

**Parallels in the Synoptic Gospels**  
**Matt 16:13-23    Mark 8:27-33    Luke 9:18-22**



10/30/11

Each of the synoptic Gospels records Peter's confession that Jesus is the Christ. We will study the account in Mark before going on to compare it to the parallel passages in Matthew and Luke.

**Read: Mark 8:27-33**  
**Observe, Discuss and Apply**

1. Jesus has been among the crowds (8:1-13,22-26). Now he withdraws to a quiet place with his disciples, and he asks them a question, "Who do people say that I am (v.27)?"
  - How well do the crowds know Jesus? What do they know about him?
  - How do you suppose they have come to the conclusion that Jesus is, "one of the prophets (v.28)?"
  - Think about people you know who don't know Jesus. What kinds of opinions and attitudes do they have about him? How might they have formed these opinions and attitudes?

**Christ**<sup>1</sup> – God had promised his people a redeemer to deliver them (Isa 40:1-7). At the same time, God had promised that David's kingdom would be an eternal one (2 Sam 7:16). The people of Jesus' day understood those promises primarily in political terms; God's anointed one would deliver them from Roman rule.<sup>2</sup> Jesus knew better. He understood that he would redeem his people through suffering and death (Mark 8:31, Isa 52:13-53:12).

2. Jesus turns the same question to the disciples, and Peter responds, "You are the Christ (v.29)."
  - Peter is right. Jesus is the Christ. Why do you suppose that Jesus warns the disciples not to tell anyone that he is the Christ?

<sup>1</sup> Christ (**Χριστός**) from the Greek or Messiah (**מָשִׁיחַ**) from the Hebrew literally means "Anointed One."

<sup>2</sup> For example see John 6:15. Also J.Julius Scott Jr. *Jewish Backgrounds of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995), 307-323.

- Why is Peter upset by Jesus' description of the things that are going to happen?
  - In what way, has Peter set his mind on "the things of man" rather than "the things of God?"
  - What kinds of false expectations do people have about Jesus today? What do they expect him to do for them?
  - What does it really mean for Jesus to be the Christ? What has he done? What power and authority does he have? What does this mean for us?
3. Before going on to parallel passages in Matthew and Luke, take a moment to summarize this passage from Mark.
- What is the main point?

**Read: Matt 16:13-23**

**Observe, Discuss and Apply**

4. Compare Matthew's account to the one in Mark. The major difference between the two is Jesus' response to Peter in vv 17-19.
- Why is it significant that Peter's confession is a gift from God?
  - What is gained by adding this material?
  - Has the main point of the passage changed?
  - What else do you notice? How these are accounts the same? How are they different?

**Read: Luke 9:18-22**

**Observe, Discuss and Apply**

5. Compare Luke's account to the ones in Matthew and Mark.
- What do you notice? How these are accounts the same? How are they different?

<p><i>"But who do you say that I am?" (Mark 8:29)</i></p>
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