day. A disciple must die to self and rise to new life in Christ each day after accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

Jesus repeats his first and most persistent call to his disciples: "Follow me."

Follow is a verb; *following* means we cannot remain stationary.

When I confess that Jesus Christ is the Messiah, the Son of God, I commit to follow Jesus in a lifestyle of sacrificial service, walking in the dust of my Rabbi.

Whatever my Rabbi values, I value.

Whatever my Rabbi thinks about God, I think about God.

Whatever my Rabbi thinks about people, I think about people.

Whatever my Rabbi believes about wealth, I believe about wealth.

Whatever my Rabbi believes about the poor, I believe about the poor.

Whatever my Rabbi believes about creation, I believe about creation.

I act like my Rabbi, talk like my Rabbi, love like my Rabbi and give my life away for my Rabbi's mission.

Conclusion

Good News

The good news is that God sent Jesus to show us the way, set the example and help us live as part of God's kingdom.

Call to Action

Each of us will answer Jesus' question - "Who do you say that I am?"

Even postponing, ignoring or trying not to answer is an answer.

So what's yours?

Invitation

"Who do you say that I am?"

Closing Prayer

[Text here]

Amen.

	8:30 AM	11:00 AM
Sermon Time		