

STUDY GUIDE:

Extraordinary Life Series in the Gospel of Mark

Who Do You Say I Am? | Mark 8:27-30

Who is Jesus?

Someone looks over your shoulder and sees you reading from the bible at the coffee shop. They spark a conversation with a comment about the greatness of the bible, and then they say to you, "I wonder who Jesus *really* was?"

What would you say?

What *wouldn't* you say?

Half Blind

Read Mark 8:22-26

There were prophecies that the Lord would send a Messiah and the signs would be that the blind would see and the deaf would hear (Isa. 35:5). Jesus performs these miracles multiple times, but this instance in Mark 8 is unique. It seems that Jesus had to make two attempts to restore this man's eyes, or, was Jesus teaching us something through this two part miracle?

Was it too difficult for Jesus who could raise the dead and heal the masses? Why do you think Jesus healed the blind man halfway at first?

Maybe it's about the man... Could this situation explain the uncertainty of someone who can't see the truth clearly because their heart is only halfway opened for it?

Who Do You Say I Am?

Read Mark 8:27-30

Do you remember what the author's intent was behind the Gospel of Mark? Go back to Mark 1:1. What two things does Mark want the reader to understand about who Jesus is?

This conversation between Jesus and his disciples sheds light on why Jesus healed the man halfway at first. Jesus took his disciples to Caesarea Philippi immediately after the healing and asked them, "Who do people say that I am?" Caesarea Philippi was a worship center to many gods, including a large temple that was built to worship Caesar Augustus - "the son of god".

Does this place add weight to Jesus' question?

How did the disciples answer Jesus' question?

The disciples answer reflected how the people in the region were unable to realize who Jesus was. Amidst a culture of many gods and beliefs, they were confused, unclear, uncertain and unsure — exactly like the blind man who saw people like trees walking. Jesus used the comparison between Peter's answer and that of the people to show the disciples how deceived people could be when they don't see the truth clearly.

Have you ever felt this way about your clarity regarding Jesus and faith?

In light of the blind man, what is Jesus' response to the process of becoming clear in vision? When things are unclear, what do Jesus do?

How does this connect with the journey of certainty and clarity on who Jesus is?

Questions from Mofid

I would like to put in front of us three challenges; questions to help us answer the question, "Who is Jesus for us?"

1. Who or what is first in your life? Who is your master or what drives and guides your life? What are indicators or signs to identify what is first in your life?

In Mark 12:15-17, Caesar represents the things that rule our lives. Who is your real king? Is it Caesar or Jesus? This coin moment is interesting. We live according to the image stamped on us. Scripture says that we are created in the image of God, therefore we belong to Him, no to 'a caesar'. When we are trying to answer the question of who Jesus is, would you say that Jesus is first in your life, or is something or someone else?

2. If someone does not see Jesus as Lord, is their eternity unclear? Dive into this question. According to Mark is there another way spoken of to live into the Kingdom of God? What about other verses in the bible? Is there another way besides Jesus? Why is a narrow answer uncomfortable? John 14:6 is a major problem for many people. Does this relate to the unclear eyes in Caesarea Philippi?
3. Who do you say that Jesus is? Messiah, savior, Lord, Son of God? Something else?

Some saw Jesus as a prophet, some as a lunatic, and others did not distinguish between Jesus, Caesar, or the multitude of gods around them. We live in a similar world of confusion and uncertainty. How we usher in clarity, hope, and certainty in our faith? What has helped you? How can you help others?

