



Empowering People to Change the World

The Great Confession

Steve Holt

Mark 8:22-38 | The Great Confession

1. Dec. 24th Christmas Eve Service 12:30pm Chapel Hills Church—get here on time!
2. January 5-9th "Windstorm" a look at the Power of the Holy Spirit, past revivals, and how that relates to us today Jan 5-6, 8-9
3. If you want to be online with all announcements and my blog, theroadcs@gmail.com
4. New Website is theroadcs.org

We are seeing Jesus moving across the northern plains of Israel, ministering around the Sea of Galilee, but now he has traveled over 50 miles out of his way to heal a Gentile woman's daughter, he has then healed a deaf-mute in Decapolis, where he had been before and cast out possibly thousands of demons out of a man. This man went back told everyone, huge crowds come out. He then feeds 4k people, the second time he has accomplished a miracle of food multiplication. And now the crowds bring him, drag to him, a blind man...

Mark 8:22

Then He came to Bethsaida; and they brought a blind man to Him, and begged Him to touch him.

- Jesus' most often miracle is blindness but this is the only blind man healed in stages in the Bible
- Blindness is the most crippling and most frightening of all disabilities
- #1 fear of missing something, people say blindness. They would rather lose a limb than be blind

Vs. 23

So He took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the town. And when He had spit on his eyes and put His hands on him, He asked him if he saw anything.

- He spits on him—another creative way!
- Ex. Smith Wigglesworth, this guy was a powerful healer. He would take people's glasses and crush them and pray over them and they would get healed! He threw people against the wall and they got healed
- Ex. Earnest Angsley, I would make fun of him growing up. Then I met this man who was healed of smoking under Earnest Angsley...
- My advice: Don't spit on people okay?

And he looked up and said, "I see men like trees, walking."

- Vertical images, blurry, not clear yet
- He is the process of healing
- Sometimes God gradually heals—sanctification is that way

Then He put *His* hands on his eyes again and made him look up. And he was restored and saw everyone clearly ("clearly" with a "glistening edge" (Gk) Then He sent him away to his house, saying, "Neither go into the town, nor tell anyone in the town."

- think about it—the first face he saw was the face of Jesus, with a big smile
- Ex. Isn't he doing the same thing in you? Maybe last year you only saw men as walking, but it's clear today.
- He is changing you gradually—Jesus clears out the giants in your life gradually, that you might trust him and his power and not depend on your own strength

Now we are coming to the most profound turning point in the ministry of Jesus

- Jesus is preparing his disciples for his coming death in just 6 months
- Jesus is preparing his disciples for battle—there lives will be changed forever
- They will no longer be their own, but will be called out away from their vocation, their family, their recreation

- They are being prepared for servant leadership—no longer observers and followers

Vs. 27

Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; (this is not Caesarea by the sea, but a city near the Sea of Galilee) and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, “Who do men say that I am?”

So they answered, “John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.”

- After 3 years of ministry...After countless miracles, signs and wonders, who do people think I am? A miracle worker? A prophet? Faith Healer? Is that all?
- The question scholars, academicians, intellectuals, and world leaders are still asking. Some say He is an “Ascended Master,” an “Avatar,” “The Enlightened One,” “Greatest Leader of all Time”
- Every Christmas, every Easter, we have to see again the articles in the major magazines, still asking the same question
- “The Quest of the Historical Jesus” coined by Albert Schweitzer, the missionary to Africa
 - 3 great quests for the Real Jesus in the 19th and 20th centuries. Albert Schweitzer wrote a book of that name.
 - These many authors attempted to portray Jesus and his miracles as myths, embellishments, and from a psychological perspective
 - Schweitzer’s statement in the last two paragraphs of his book sum up “the quest” that still continues to this day: “Jesus of Nazareth will not suffer himself to be modernized as an historical figure... He comes to us as One unknown” Really?

**He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”
Peter answered and said to Him, “You are the Christ.”**

- This is the most important question of your life! Who is Jesus in your life?
- Is He your Lord? Is He the Lord of your morality? Is He the Lord of your alarm clock in the morning? Is He the Lord of how you treat other people? Is He the Lord of your internet material? Is He the Lord of your discussions about people?
- Have you given your heart to Jesus? Is He your Lord?

In Matthew’s account of this incident more detail is given,

Matthew 16:15

He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”

Simon Peter answered and said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”

Jesus answered and said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed *this* to you, but My Father who is in heaven.

18 And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

- Basically Jesus is saying, there is no way this side of the Mississippi, that you, Peter, could have come up with this revelation on your own!
- God calls you and me to himself. God woos us to himself. It is his “grace work” that beckons us to himself
- “For by grace you’ve been saved by faith. Not by works that you can boast about”
- the rock is not Peter as an individual, since Jesus

substituted petra, a foundation rock or boulder, for petros, a fragment of the petra. Jesus probably meant that he Himself is the Rock upon which the church is built

- **1 Cor 3:11 *For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.***
- The Church is built on Christ (see our first point Jesus Disciples on our website) but as we confess Christ, we now partake of His nature, His power, His gifts, His wisdom and we become “living stones” Peter, who is here making the confession, would later write,
- Peter speaking years later: **(1 Peter 2) “*you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, “Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame.”***

Vs. 19 And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.”

- Keys denote authority and we can bind and loose on the earth. The church is charged with implementing the kingdom of God on earth, as Christ’s representative
- What Christ released through his life, death, and resurrection has been given to the church
- Ex For example if someone is bound by sin, when we preach Christ, that person can be “loosed” of the power of sin through the freedom of Christ. If someone is bound by a demon, we can command that demon to leave in the name of Christ and be loosed into freedom

Mark 8:30

Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him.

- It is not time for the people to know his identity
- You don't know the full picture yet. It's not the time to proclaim this truth

And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.

- “must suffer?” Jesus wants them to know that that the suffering he is about endure is God's will
- This is not what they have signed up for—they are wanting a religious, political revolution—overthrow the Romans
- This is the hinge of Mark's gospel—the identity of Christ
- All that Jesus is doing—the miracles, the signs, the wonders—they are all there to point to Jesus' identity
- This is why the quest of the historical Jesus, the Jesus Project, and other studies that deny the deity of Christ all fail. They miss the most fundamental point of the life of Jesus—it's not just what he did, but who he claimed to be
- Ex. in sharing our faith, don't get caught up in all the minor issues of prophecy, creation, abortion, etc. but focus on Who Jesus said he was. Who Jesus claimed to be. Why Jesus was crucified...

He spoke this word openly. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. 33 But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, “Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the

things of men.”

- Peter sincerely doesn't want anything bad to happen to Jesus.
- He turns his back to Peter—he's not saying it only to Peter but to Satan. He knows who is inspiring Peter. Satan can influence you if your heart is longing for the “things of men”
- “Mindful—*savoreth* (KJV) of the things of God and man. An appetite for the values of this world Ex. Dark chocolate; T Bone steak. You're not tasting the things of God, but you're savoring the things of man
- Savoring the “things of men”
 - What are the things of men?
 - Comfort, ease, avoid suffering at all costs
 - Success, power, prestige
- Whenever the true identity of Christ as God, as the Messiah, is revealed, Satan is not far behind
- Satan is always moving to discredit, create questions about, and confuse the identity of Jesus
- The Great Bait of Satan—skip the cross and get the gold!
- Jesus uses the exact same words when he rebukes Satan in the wilderness: ***Away with you, Satan! For it is written, 'You shall worship the LORD your God, and Him only you shall serve.'***¹

Vs. 34 When He had called the people to *Himself*, with His disciples also, He said to them, “Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.

¹ *The New King James Version*. 1982 (Mt 4:10). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

- Disciples are thinking, “If the waves obey him, if satan obeys him, if the authorities can’t win an argument with him, how can there be any suffering”
- We want ease, comfort and credit, but Jesus is painting a different road, a new course of discipleship
- The disciples have seen such power—people rising from the dead; demons cast out—they just might be concluding that there will be no suffering. Just call down power from heaven!
- **Not self-denial (that’s martial arts and the Marines) but denial of self—there is only one throne in your heart. If he is going to be Lord, you must deny yourself. I must decrease, he must increase**
- **Moving self out of the way—savoring the things of Jesus, turning away from the savorings of men**
- **Whoever will come after Me for physical cures, freedom, power, must also come after Me for Me—to know Me, to love Me, to have an intimate relationship with Me**
- **This is constant. There will be a cross to bear—the cross of the crucified Christ, the life of the crucified Christ**
- **This is the road less traveled—following Christ, listening to him, letting him lead you and your family...**

For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel’s will save it.

- Ex. I hear people all the time saying “I’m losing it. I’m losing it.” Yes you are. So give up, and quit trying to keep it. Just lose it.
- Count the cost. Think about what you’re doing in becoming a wholehearted disciple. Sit down and think about it. Are you willing to become a wholehearted disciple?

- Lose it. Lose your life. Surrender your life to Him. Let Him live it through you.
- Jesus did nothing half hearted. Peter did nothing half hearted. All of the disciples except for John, died martyrs deaths

For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.”

- As Satan draws many a believer away from Christ and the Church, he woos them away with longings for pleasure, safety, acceptance, quick thrills—All gold no cross!
- The Great Bait of Satan—you can have your fun. You can do anything you desire and this will make you happy. He tells you the pleasure but not the peril. There is a price to be paid! And the price is your blood. Satan always wants our blood
- Ex. And so we see the lives of those who have it all. Those with everything that satan has to offer—pleasure, power, money, and they are miserable! Look at the drug and alcohol addiction, look at the broken marriages, look at the abuse. The Bait of Satan
- Jesus offers life—counterintuitive to our flesh, yet consistent with our spirit—give your life away to Jesus and others and you find joy. You find true deep seated happiness!
- When we come after Christ, eternal life begins for us! everlasting life begins when we deny ourselves and choose to follow Christ
- So, do you have that life tonight? Do you know Christ? Is He your Lord?