

# Scrolls

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## Meeting the Messiah Better Broken

Mark 8:31-33

*Week 29  
July 27, 2025*

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### LIFE LESSON:

**“Whoever understands the suffering of the Son of Man understands God. It is there, and not in heavenly splendor, that one sees the heart of God.”**

### I. V. 31

To get the full understanding of this verse, we must look back at verse 29 where Peter declared that Jesus is the Messiah. It is a bold and true statement by Peter but one that is most likely misunderstood by the disciples. What they thought of the Messiah came to do and what Jesus the Messiah is going to accomplish is two different things. Up to this point Jesus has kept His title quiet but now He is going to speak plainly about it. This means that Jesus is going to go against what the Jews of the day believed the Messiah to be and do.

Jesus is not coming to be a political Messiah or to rescue the Jews from the Romans. It will at first not seem like a royal act when the suffering of the Savior is seen and experienced. The enemy that Jesus came to deliver from is sin and death and this task will itself call for the death of the Son of God. This is the suffering that Jesus is speaking of and nowhere is have the Jews taught that the Messiah would suffer. Isaiah 53 speaks of the suffering servant, but the Jews never had tied this to the Messiah. They saw Him coming in power to accomplish political triumph. But the power and love of God would be seen through the suffering of His Son more clearly than in any other way. The whole meaning of the life of Christ was to humble Himself, suffer and die for the sins of the world and rise from the dead to fulfill the will of God and save all who would turn to Him alone for salvation. It is through the death of His Son that God most clearly demonstrates His love for humanity. Romans 5:8 says, “But God proves his own love for us in

that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” Eduard Schweizer wrote, “Whoever understands the suffering of the Son of Man understands God. It is there, and not in heavenly splendor, that one sees the heart of God.”

Through His plain teaching the fact that the Messiah must suffer, Jesus is also teaching what it means to be His disciple. To follow Jesus is to put the Kingdom of God first and not only does the world not understand it, in many cases they despise it and see it as being hateful toward the world’s system. Following Jesus will in some cases cause for the disciple to suffer in the same way that Jesus did. Jesus said, “Then he said to them all, ‘If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.’” He also said, “Remember the word I spoke to you: ‘A servant is not greater than his master.’ If they persecuted me, they will also persecute you. If they kept my word, they will also keep yours.” Though the disciples did not understand this at first, the day will come when not only will they understand it, but they will embrace it as an honor to do in the name of their Messiah.

Perhaps one of the most surprising elements to the prophetic statement of Jesus is who the culprits will be that will carry out His suffering and death. We would expect it to be the lowest of the low, the evil pagans who did not want their false gods to be shamed, or maybe some enraged drunk having a bad day. But that is not who Jesus predicts. They are the religious leaders of that time. His own Jewish brothers will be the ones that turn on Jesus and turn Him over to the Romans to be crucified. And it is not a spontaneous act that they will carry out on a whim, it is a carefully planned activity organized in the minds of the Sanhedrim. This makes sense when one realizes that it is the false religion of humanism that Jesus came to replace with true religion that only comes through faith in Him. Judaism had become this religious belief where people could be made right with God by their own efforts when being made right with God is something only God can do for us. But since the fall in Genesis three, mankind has been trying to put themselves in the place of God and in many instances, we will use religion or church to do that. Just like the pharisees of Jesus’ day, we too run the risk of becoming self-righteous and condemning of others, forgetting that we too are sinners who are in desperate

need of a Savior. One does not have to wear ceremonial garbs to be sanctimonious, they can do it sitting in a church pew wearing blue jeans. It is a matter of attitude not only toward other people but toward God and what He had to do to save us as well as anyone else.

## **II. V. 32**

Jesus spoke openly or plainly about the suffering, death and resurrection that He must face. Peter, being true to form, feels that it is his responsibility to educate Jesus on what the Messiah is, and in this case, is not supposed to do. James Edwards comments, “For once Peter takes his obligation as seriously as Jesus takes his to train the disciples in the meaning of Messiahship” (Pg. 255). Peter begins to rebuke Jesus for His words. The Greek word for rebuke is the same one used to rebuke demons which means it is the strongest word for rebuking and reserved for the worse offenses. This gives us an idea of how convinced Peter was of his beliefs. But no matter how vigorous one may be about their beliefs; it does not make them true. But in Peter’s mind, this teaching of Jesus was as bad as it gets when it comes to the behavior of the Messiah. After all, they were starting a movement with Jesus as their leader. How difficult will it be to recruit new members if the main teaching is that the teacher will be tortured and die. Peter had a better plan to grow the group just like we can be tempted to come up with better plans to grow the church or our group if the world does not respond to the plan orchestrated by the Bible to grow. Just like Peter though, we too can hold strong convictions and ideas but that does not make them true or justified. Only when we follow the sufficient teaching of God’s Word will be accurate in our methods and activities.

## **III. V. 33**

In trying to remove Jesus from suffering, Peter is attempting to (unbeknownst to him) is going against the very mystery of the gospel. Hebrews 9:22b says, “without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness.” Jesus said, “just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.” So, what Peter was rebuking Jesus for is the exact reason that He had come to earth in the first place. Without His suffering, there would be no hope for

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

- 1. Does the idea that your Messiah died on a cross embarrass you?**
- 2. Has your religious life caused you to be self-righteous at times, or does it cause you to look at others in the same situation that you once found yourself?**
- 3. How does it make you feel to read in today's lesson that when you oppose the teaching of Jesus it makes you a disciple of Satan?**

humanity. So now Jesus turns the rebuke back on Peter. Peter does not realize it, but he is doing exactly what Satan attempted to do in the wilderness when he tried to tempt Jesus to bypass the cross to be Lord. So, in the same way that Jesus rebuked Satan in Matthew 4:10, He is now rebuking Peter since Peter is doing the work of Satan. The name Satan means adversary and to do anything against Jesus puts one in the same boat as Satan himself. Even a disciple, if they go against the teaching of Jesus, become disciples of Satan whether they realize it or not because they have adversarial to the Person of Christ and His work. Jesus' idea of what the Messiah is not Satanic as Peter may believe, but Peter's perception of the Messiah is.

It is the cross that is foolishness to the world because it shows weakness in their eyes. In reality, the cross was the greatest display of power and love ever performed. Ralph Martin said, "Jesus and Peter, God and humanity, are at cross purposes since at the heart of the discussion is the cross." James Edwards again comments, "For Peter, the indication that the Son of man will die is unthinkable. For Jesus, it is inevitable" (Pg. 255).

## **COMMENTARY USED:**

Edwards, James R. 2002. *The Gospel according to Mark*. Grand Rapids; Cambridge: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.