

The Jefferson Spirit

Sundays at 9:00AM

Pastor Mark Jarema

March 16, 2025



"Who Do You Say That I Am?"

Mark 8:27-38 captures a pivotal moment when Jesus asks His disciples, **"Who do you say that I am?"** Peter declares Him the Messiah, but he misunderstands what that means. Jesus reveals that He must suffer, die, and rise again, which Peter rejects. In response, Jesus rebukes him and teaches that true discipleship requires self-denial, taking up one's cross, and prioritizing eternal life over worldly gain. This passage challenges believers to follow Christ fully, even when the path is difficult. passage challenges believers to fully embrace Christ—not just as Savior, but as Lord, even when the path of discipleship is difficult.

Scripture Reading: Mark 8:27-38 (NIV)

Peter Declares That Jesus Is the Messiah

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, “Who do people say I am?”

²⁸ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.”

²⁹ “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”

Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.”

³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

Jesus Predicts His Death

³¹ He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. ³² He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

³³ But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”

The Way of the Cross

³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save their life ^[b] will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul? ³⁷ Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ³⁸ If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.”

How Mark 8:27-38 Ties into the Old Testament

Understanding how **Mark 8:27-38** connects to the **Old Testament** deepens our appreciation of Jesus’ mission and His fulfillment of prophecy. Here are key ways this passage is rooted in the Old Testament:

1. Jesus as the Messiah Fulfills Old Testament Prophecy

When Peter declares, “**You are the Messiah**” (*Mark 8:29*), he is acknowledging Jesus as the long-awaited **Anointed One** promised in the Old Testament.

- **Psalms 2:2** – The kings and rulers of the earth plot against “**the Lord and His Anointed**” (Messiah). This verse foreshadows how the world would reject Jesus.
- **Isaiah 9:6-7** – Speaks of a future **Messianic King** who will reign with justice and righteousness.
- **Daniel 7:13-14** – The “**Son of Man**” (a title Jesus used for Himself in *Mark 8:31*) receives **authority and an everlasting kingdom** from God.

Many Jews expected the Messiah to be a **political and military ruler** who would overthrow Rome, but Jesus reveals that His mission involves suffering and sacrifice before glory.



2. The Suffering Servant of Isaiah 53

When Jesus says in **Mark 8:31** that He must **suffer, be rejected, and be killed**, He is fulfilling **Isaiah 53**, which prophesied about a **suffering servant**:

- **Isaiah 53:3** – “He was despised and rejected by mankind, a man of suffering, and familiar with pain.”
- **Isaiah 53:5** – “He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities.”
- **Isaiah 53:7** – He would be **led like a lamb to the slaughter**, yet remain silent.

Peter couldn't accept a suffering Messiah, but **Jesus was fulfilling God's greater plan**—to atone for sin through His suffering and death.

3. Jesus' Rebuke of Peter Echoes Satan's Temptation

When Jesus says, “**Get behind me, Satan!**” (*Mark 8:33*), He is rejecting the temptation to **avoid suffering and take an easier path to kingship**—the same temptation **Satan offered Him in the wilderness** (*Matthew 4:1-11*).

This echoes:

- **Genesis 3:1-6** – Satan tempts Adam and Eve to reject God's plan and choose their own desires.
- **Isaiah 55:8-9** – God's ways are higher than human ways, just as Jesus tells Peter that his thinking is human, not divine.

Peter unknowingly voices the same temptation—a **kingdom without a cross**—but Jesus came to fulfill **God's plan, not human expectations**.

4. “Take Up Your Cross” and the Old Testament Concept of Suffering for God

Jesus' command to “**take up your cross**” (*Mark 8:34*) wasn't just about physical suffering—it was about **total surrender to God's will**, which is deeply rooted in the Old Testament:

- **Deuteronomy 30:19-20** – God tells Israel to **choose life by following Him**, just as Jesus tells His disciples to lose their lives for His sake (*Mark 8:35*).
- **Jeremiah 20:7-9** – The prophet Jeremiah suffered rejection and persecution but remained faithful to God's call, foreshadowing how disciples must endure hardship for their faith.
- **Psalms 22** – A prophetic psalm about **suffering and ultimate victory**, later fulfilled by Jesus on the cross.

Following God often required **obedience through suffering**, just as Jesus now calls His followers to **take up their cross** and follow Him.

5. The Warning Against Gaining the World but Losing the Soul

Jesus asks in **Mark 8:36**, “**What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?**” This echoes wisdom from the Old Testament:

- **Ecclesiastes 2:11** – Solomon laments that all worldly success is ultimately **meaningless** without God.
- **Psalms 49:7-9** – No one can **ransom their soul** with wealth; only God can redeem it.
- **Deuteronomy 8:3** – “**Man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth**



of the Lord", which Jesus Himself quoted to resist temptation.

Jesus is reminding His disciples that **earthly success is temporary, but eternal life is priceless**—a theme consistently taught in the Old Testament.

6. Jesus' Promise of Glory in His Second Coming

In **Mark 8:38**, Jesus warns that those who are ashamed of Him will face judgment when He returns in **His Father's glory**. This reflects Old Testament **visions of the coming of God's kingdom**:

- **Daniel 7:13-14** – The **Son of Man** (Jesus' title for Himself) will come in **glory and power** to establish His eternal kingdom.
- **Isaiah 66:15-16** – A prophecy about **God coming in fire and judgment**, just as Jesus describes His future return.

Jesus is not just a suffering servant—He is also the **glorious King who will one day return in victory**.

Conclusion: Jesus is the Fulfillment of the Old Testament

Mark 8:27-38 is not just a New Testament lesson—it is the fulfillment of **centuries of prophecy, foreshadowing, and divine promises** in the Old Testament.

- **Jesus is the Messiah prophesied in the Old Testament.**

Fun Quiz on Mark 8:27-38

(Where did Jesus ask His disciples, **"Who do you say that I am?"**) a) Jerusalem b) Bethlehem c) Caesarea Philippi d) The Sea of Galilee

Who correctly identified Jesus as the Messiah? a) James b) John c) Peter d) Judas

What did Jesus say would happen to Him? a) He would be crowned as king of Israel b) He would suffer, be rejected, and be killed c) He would call down angels to destroy His enemies d) He would travel to Rome to meet Caesar

How did Peter react when Jesus said He would suffer and die? a) He praised Jesus for His courage b) He rebuked Jesus, saying this would never happen c) He asked for a deeper explanation d) He remained silent and prayed

What did Jesus say to Peter after he rebuked Him? a) "You are my rock." b) "Get behind me, Satan!" c) "I will never leave you." d) "Blessed are you, Simon."

What did Jesus say a disciple must do to follow Him? a) Attend synagogue regularly b) Take up their cross and follow Him c) Pray five times a day d) Obey the Pharisees

What does Jesus say about gaining the whole world? a) It is the key to happiness b) It means you are blessed by God c) It is worthless if you lose your soul d) It is only for the strong and powerful

What did Jesus say would happen to those who are ashamed of Him? a) They will be forgotten b) He will be ashamed of them when He comes in glory c) They will receive a second chance d) They will be the least in the kingdom of heaven

True or False

Peter fully understood what it meant for Jesus to be the Messiah. (True/False)

Answer Key

c) Caesarea Philippi

c) Peter

b) He would suffer, be rejected, and be killed

b) He rebuked Jesus, saying this would never happen

b) "Get behind me, Satan!"

b) Take up their cross and follow Him

c) It is worthless if you lose your soul

b) He will be ashamed of them when He comes in glory

False (Peter didn't yet understand that the Messiah must suffer and die.)

Order of Worship

Welcome

Opening Prayer

*Call to Worship (Congregation)

Leader: Come, all who seek the truth, for Jesus asks, “Who do you say that I am?”

People: We come to declare that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God!

Leader: He calls us to take up our cross and follow Him, surrendering our lives for the sake of the Gospel.

People: We will deny ourselves and follow Jesus, for in Him, we find true life.

Leader: What good is it to gain the whole world but forfeit our souls?

People: Nothing compares to knowing Christ and the power of His love!

Leader: Then let us worship the One who gave His life for us and calls us into His glorious kingdom.

All: With hearts open and spirits willing, we worship Jesus, our Lord and Savior!

Children’s Message

***I am thine o Lord p.419 UMC Hymnal**

Scripture Reading: Mark 8:27-38

Sermon: Who Do You Say That I Am?

Offertory

*Doxology - p.95 UMC Hymnal

***O Jesus I have promised, p.396 UMC Hymnal**

*Confession and Pardon – Based on Mark 4:35-41

Confession (Leader and People)

Leader: Merciful God, You have called us to follow You with our whole hearts, yet we confess that we often seek our own way instead of Yours.

People: Forgive us, Lord, for when we value the world more than Your kingdom.

Leader: You ask us to take up our cross, yet we resist sacrifice and seek comfort instead.

People: Forgive us, Lord, when we put our desires above Your will.

Leader: You call us to boldly proclaim You as Lord, but we have remained silent, afraid of rejection.

People: Forgive us, Lord, when we are ashamed to stand for You.

Leader: Jesus, You surrendered everything for us—Your suffering, Your life, and even the cross. Teach us to follow You with faith and courage.

All: Renew us, Lord. Strengthen our hearts to love You fully, trust You completely, and live for You boldly. Amen.

Pardon (Leader)

Leader: Hear the good news! Christ came not to condemn but to save. Through His life, death, and resurrection, we are forgiven!

People: Thanks be to God! In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven. Amen!

Announcements

Joys and Concerns

Pastoral Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

***We've a story to tell to the nations, p.569 UMC Hymnal**

*Sending Forth

Postlude

Upcoming Events:

March 18 - 7-8pm Online Bible Study - Bad Girls of the Bible

March 22 - 5pm Men In Black Band with Potluck Dinner following service

March 23 - No Worship Service or Children's Sunday School

March 25 - 7-8pm Online Bible Study - Bad Girls of the Bible

March 29 - 9am Jefferson Church Summit with Pastor Mark and Pastor Katie at Jefferson UMC

March 30 - Easter Flowers orders are due

April 6 - Holy Communion

April 6 - 4pm Chili Cook Off and Bake Sale fundraiser to be held at Jefferson Ruritan

April 13 - Birthday Celebration

April 17 - 7pm Maundy Thursday Service - Pastor Amy preaching at Jefferson UMC

April 18 - 7pm Good Friday Service

April 20 - 6:30am - Easter Sunrise Service outside at the Myers Farm at 3514 Jefferson Pike, Jefferson

April 20 - 9am - Easter Service in the sanctuary

Prayer Requests:

Gary Duvall cancer treatments (Judi Arnold)

Kevin Anderson last stage of lung cancer (Doris Branch)

Sermon Insights

Sermon Lesson:

In Mark 8:27-38, Jesus asks His disciples the most important question: “Who do you say that I am?” Peter rightly declares Him as the Messiah, yet he fails to understand what that truly means. Jesus reveals that following Him requires more than just words—it demands surrender, self-denial, and the willingness to take up our cross. Like Peter, we often want a faith that is easy, a Messiah who fits our expectations, but Jesus calls us to something greater: a life of trust, sacrifice, and eternal reward. He warns that gaining the whole world is meaningless if we lose our souls, reminding us that true life is found not in earthly success, but in following Him wholeheartedly. Today, Jesus asks us the same question: Who do you say that I am? And does your life reflect that answer?

Application:

1. Have a Personal Faith in Jesus (Mark 8:27-30)

Application: Don't rely on secondhand faith—make your relationship with Jesus personal. Spend time in prayer, study His Word, and deepen your trust in Him. Like Peter, we must move beyond knowing about Jesus to truly knowing Him as our Messiah. This week, take time to reflect: Who is Jesus to me?

2. Trust God's Plan, Even When It's Hard (Mark 8:31-33)

Application: When life doesn't go as expected, resist the temptation to fight against God's plan. Like Peter, we may struggle to accept suffering or uncertainty, but Jesus reminds us that God's ways are higher than ours. Instead of questioning His will, pray for faith to trust Him in all circumstances. Ask: Am I following God's plan or asking Him to follow mine?

3. Live Boldly as a True Disciple (Mark 8:34-38)

Application: Jesus calls us to take up our cross, which means putting His mission above our comfort. This week, take a step of faith—share your testimony, serve someone in need, or stand firm in your beliefs. Ask yourself: Am I truly following Jesus, or am I just going through the motions? Let your life reflect that you belong to Him.

Conclusion:

Mark 8:27-38 challenges us to move beyond simply knowing about Jesus to truly following Him. He asks each of us, “Who do you say that I am?” and our answer is not just in our words, but in how we live. True discipleship requires trusting God's plan, even when it's difficult, and boldly taking up our cross to follow Him. We may be tempted to seek comfort, approval, or worldly success, but Jesus reminds us that nothing is worth losing our soul. Today, let's recommit ourselves to a faith that is not just spoken but lived—trusting in Christ, surrendering to His will, and walking in the path He has set before us. Will you follow Him completely?