

How many people today, perhaps church people too, don't mind a Jesus who is the Christ in some political sense but we need Jesus Who is the Christ in a salvation sense. Man repeatedly forgets and undermines that our greatest problem and the root of all our miseries is our sins and sinfulness. But more than anything else always we are in need of an almighty God-anointed, God-approved, God-equipped Saviour from our sins, and Jesus Christ alone is that great and glorious most gracious Saviour for us. See Him here in His devotion to His title, Christ, and all that it truly means.

For what does the text tell us when Jesus Christ speaks of the suffering and death to come and Peter rebukes Him for it and would stop Him from so speaking? Then Jesus responds very emphatically and pointedly and He solemnly addresses Peter saying, as Mark 8:33 records, "*Get thee behind Me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men.*" Oh, what strong language Jesus uses here, calling His dear disciple, Peter, Satan in this case. Why did He do so? Because Satan was behind this word of Peter. Satan didn't want Jesus to fulfill His calling as the Christ, and the devil would use even His closest disciples to try to tempt and dissuade Jesus from so fulfilling His God-given role as Messiah. Oh, , Jesus saw the sly wicked serpent slithering near in and through the words of Peter here, and He strongly reacted against it, not willing for a second to entertain anything but God's will for Him as the Christ, and what He knew was so absolutely necessary for our salvation through Him as the Christ. When we think of people naturally, we don't see the root problem we have and skip over it as if it is nothing so serious but we need Jesus to be the Christ on the cross for sin and raised from the dead again, shall anyone be actually saved and find truth, and be redeemed and ruled triumphantly in this life and forevermore.

Thank God Jesus came as the Christ and the Christ He would be for people like us, foolish, sinful, and blind by nature. The Christian glories in the fact that Jesus is the Christ How our Scripture passage seeing Jesus draw out this title concerning Him for us and being so devoted to this title concerning Him for us gives reasons to glory in Jesus being the Christ indeed. Does this same conviction and testimony ring in your heart too seeing the Scriptures before us and it's proclamation of Jesus as the Christ? Amen!

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BANNER OF TRUTH RADIO BROADCAST

Radio Ministry of the FREE REFORMED CHURCHES of North America

Thou hast given a banner to them that fear thee that it may be displayed because of the truth. (Psalm 60:4)



JESUS IS THE CHRIST

Dear friends, looking at Mark 8:27-33 we find Jesus both drawing out His title, Christ, for us, and then we see Him so devoted to this title, Christ. His personal name, Jesus, means Savior. Christ, which is his official name, means the Anointed One, and in Old Testament terms, the Messiah. How important that we always remember whenever you think of Jesus that He is Christ Jesus, or Jesus Christ. Beware of anyone and everyone who say they believe in Jesus but won't acknowledge Him as the Christ. The theme for this message is "Jesus' devotion to His title, Christ". We see it in His instruction to His disciples about this title and then His insistence on being true to this title. There is so much gospel in what you are about to hear.

Our Scripture passage tells us in a time when Jesus was alone with His disciples, He then asks them, "*Whom do men say that I am?*" The disciples mention that some say He was John the Baptist raised from the dead, others Elijah, the great prophet of old, or simply one of the prophets. Here we learn the people in general were certainly saying and thinking Jesus was some special person. He was someone Who spoke with authority and He was someone unique. Today too, many people think some great things about Jesus, but when you are a true Christian you don't just believe some great things about Jesus. No, you believe something very special about Jesus. What is that?

We are told Jesus then asks the disciples, in verse 29, "*But whom say ye that I am?*" And Peter answers the question, we may believe also on behalf of all the others, saying to Jesus, "*Thou art the Christ.*" What a confession this was on the part of Peter and the disciples. For the title "Christ" means the Anointed One, the Messiah. Peter was here confessing, 'We believe, Jesus, You are the One God promised of old, and the one sent of God and anointed and approved of God and equipped by God to be the Great Deliverer of Your people.' In saying Jesus is the Christ, Peter and the disciples here were saying they believe He was the One that all the Old Testament was foretelling would come, and that all the Old Testament foreshadowed; they were saying now with Jesus, at last, the full revelation of God had come, and now all the promises of God would be fulfilled, yes, in and through Christ Jesus.

"*Thou art the Christ*" says Peter. What a confession this was and is, especially also when you think of the term 'anointed one' in the light of the

Old Testament. In that time, prophets were anointed into their office, and priests were anointed as well as kings, and now Jesus has come into this world as the anointed Prophet, Priest, and King for us. God has all His people know and believe and confess about Jesus that He is the Christ! For all true knowledge of God, we are thus to look to Him; for all true salvation from God, we are to call to Him; for all true guidance from God, we are to follow after Him and His Word. Jesus being the Christ makes Him to be the Saviour of sinners so reliable and rich and real. Do you realize this too and glory in this fact as well? The Christian glories in the fact that Jesus is the Christ, seeing Him truly as such and needing Him so much as such, yes, as your chief Prophet and only High Priest and Eternal King!

But it is a fact that often we don't so glory in Christ Jesus as we might and should. We can be so blind to the true gospel concerning Jesus as the Christ. We see that also in our Scripture passage with Peter. But notice with me now further how Jesus goes on to show, after His instruction about Himself as the Christ, His insistence on truly being the Christ for people like us. In Mark 8:27-33, in at least three ways we can see Jesus so devoted to this title, Christ. It would be good if you had your Bible open to this passage, so you can follow along here.

Notice for one, Jesus' insistence that they should tell no one about Him as the Christ as verse 30 states. This was actually strictly warned or charged by Jesus in devotion to the title, Christ. Let me explain. You see, Jesus knew well that the people would not understand what God meant with Him come as the Christ. The people, even God-fearing Jews, yes, the disciples too, had such an earthly idea of Jesus being the Christ. They thought with Him being the Christ that He would deliver them from the Romans, and set up an earthly kingdom, and Jesus would be earthly ruler over all and finally all His people triumphant and free. Jesus knew if the people would rally behind Him as the Christ in a political sense, at that point then His real purpose for coming to this earth and His ultimate work as the Christ as Saviour from sin would no longer have the preeminence.

But it must have the preeminence and so it is also that just before His crucifixion it is Jesus Himself Who then lets the Jewish religious authorities and the masses of people know that indeed, He is the Christ. Jesus testifies of this when on trial before Pilate in Matthew 26:63&64. It was Jesus' death on the cross that would finally so prove and display His messiah-ship, and following His death and resurrection, this is what all the world needs to hear and know, that Jesus is the Christ! But right at that time, with His 'slow to learn' disciples and the masses too, this great truth needed yet to be kept secret somewhat, not because God would not already then have it known, but because people would so twist that truth and make it something other than God designed and Jesus desired. Because of hearty

devotion to the title Christ for us, Jesus would keep it under wraps for the time being, even as He began to unfold this great truth to His disciples.

We see further Jesus' devotion to this title, Christ, as immediately following this revelation of His true identity, He foretells in verse 31 how "*He must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.*" Why does Jesus say this here? Because it is so intimately related to what it means that He is the Christ. As the Chief Prophet Who would verify and fulfill all the Scriptures and prove God's Word so penetratingly and pricelessly true, Jesus as the Christ would have to give His life a ransom for many. As the anointed High Priest in fulfillment of all the priesthood and sacrifices of the Old Testament, He would have to lay down His life for His sheep and shed His blood as the once for all sacrifice for sin, and be the High Priest Who sits down forever at the right hand of God in the Temple above! And as the anointed King, He would have to rule with perfect justice and holiness and mercy and love and compassion, and give all wise, all-powerful, everlasting guidance and rule and protection over His sheep. But this would mean that He would have to conquer sin, Satan, death, and hell once for all for all His people as the reigning ruling King of kings. So in devotion to the title Christ, Jesus refers to His coming suffering and death, emphasizing this as an absolute necessity for Him as Jesus the Christ. You shouldn't miss what verse 32 says here, "*And He spake that saying openly*". In the original the text reads, 'Jesus kept on saying this boldly and frankly and unreservedly'. So while the title, Christ, was to be kept in the background still, Jesus would so emphasize and bring out the work of Christ the Saviour in all three offices as well as the climax of it all, His suffering and death on the cross in the place of sinners, and His resurrection from the dead three days later.

Oh, shall we not pause and marvel at His devotion to His title, Christ? Jesus Christ took His name and title so seriously. He would live up to it, no matter what! Jesus knew that only if He would truly be the Christ could anyone be truly saved. Should we not so thank the Saviour, Jesus Christ, for His insistence on being the Christ, His devotion to be the anointed faithful Saviour of sinners, no matter what, yes, even when His closest companions would deter Him from being the Christ in the real and only way He had to be and we so need Him to be.

Here I come also to the third way Jesus showed His devotion to the title, Christ. We are told in verse 32, when Jesus speaks of His suffering and death, Peter takes Jesus aside and starts to rebuke Him. In other words, Peter tells Jesus off and calls Him not to speak so about His sufferings and death, for according to Peter that must not and cannot happen to Jesus the Messiah! But Peter, do you know what you are saying? Obviously he didn't grasp the truth about Jesus being the Christ. Not in the least even!