

### Media and Graphics Notes

<b>Sermon Starter Video?</b>	Yes
<b>Sermon Notes?</b>	Yes
<b>Other Notes</b>	

## Key Questions

### ***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 was created with an outline from the sermon I preached on March 15, 2015 on a similar text from Luke 9:18-22.

### ***What are the next action steps?***

Act like Jesus,  
talk like Jesus,  
love like Jesus and  
give your life away for Jesus' mission.

### ***What is the good news (bottom line)?***

The good news is that following Jesus' leads to life.



## Metadata

### **Topic(s)**

1. Change Lives

### **Sermon Books of the Bible**

1. Mark

4th Sunday in Lent  
Mark - Clarity, Christ and the Cross  
First United Methodist Church of El Dorado  
Text Online at <http://j.mp/1SzbA26>

March 6, 2016  
Mark 8:22-9:1  
Preaching Target Word Count: 2,142  
Audio Online at <http://j.mp/1nsdJPE>

## Tags

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<b>Mark 8:22-9:1, CEB</b>	<b>5</b>
Response to Scripture	5
<b>Introduction</b>	<b>6</b>
Sermon Starter Video	6
Mark: Eyewitness to the Gospel	6
Sermon Notes and Scripture Study	6
Take Notes	
God Speaking	
Tool for Spiritual Growth	
Prayer	6
<b>Who are you voting for?</b>	<b>7</b>
2016 Kansas Caucus	7
Jesus asks, Who do you say that I am?	7
Transition	
<b>The Most Important Question</b>	<b>7</b>
Context	7
Peter's Confession	8
Christ / Messiah - Anointed One	
The Trilemma of C.S. Lewis	8
Liar	
Lunatic	
Lord	
Transition	
<b>A Whole Life Commitment</b>	<b>9</b>
Jesus Paints a Picture of God	9
Stories of Mark	9
Parable of the Soils	
Parable of the Mustard Seed	
Jesus Heals	
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>10</b>

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Good News	10
Call to Action	10
Invitation	11
Closing Prayer	11

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## Mark 8:22-9:1, CEB

Jesus and his disciples came to Bethsaida. Some people brought a blind man to Jesus and begged him to touch and heal him. Taking the blind man's hand, Jesus led him out of the village. After spitting on his eyes and laying his hands on the man, he asked him, "Do you see anything?"

The man looked up and said, "I see people. They look like trees, only they are walking around."

Then Jesus placed his hands on the man's eyes again. He looked with his eyes wide open, his sight was restored, and he could see everything clearly. Then Jesus sent him home, saying, "Don't go into the village!"

Jesus and his disciples went into the villages near Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?"

They told him, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and still others one of the prophets."

He asked them, "And what about you? Who do you say that I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Christ." Jesus ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then Jesus began to teach his disciples: "The Human One must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and the legal experts, and be killed, and then, after three days, rise from the dead." He said this plainly. But Peter took hold of Jesus and, scolding him, began to correct him. Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, then sternly corrected Peter: "Get behind me, Satan. You are not thinking God's thoughts but human thoughts."

After calling the crowd together with his disciples, Jesus said to them, "All who want to come after me must say no to themselves, take up their cross, and follow me. All who want to save their lives will lose them. But all who lose their lives because of me and because of the good news will save them. Why would people gain the whole world but lose their lives? What will people give in exchange for their lives? Whoever is ashamed of me and my words in this unfaithful and sinful generation, the Human One will be ashamed of that person when he comes in the Father's glory with the holy angels."

Jesus continued, "I assure you that some standing here won't die before they see God's kingdom arrive in power."

### 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.](#)

### Mark: Eyewitness to the Gospel

We are in the middle of a series examining the gospel according to Mark. We are reading through the entire text as a congregation as we journey together to Easter. The gospel according to Mark is an interesting text. Most scholars would agree that it is the oldest of the four gospels. It is the shortest of the four gospels. It is basically like a year book. It is not a biography in the same way that we would think about a biography where it is linear in development and chronological – you start as a kid and you work your way up.

Mark is much more like a high school yearbook. There is a bunch of snapshots that seem random, but as you look at them enough you will form in your mind a composite of what the culture of that high school is all about. This is how it is with Mark. There is a snapshot of Jesus doing this, a snapshot of Jesus doing that. He's over here, he's over there...

Snapshot, snapshot, snapshot...

As you read all of them in their totality, you will come up with a composite with what Jesus is all about. It is a wonderful text.

### Sermon Notes and Scripture Study

#### *Take Notes*

I invite you to open your bulletin to a place where you can take notes during the message today.

#### *God Speaking*

I pray that you will hear God speaking to you sometime during the service today. Listen for God's word for you – something that helps you live as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Whenever you hear it, write it down.

#### *Tool for Spiritual Growth*

Then, take this bulletin home with you so that you can grow in your faith outside of worship by reflecting on what you heard today, praying for others connected with our community and reading scripture.

#### **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.

## Who are you voting for?

### 2016 Kansas Caucus

Cruz  
Kasich  
Rubio  
Trump

Clinton  
Sanders

Yesterday, we had the opportunity to caucus for the best candidate to become President of the United States. The people of Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine and Nebraska all made selections.

One of the key questions in this and any election is,  
Who is this person?  
What do they stand for?  
What do we know about them that indicates what the future may hold?

### Jesus asks, Who do you say that I am?

We find this same question asked in the scripture for today.  
Jesus asks his disciples “And what about you? Who do you say that I am?”<sup>1</sup>  
The disciples don’t ask Jesus.  
Jesus asks his disciples.

The question is flipped and it becomes much more personal.

### *Transition*

Let me remind you of the context of this question...

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## The Most Important Question

### Context

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

Wherever Jesus went, the disciples went.  
Where Jesus ate, the disciples ate.  
Wherever and whenever Jesus slept, they slept.

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<sup>1</sup> Mark 8:29, CEB.

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."<sup>2</sup>

## **Peter's Confession**

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. We find this story in Mark 8:27-29:

Jesus and his disciples went into the villages near Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?"

They told him, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, and still others one of the prophets."

He asked them, "And what about you? Who do you say that I am?"

Peter answered, "You are the Christ."

## **Christ / Messiah - Anointed One**

The Christ is the one that is chosen.

This is the one that was promised long ago.

This is the one that they have been waiting for.

## **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."<sup>3</sup>

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."<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Mike Slaughter, *Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014), 62-3.

<sup>3</sup> Wikipedia contributors, "Lewis's trilemma," Wikipedia, The Free Encyclopedia, [https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Lewis%27s\\_trilemma&oldid=707097647](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Lewis%27s_trilemma&oldid=707097647) (accessed March 5, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> Mike Slaughter, *Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014), 59.



### ***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."<sup>5</sup>

### ***Transition***

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

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## **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. ...<sup>6</sup>

### **Stories of Mark**

The stories in Mark reveal God's heart.

#### ***Parable of the Soils***

You remember the parable of the soils in which the seed of the word of God is spread far and wide - no determination of the goodness of the soil is made before the seed is sown.

God calls us even before we are aware of it.

God's love is true for every person, whether or not they are ready for it.

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<sup>5</sup> Mike Slaughter, *Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014), 63.

<sup>6</sup> Mike Slaughter, *Renegade Gospel: The Rebel Jesus* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2014), 69-70.

### ***Parable of the Mustard Seed***

Jesus describes God's kingdom in Mark 4:30-32

He continued, "What's a good image for God's kingdom? What parable can I use to explain it? Consider a mustard seed. When scattered on the ground, it's the smallest of all the seeds on the earth; but when it's planted, it grows and becomes the largest of all vegetable plants. It produces such large branches that the birds in the sky are able to nest in its shade."<sup>7</sup>

God takes the smallest things and they bear great fruit.

God works through even the most unlikely people.

### ***Jesus Heals***

Jesus heals a man possessed by a demon, a woman who has been bleeding for twelve years, brings a girl back to life and heals the daughter of an immigrant.

God cares when we are broken.

God works for wholeness, healing and life.

This is a God I can believe in.

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## **Conclusion**

### **Good News**

The good news is that following Jesus' leads to life.

### **Call to Action**

When we confess that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, we commit to follow Jesus in a lifestyle of sacrificial service.

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

We cannot remain still.

Whatever Jesus values, I value.

Whatever Jesus thinks about God, I think about God.

Whatever Jesus thinks about people, I think about people.

Whatever Jesus believes about wealth, I believe about wealth.

Whatever Jesus believes about the poor, I believe about the poor.

Whatever Jesus believes about creation, I believe about creation.

Act like Jesus,

talk like Jesus,

love like Jesus and

give your life away for Jesus' mission.

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<sup>7</sup> Mark 3:40-32, CEB.

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## **Invitation**

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?

"Who do you say that I am?"

## **Closing Prayer**