

If You Know Who He Is . . .  
Mark 8:27 - 9:1

## I. Getting the Answer Right

### A. Questions

1. There are a lot of questions floating around in people's minds these days.
  - a. Questions like:
    - (1) Should I get COVID vaccine or not?
    - (2) Is police reform really the answer to societal problems?
    - (3) Do some lives matter more than others at this moment in time?
    - (4) Is it true that people are just born that way?
  - b. There is nothing wrong with asking these questions,
    - (1) You may face something of a backlash if you ask them aloud.
    - (2) Still, nothing wrong with asking questions and seeking wisdom,
      - (a) nothing wrong with pursuing God and His truth in an age where false assumptions often prevail
      - (b) and deceit is the Devil's goal.
    - (3) **Current cultural questions are not insignificant for our time and place in history.**
    - (4) But, let us keep our questions in perspective.
2. **As important as these questions and their answers are for our time and place, they do not carry the weight of a question with eternal implications!**

### B. The Importance of Jesus' Question

1. Jesus presents His hand-picked disciples a question of eternal significance.
  - a. It is not the question of how the world around them perceives Jesus.
  - b. It is the question about their own, personal understanding of His true identity, "Who do you say that I am?"
    - (1) This is the question He has been leading them to all along
    - (2) This has been the goal of every teaching, every healing, every miracle, to bring them to this question and the right answer with its eternal implications
  - c. If we are going to stand against the onslaught of a sin-corrupted, devil-deceived, self-deluded world;
    - (1) If we are going to gain eternal joy in the presence of God and of the Lamb,
    - (2) then **we must get right the answer to the question Jesus asks: "Who do you say that I am?"**
2. The Danger of Getting the Answer Wrong
  - a. In **2 Thessalonians 2:3**,
    - (1) Paul writes of the time at the end of the age when Jesus

comes and gathers His true church to Himself.

(2) He writes, ***“Let no one deceive you in any way. For that day will not come, unless the rebellion comes first, and the man of lawlessness is revealed.”***

(3) Focus with me for a moment on that word “rebellion.”

(a) There must come a rebellion before Jesus returns.

(b) The word “rebellion” is the Greek word ***apostasias*** from which we get our English word, *apostasy*.

(c) The word indicates a complete **falling away** from God and His word, a total rejection of God’s sovereignty and His self-revelation both in the word, the Bible, and in Christ.

b. Now, think about this.

(1) The world and the people of this world have never been “with God.”

(2) They have never been on God’s side.

(a) In fact, John calls love of this world enmity with God, so that those who love the world actually make themselves **enemies of God**.

(b) Those who have never been with God, those who have always been enemies of God, those who have never been on God’s side **can’t logically be said to “fall away” from God, right?**

(3) So, **who then engages in this rebellion, this falling away, this apostasy, this complete and total rejection of God, His authority and His purpose?**

(a) Who but those who once claimed faith, who once embraced God’s righteousness and truth as their own?

(b) Who but those who claimed to be Christians, followers of Christ, lovers of Jesus, but were not?

(c) **Who are these apostates other than those who got the answer to Christ’s question wrong?**

c. These are those who said publicly He was the Christ, but held Him as a counterfeit in their hearts.

(1) They claimed Him as Savior but never truly repented of their sin.

(2) They lauded Him as lord but never really submitted to His lordship.

(3) They called Him their King and announced His kingdom,

(a) all the while serving only themselves

(b) and never relinquishing the throne of their heart and will to Him.

(4) Their confession and their lives are nothing more than lies and delusions and when persecution comes they will run

like rats from a sinking ship.

- (a) They will abandon their faith.
- (b) They will abandon their church.
- (c) They will abandon their testimony, but worst of all,
- (d) they will abandon God.
- (e) All because when Jesus asked them, “Who do you say that I am?” they got the answer wrong.

**C. Four Indicators You’ve Got the Answer Right**

- 1. If you know, truly, faithfully know who Jesus is, then the four revelations in this passage are what you have staked your life upon, the standards you have embraced both to live by and to live for.
- 2. They provide four indicators you probably have the answer right.

**II. Four Indicators Revealed By Jesus That You Probably Have the Answer To His Question Right.**

**A. Personal Conviction That Jesus is the Christ of God (8:27-30)**

- 1. That Jesus is the Christ, the God-appointed, God-sent Savior to whom faith and allegiance are due
- 2. To know with your heart, your soul that Jesus is the Christ is to know not only that He is the God-appointed and anointed Savior
  - a. It is to own that you are a sinner in need of a Savior
  - b. It is to hear your own personal story in Paul’s words, “*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*” (Rom. 3:23)
- 3. To know with your entire being, by faith, that Jesus is the Christ is to know
  - a. That He alone as the God-man is able to provide in your place and on your behalf an adequate sacrifice for sin
  - b. That He alone, as the God-man, lives a life of perfect faithfulness, without sin, and gives Himself to the cross and to death, his perfect innocence matching the infinite offense of your sin against God
- 4. To know that Jesus is the Christ is to know that He alone deserves your faith, your devotion, your allegiance, and your obedience for He alone has the grace that can bring you to peace with God.

**B. Personal Devotion to the “Things of God” (8:31-33)**

- 1. That Jesus is the truthful representative of “the things of God.”
  - a. That God created the world for His glory
  - b. That God condemned the world for Adam’s sin
  - c. That God decreed that the shedding of blood as the necessary payment for sin
  - d. That God sent and made His Son, Jesus, to be the acceptable, representative, substitute sacrifice in our place and on our behalf
  - e. That God Himself does
    - (1) all that is necessary for salvation which rests in Christ alone
    - (2) and we access God’s saving grace through faith alone, to the glory of God alone.
- 2. Faith in Christ is both the response God calls for and the gift that He gives.

**C. Personal Commitment of Your Whole Self to Christ (8: 34-38)**

1. That following Jesus involves the full surrender of heart and life and will to Him in faith.
2. **Mark 8:35 (ESV) *For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.***
3. Divine paradox of salvation:
  - a. in order to save your life, you must lose it
  - b. Gain through loss
4. The successful effort to gain eternal life is not cryogenics but faith in Jesus, surrendering our lives to Him in complete trust in Him as God's truth.

**D. Personal Expectation of the Kingdom (9:1)**

1. That God intends to establish his kingdom and fill the earth with the knowledge of His glory, and He alone is worth living and dying for.
2. A kingdom has two major components
  - a. A King
  - b. Subjects of the King
3. Who sits on the throne of your heart
  - a. Who is in charge?
  - b. Whose name is on the welcome sign?
4. **If we get the answer to Jesus' question right, He will be our King in both name and in fact.**

**III. Conclusion: Martin Luther Story**

**A. Sinclair Ferguson, *A Heart for God***

1. "A Christian's greatest privilege is the knowledge of God," which Ferguson describes as a personal relationship and acquaintance with the person and heart of God Himself.
2. Thus we can say of Jesus, His question is this,
  - a. "Do you know me?"
  - b. Do you know my Father?
  - c. Are you fulfilling the purpose for which you, personally, were created, to know God and enjoy Him forever?"
3. **How are we experiencing Jesus in the word and in life so that we are coming to know Him as He actually is?**
  - a. Questions
    - (1) Are we seeking understanding through studying God's word?
    - (2) Are we living by faith and experiencing the power of Christ in our daily lives?
    - (3) Are we engaging in a relationship with Christ that gives substance to our religious worship of Christ?
  - b. **It is a dangerous trap to settle on knowing Jesus only as we want Him to be and not as He is.**
  - c. To settle for something less than He is,
    - (1) is to settle into condemnable idolatry, to have made Jesus

over into a god in our own image.

- (2) Are we actively knowing Jesus as He is or imagining a Savior in our own image?

## B. Martin Luther

1. On this day in 1521 (April 18) Martin Luther stood before the Holy Roman Emperor, Charles V, and officers of the Roman Catholic Church and proclaimed his steadfast love for Christ and for the Word.
  - a. He was called upon to recant
    - (1) of all he had written about Christ,
    - (2) and salvation by faith alone in Christ alone,
    - (3) and the singular, final authority of the Bible rather than church tradition in the life of the believer
  - b. Called upon by the powers of the world to abandon God's truth, this is the answer Martin Luther gave:
    - (1) *Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures or by evident reason—for I believe neither pope nor councils alone, as it is clear that they have erred repeatedly and contradicted themselves—I consider myself convicted by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, which is my basis; my conscience is captive to the Word of God.*
    - (2) *Thus I cannot and will not recant, because acting against one's conscience is neither safe nor sound. [Here I stand; I can do no other.] God help me. Amen.*
  - c. Martin Luther knew, he knows, Who Jesus is.
    - (1) **Do you know Who Jesus is?**
    - (2) Are you prepared to live and die for the Christ, the Son of God, the Savior, the King, the One who lived and died for you?
    - (3) Or will you be among the apostate, those who rebel and fall away, trying to save your own life only to lose it in the end?

## C. Call to Commitment

1. The Spirit calls God's chosen people from sin to righteousness, from death to life, from darkness to Light, from apostasy to victory.
2. Come, Church, and follow Jesus.
3. Come, Body, and obey the Head.
4. Come, Bride, be made blameless, spotless, and holy, and take your place at His side.
5. Come, Christian, take your stand.
  - a. The world is coming for you, probably sooner than you think.
  - b. **You have to get the answer right when Jesus asks, "Who do you say that I am?"**