



Sermon Series: Mark: Living Everyday With Jesus
Sermon Title: His Identity
Date: 12/28/2025

Mark 8:27–30

Big Idea: Believing the real identity of Jesus is critical & life altering!

Mark 8:27–30 records a turning point in Jesus' ministry and in the disciples' understanding of Him. Jesus has been teaching, healing, casting out demons, and revealing His authority. But now He leads His disciples into a deeply personal moment. As they walk near Caesarea Philippi—a region known for idolatry and pagan worship—Jesus asks a question that divides humanity into two categories: those who are with Him and those who are not. That question is simple, direct, and unavoidable: “Who do you say that I am?”

This passage shows that knowing Jesus involves three essential realities, each shaping how a person comes to understand His true identity.

1. Without a relationship, people can draw false conclusions

Jesus first asks, “Who do people say that I am?” The disciples easily recall the common opinions: John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the prophets. John had a similar message of repentance. Elijah was known for miracles and was expected to appear before the Messiah. Prophets spoke for God and demonstrated His power. In each case, the crowds were responding to what they observed—teaching, miracles, authority, compassion. But their conclusions were still incomplete.

The problem was not lack of interest; it was distance. They knew about Jesus, but they did not know Him. Without relationship, people naturally fill in the gaps with assumptions. That was true then, and it remains true today. Many people still describe Jesus as a teacher, example, or religious figure—true observations, but not the whole truth. Facts about Jesus do not save; only faith in Him does. A person without a saving relationship with Jesus will not fully recognize who He is.

2. With a heart of openness, people correctly identify Jesus

Jesus follows up His first question with a personal one: “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answers on behalf of the group: “You are the Christ.” This confession recognizes Jesus as the Messiah, the Anointed One, the long-expected Savior.

Peter reaches this conclusion not simply because he spent time with Jesus, but because his heart was open. Judas also spent three years with Jesus but never opened himself to faith. Time with Jesus is not enough. Openness, humility, and a willingness to receive Him as Lord are essential.

The same pattern holds true for us. As we draw near to Jesus—through Scripture, prayer, obedience, and relationship—misconceptions fade, and clarity grows. Jesus is not merely someone to study; He is someone to know. He invites closeness, and those who seek Him with openness come to see Him as He truly is: Christ, Lord, and God.

3. Jesus is patient with people as they come closer to the truth

After Peter’s confession, Jesus instructs the disciples not to tell anyone yet. This is not secrecy but timing. Jesus is guiding the revelation of His identity according to the Father’s plan. The full truth about Him will not be understood until His death and resurrection.

Jesus shows patience toward those who misunderstand Him. Many in the crowds would not come to true belief until after the resurrection. Even today, people move from confusion to clarity at different speeds. God’s desire is that all would come to repentance ([2 Peter 3:9](#)), and His patience reflects His love.

Jesus does not rush people, but He does confront them with the essential question: “Who do you say that I am?” The answer is personal and cannot be borrowed from family, church, or culture. Mistaken identity has eternal consequences. But believing the real identity of Jesus brings life, peace, and salvation.

To know Jesus as teacher only is to admire Him but not worship Him. To see Him as an example only is to imitate Him but miss His sacrifice. To view Him as a prophet only is to hear His words but miss His gift of eternal life. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, the Savior, and God.

Believing the true identity of Jesus is critical and life altering.

Discussion Questions:

- 1. Why do you think people often draw incomplete conclusions about Jesus?**
- 2. What helped Peter recognize Jesus' true identity, and how does that apply to us?**
- 3. How does openness of heart affect someone's ability to understand who Jesus is?**
- 4. Where have you seen Jesus' patience toward you or others in coming to faith?**
- 5. How would you personally answer Jesus' question: "Who do you say that I am?"**