

## Mark 8:27–33 — Do I Claim Jesus Without Submitting to The Plan Of Jesus?

**September 15, 2019**

Welcome to CrossWinds. This morning, we continue our study of the Gospel of Mark. Today we are looking at a time in the apostle Peter's life that was one of his best moments. Unfortunately, it was followed by one of his worst moments. As we will see, it is all too easy for us to follow in Peter's footsteps.

Last week, we learned the Gospel of Mark is divided into two big sections. The first half, which is Mark 1 to 8, answers the question, "Who is Jesus?" The second half, which is Mark 9 to 16, answers the question, "Why did Jesus come?" This morning, we are crossing the seam between these two sections in the middle of this book. We will see Peter get the right answer to the question, "Who is Jesus?" which hung over the first half of the book. Then, we will see Peter completely botch it up and get the wrong answer to the question that will dominate the second half of this book, "Why did Jesus come?" Let's read the text together before we study it.

And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" And they told him, "John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets." And he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered him, "You are the Christ." And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him. And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man." Mark 8:27–33 (ESV)

We are going to break our study under three broad headings. First, what did Peter get right? Second, what did Peter get wrong? Third, what can we learn from Peter's mistake?

### **Peter got the person of Jesus right.**

And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" Mark 8:27 (ESV)

The text begins by telling us "Jesus went on with his disciples." Where was Jesus leaving and where was Jesus going in this travel blog?

### **Jesus left Bethsaida.**

Bethsaida is a city on the northeast corner of the Sea of Galilee.

Bethsaida was the home of at least three of his apostles. It was a familiar place that Jesus and the apostles visited many times. Jesus had performed many miracles there. He had performed so many miracles and



received such a poor response from the people in the city that in Luke 10:14, Jesus said it would be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon on the Day of Judgment than for Bethsaida. Remember the identity of Tyre and Sidon. We studied them earlier in this Gospel. They were the Las Vegas of the day. They were hardcore pagan cities on the coast. They were cities where all the sailors came to unwind when they got off the boat. Jesus only did one low profile miracle in those cities. On the other hand, Bethsaida was a nice Jewish community. Jesus performed many miracles in Bethsaida, but the people did nothing more than look at Jesus

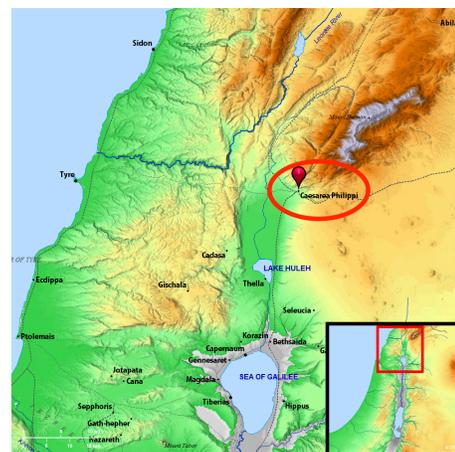
like he was entertainment at the Clay County Fair. Since the people of Bethsaida had so much evidence for the identity of Christ with so little response to Jesus, Bethsaida will be judged more strictly on the Day of Judgment than the hardcore sinful cities of Tyre and Sidon. This is a powerful reminder to each of us that the more we know about Christ, the more responsible we are to live for Christ. We are responsible to respond to live by the light God has given each of us about the true identity of Jesus.

Bethsaida was known for its fishing industry. On the Sea of Galilee, this was the city where fishermen docked their boats and sold their fish to be salted and exported around the ancient world. The name of the city reveals the centrality of the fishing business to the city. Bethsaida literally means house of fish or fish city in Hebrew. This is why three of Jesus' disciples, who were fisherman, came from the city.

Last week, we saw Jesus healed a blind man in Bethsaida. He didn't perform that miracle publicly but privately for his disciples. It was a unique miracle because Jesus healed this man in stages. If you want to know why Jesus healed this man in stages, I refer you to last week's message. At this point, Jesus left Bethsaida and headed out of town. Let's see where Jesus went.

**Jesus traveled to Caesarea Philippi.**

Jesus took his disciples 25 miles north to Caesarea Philippi. This was considered one



of the last cities in Israel before you left the territory of Israel. Caesarea Philippi was near the ancient Israelite town of Dan. In Judges 20:1, when it describes the territory of Israel, it says Israel ran from the city of Dan to Beersheba. Beersheba was the last town in the south of Israel. Dan was the last town in the north of Israel. Jesus took his disciples to the northern-most edge of Israel.

At this time, this area was not very Jewish. It was mostly populated by Gentiles. That was probably a good thing. I think the reason Jesus took his disciples to this city was to get away from the Jewish crowds there included either religious leaders that hated Jesus and wanted him dead or the common people who loved Jesus and wanted him to perform a miracle. Remember that everywhere Jesus went he was mobbed. Traveling to a pagan city in the northern tip of Israel was the only way Jesus and his disciples were going to be able to get some much needed rest.

This city was originally called Panaeas. That is because the city was originally named by the Greeks after the Greek god Pan. Maybe you have seen the Greek God pan. He is half goat and half man. He looks like an ugly version of Mr. Tumnus from the "Chronicles of Narnia." Supposedly that mythical Greek god was born in a cave near this town. That was the big tourist attraction that brought everybody to the city. "Come see the cave where the Greek god Pan was born."

At this time, the city was no longer called as Panaeas and had recently changed its name to Caesarea Philippi. Why did its name change? Let me tell you the backstory. Caesar Augustus originally gave this part of the world to Herod the Great to rule on behalf of Rome. When Herod the Great died, he split

his territory into four parts, giving a quarter of his territory to each of his four sons. This part fell into the hands of his son named Herod Phillip. Herod Phillip was known as Phillip the Tetrarch. Tetrarch means a ruler of a quarter.

When territory like this falls into your hands, in that day it was politically wise to go out of your way to please the Roman emperor and show him your loyalty so he didn't try to get rid of you. One of the ways you did this was by changing the name of an important city in your empire to something Caesar would like. That is what Herod Phillip did. He renamed Panaeas to Caesarea, which means Caesar city. Herod Phillip was sucking up big time to the Roman emperor. The problem was he wasn't the only one sucking up to the emperor by renaming an important city after him. In time there were multiple Caesareas in the ancient world so you needed to specify which Caesarea you were talking about. This one was known as Caesarea Philippi because it was the Caesarea in Herod Phillip's territory. That is how they had a city named Caesarea Philippi in northern tip of Israel.

So Jesus and his disciples were on a brief vacation in pagan territory. That allowed Jesus to spend time training his disciples without being mobbed by the crowds asking for a miracle. As Jesus was walking with his disciples, he was talking with them. They had been together for two and a half years. Jesus was about ready to head to Jerusalem where he would die on the cross. Before he headed to Jerusalem, he gave his disciples a final exam. It was only two questions. The first question was the easier of the two. Let's look at their answer to the first final exam question, which was "Who do people say that I am?"

## Who do people say that I am?

And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.” Mark 8:28 (ESV)

Who Jesus was was the big question that hung over the first half of this gospel. Mark told us the right answer to this question in the first verse of this book. In Mark 1:1 Mark said Jesus is the Christ! In the earlier chapters, multiple times demons recognized Jesus as the Christ. Up to this point, no human being recognized Jesus as the Christ. What were people saying about Jesus?

### Some thought Jesus was John the Baptist back from the dead.

John the Baptist was an outspoken prophet who prepared the way for Jesus. He was dead at this point in our story. Herod Antipas, another tetrarch who was brother to Herod Phillip, was tricked into chopping off John’s head. We read about that earlier in Mark. When Herod Antipas heard about Jesus, he was filled with paranoia and thought Jesus was John the Baptist come back from the dead to haunt him. This really doesn’t make much sense because Jesus and John the Baptist lived at the same time. John the Baptist even baptized Jesus. We all know the way rumors get started, especially from people like Herod Antipas who was not near Galilee but was filled with paranoia. John the Baptist and Jesus did have mothers that were cousins so Jesus and John may have looked similar. So the story circulated that Jesus was John the Baptist come back from the dead to haunt Herod.

### Some thought Jesus was Elijah from the Old Testament.

Why would some people think Jesus was the Old Testament prophet Elijah come back from the dead? In Malachi, which is the last book of the Old

Testament, in Malachi 3:1 and 4:5-6, the prophet Malachi said Elijah would come to earth just prior to the Messiah's arrival to prepare the way for his coming.

Elijah was also a prophet that didn't die. He was taken to heaven in a chariot of fire so people thought maybe Jesus was the Elijah that the prophet Malachi predicted would come to prepare the way for the Messiah's return.

As we get a little further into the Gospel of Mark, we will see in Mark 9:11-13 that Jesus said John the Baptist was the Elijah that was to come. Outside of Jesus telling us that John the Baptist was the Elijah Malachi talked about, would anyone else have been able to come to that conclusion? If you study Elijah and John the Baptist, you find they had many similarities. John the Baptist was known for wearing a hairy garment, had a leather belt, and had an eccentric diet of bugs and honey. He also lived in the desert and was an outspoken prophet. If you look up Elijah in the Old Testament, guess how he dressed?<sup>1</sup> He wore a hairy garment, a leather belt, and also had an eccentric diet. He also spent lots of time in the desert and was an outspoken prophet. John the Baptist literally looked and acted like the Old Testament prophet Elijah!

**Some thought Jesus was just another prophet.**

The other option people gave for Jesus was that he was simply another prophets, like Moses.

Now that Jesus asked them what other people said about him, he asked them the million dollar question.

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<sup>1</sup> See 2 Kings 1:7-8

## Who do you say that I am?

And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.” Mark 8:29 (ESV)

Incidentally, this is the most important question anyone of us can answer. Everyone on the planet needs to answer this question. The right answer leads to heaven. The wrong answer means hell. Who do YOU say I am?

The Greek in this question is interesting. The word *you* is in the double emphatic. It is, “Who do YOU say that I am?” You can picture Jesus putting his finger in the chests of his disciples as he asked this question.

Lots of people have different answers to this question. Muslims will say Jesus was a prophet. They don't believe Jesus died and rose from the dead. Muslims claim Jesus was just a prophet but second to Mohammed. Jehovah's Witnesses says Jesus was the first created being, certainly not God in the flesh. Others says Jesus is a figment of history who didn't exist. How did Peter answer the most important question in the world?

Peter confessed Jesus as the Christ. He said Jesus was the long awaited Christ, the one the Bible said was chosen by God to come and save God's people in this world. As the Christ, he is the one chosen by God to bring history to its fulfillment. In the Old Testament, this person was called the Messiah. Christ in Greek and Messiah in Hebrew mean the same thing. They are just in different languages. This is a huge conclusion on Peter's part. When Peter claimed Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, he was claiming Jesus is the one who was chosen by God to save his people and wrap up history! How much bigger of a statement could Peter give?

We learned last week, that Peter actually didn't come to this massive conclusion on his own. It was a supernatural work of God to open Peter's eyes to see this. Look how the parallel account in Matthew finishes Peter's confession.

And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven." Matthew 16:17 (ESV)

At this point, Peter was at the high point of his life. Jesus said, "You got it right." This is a huge moment. I am sure Peter was busting shirt buttons as his chest puffed up in pride. Things couldn't get any better for Peter. He was the first one to recognize the identity of Jesus and be complimented by Jesus for doing it. Then things began heading in a different direction.

And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him. Mark 8:30 (ESV)

This is a very strange twist. Why would Jesus tell Peter and the other apostles to be quiet about his identity? If I was Peter, I would have taken a selfie with Jesus and posted it on social media that I figured out the true identity of Jesus. Why were Peter and the other disciples to be quiet about this? I will tell you. Their idea of what it meant for Jesus to be the Christ and Jesus' idea of what it meant for him to be the Christ were vastly different. Peter properly nailed the person of Christ, but he was way off base when it came to the plan of Christ. Let's see how Peter went from his best moment to his worst.

### What did Peter get wrong?

And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. Mark 8:31–32 (ESV)

This is the first time Jesus plainly taught that he was going to Jerusalem to suffer and die. If you are taking notes, circle the word *must*. Jesus must suffer. This was not optional. This was not just possible. This had to happen. Jesus had to be rejected. Jesus had to die. In the next two chapters, Jesus plainly told his disciples that he had to go to Jerusalem to suffer and die two more times, but each time the disciples failed to understand what he meant, even though he was talking plainly.<sup>2</sup>

In addition, you will notice Jesus identified himself as the Son of Man. In one sense, that just meant he was a human being. In this context it meant much more than just a human being. Jesus was identifying himself with the Son of Man from Daniel 7, and Jesus' disciples knew this. Let's read who the Son of Man was from Daniel 7.

I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. Daniel 7:13–14 (ESV)

When Jesus said he was the Son of Man from Daniel, he was identifying himself as the one who will set up an everlasting kingdom that will not end. He will rule over all people. He is the Christ, who will save God's people and wrap up history.

The part that doesn't make sense was that as the Christ and the Son of Man, he had to suffer many things, be rejected by the leadership of Israel, die, and rise in three days. Can you picture Peter trying to put these two pieces

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<sup>2</sup> Mark 9:31; Mark 10:233-34

together on what it meant for Jesus to be the Christ? I picture Peter's head cocked to the side looking like a dog that just heard a whistle. He couldn't figure this out.

Peter's background would have taught him that as the Christ, Jesus would be establishing a military kingdom. He would be leading Israel in the overthrow of the Romans. He would lead Israel to become the nation that ruled over the world. Jesus would be a worldwide king that sat on a throne and they would sit on thrones with him. The idea of Jesus coming to suffer, be rejected, and die was incomprehensible.

To show you how committed the disciples were to the concept of Jesus setting up an earthly political kingdom, look at Matthew 20. There we read that the mother of James and John came to Jesus and asked if her sons could sit at his right and left when Jesus established his kingdom. She, like the rest of the disciples, thought that as the Christ Jesus would set up an earthly political kingdom. Instead of Jesus using his power to calm a storm to protect his disciples, they envisioned Jesus creating a storm to send it on the Romans.

While Peter had things right, that he nailed the true identity of the person of Christ, he was dead wrong when it came to understanding the plan of what it meant for Jesus to be the Christ.

What happened next was amazing. Peter had just confessed Jesus as the Christ, the one who is qualified to wrap up history, yet Peter sat Jesus down, and gave him a lecture on how this plan to suffer and die in Jerusalem was all wrong. The word rebuke is a very strong word, especially in the Greek. It is the same

word Jesus used to cast out demons. Peter was a little full of himself for getting the right answer about Jesus' identity, so he told Jesus off.

I was reading this and thinking to myself, who did Peter think he was talking to Jesus like this? Was he nuts? Had he lost his marbles? How could he recognize Jesus as the Christ then have the audacity to tell Jesus his plan was messed up? I think Peter forgot who he was talking to, so Jesus put him in his place.

But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man." Mark 8:33 (ESV)

After Peter let Jesus have it, Jesus put him in his place and let Peter have it. The word rebuke is the same strong word used for Peter. Jesus said, "Who do you think you are? Don't claim that I am the one chosen by God to wrap up history, then have the gall to start lecturing me on how I should run history."

Jesus even said to Peter, "Get behind me Satan." You know that rebuke had to sting. Peter went from feeling proud of himself to feeling smaller than a peanut after Jesus cut him down to size. As we learned last week, this was an appropriate rebuke because Peter was doing the same thing Satan did when he tempted Jesus in the wilderness. He was telling Jesus he could be the king without a cross.

As I was thinking about this, there is an interesting application that came to mind that all of us can apply. How many times are we just like Peter? We claim Jesus as the Christ, but then we start lecturing Jesus on how to run the world. We think we know better how to run our lives than he does. Anybody every done

that? Lots of us call Jesus the Christ, but we are not willing to submit to his plan for our lives. We think we know better than Jesus on how to run the world.

Now, I am going to move from preaching to meddling. Let's look at how easy it is for us to be like Peter.

**How can we be like Peter? We recognize Jesus as the Christ, but we are not willing to submit to the plan of Jesus for our life.**

**We think suffering is NOT a normal part of the Christian life.**

This is what got Peter upset in the first place. As soon as Jesus started talking about suffering, Peter said, "Jesus, you must be wrong." Peter thought following Jesus would always be easy. He thought that following Jesus would lead to the overthrow of the Romans and putting him in charge which would mean a fat wallet and a fat waist. How many of us have thought that way? We call Jesus the Christ, but as soon as suffering comes into our lives, we want to sit Jesus down and tell him he has his plan wrong. The Bible says it doesn't work that way. Just as suffering was a part of God's plan for Jesus' life, suffering will be a part of God's plan for our lives. We will suffer as Christians. That is a normal part of God's plan, and sometimes we will never be able to explain why.

The Bible has an entire book about suffering called the book of Job. Job was the most righteous God-fearing guy to walk the face of the earth. His life was perfect, yet his life completely fell apart. He lost all of his wealth and all of his children and God never gave him a reason why it happened. Even at the end of the book after God restored to Job many blessings, Job was still not given a reason for why the earlier part of his life fell apart. As far as he knew, he suffered

for no good reason. We must expect that in God's plan for our lives, there will also be unexplained times of suffering.

How should we handle suffering when it comes our way? The Bible tells us how we respond to suffering depends on the kind of suffering we are facing. If the suffering comes from inside us, like the temptation to control of our sexual appetite or our physical appetite with food, we are to run from temptation. We are not to negotiate with temptations that come from inside of us. We are to flee. Do not go to Spudnuts, look at the donuts and tell yourself you will not eat one. Flee from temptation. Get in the car and drive away as fast as you can.

If the suffering comes from outside of us — like a difficult marriage, or someone that is not treating you right at work, or a difficult relationship with your child — we are to bear up under those kinds of trials and ask God for strength to endure them. We are not to flee from them but ask God for strength and wisdom to endure them. If your marriage is difficult, do not flee it by getting a divorce and running away. If your children are difficult, do not flee them by disowning them and never talking to them. We ask God for strength to endure those times and bear up under those times.

We must remember that Jesus told us to expect suffering. Just as suffering was part of God's plan for Jesus' life, suffering will be part of God's plan for your life and mine. If we claim Jesus as our Christ, we have no right to try to sit God down when suffering comes and tell him he has the plan wrong. Let me show you some verses to illustrate my point.

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery trial when it comes upon you to test you, as though something strange were happening to you. 1 Peter 4:12 (ESV)

Trials are a normal part of the Christian life.

Indeed, all who desire to live a godly life in Christ Jesus will be persecuted... 2 Timothy 3:12 (ESV)

God promises us we will suffer for following Christ. It is a forgone conclusion. If you are a student, expect there will be things your friends do that you cannot do with them because you know they are wrong. When you say, “No” to joining them, expect to suffer. Don’t freak out when that happens. Expect that will happen. As a Christian, expect there will be times at work when you choose to do what is ethically right and your coworkers will be frustrated with you because of it. They will pick on you. You will suffer for being a Christian. That is a normal part of the Christian life. If you are a single Christian looking to get married, you can decide to marry simply anyone of the opposite sex that has a heartbeat or you can limit yourself to someone of the opposite sex that loves Jesus. If you do that, expect your options to be limited. You will spend time being lonely. That is not unusual. That is suffering that is a normal part of the Christian life. We need to expect it.

We must not do the Peter. Let us not name Jesus as the Christ, then when we suffer, try to tell Jesus he has the wrong plan for our life.

**We think forgiveness is optional, not a requirement.**

Did you know Jesus said the way I forgive others is the way Jesus will forgive me?

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Matthew 6:14–15 (ESV)

There are no exceptions on this. We have been completely forgiven by Jesus. We must be completely forgiving of others. Jesus gave us no exceptions on this one. Those who are completely forgiven must be completely forgiving. It is easy to call Jesus the Christ, and forgive most people, but have a few people who hurt us deeply that we do not want to forgive. We tell Jesus that we will forgive everyone except this person. They are too evil. They hurt me too badly. That is being just like Peter.

Before we go too far and you misunderstand this, you need to know that forgiveness does not mean the removal of all consequences. Forgiveness does not mean you invite the person who tried to kill you over to your house for Thanksgiving dinner then give him the big knife, turn your back and ask him to carve the turkey. That is not forgiveness. That is foolishness.

Forgiving someone also doesn't mean that person now needs to become your best friend. Maybe the way she hurt you means you now know she has a seriously deep character flaw in her lives and you need to limit the amount of trust you have with her.

What does forgiveness mean? Forgiving someone means you turn something over to God and leave what that person has done to hurt you at God's feet. You no longer look for an opportunity to get revenge. You no longer look for ways to put that person down and hurt him. You let God deal with it. Forgiveness also means you decide to no longer let that person and what she did to you keep dominating your thought life. When we don't forgive and keep rehashing the person and situation over and over again, we turn the poison that was given to us

into more poison inside of us. We poison ourselves by holding the hurt and rehashing the hurt.

Forgiveness means we let the hurt go and give the situation to God so he can take care of it. God says, "Vengeance is mine. I will repay." God may decide to take care of things by punishing that person. God may also decide to take care of things by bringing that person to repentance. That is not our call. If we forgive people, we leave the hurt at the feet of Jesus, move on and refuse to dwell on it any more.

As I talk about this, I know some of you have a person that keeps coming to mind. A person you are still angry at. A person whose coffee you want to spit in when you see them. If you have that person, don't do the Peter. Don't claim Jesus as the Christ, then refuse to follow Jesus' plan for your life and be unforgiving.

**We think God is pleased with giving him a bit of what we have left instead of the first-fruits of all we receive.**

Jesus said how we handle our money reveals more about the true maturity of our hearts than anything else. Jesus talked about money more than he talked about heaven and hell combined. Jesus said what we do with our money is a true reflection of our hearts and priorities.

Why do we give of our money to God? Giving of our wealth is an act of gratitude and worship. God loves us so much that he paid the most costly price possible to save us. He gave his own son to die on the cross and pay for all of our sin. God freely, through his son, took us from an eternity in hell to an eternity in heaven. He made us the most blessed beings in the universe as a gift.

What we do with our money shows the true level of gratitude in our hearts for what Christ has done. If we just give God a little bit of money from what we have leftover in our wallet, that is not a statement of love and gratitude to him. The Bible says God always deserves what is first and what is best from us. That is why what we give to him should be our first-fruits. We give him what is first and what is best as an act of worship and an expression of our gratitude to him for what he has done for us. There is no way to avoid it. Giving God a tip out of what we have leftover is a statement that we don't love him that much and we don't appreciate what he has done for us.

A long time ago, Christians started using the word tithe. Tithing comes from the Old Testament. It means giving a tenth. Many Christians give a tithe of their income to their church as the first check after their paycheck. There is nothing wrong with that. That is a good guideline for many people to use. In the New Testament, the Bible doesn't say Christians are to give a tithe. According to 2 Corinthians 9, we are to give to God generously, proportionately, sacrificially, and joyfully. That may be more than a tithe because a tithe because for you may not be sacrificial. In some cases, it may be less than a tithe.

Do you know what percentage the average Christian in the church gives of their income to the Lord? Two percent. This means the average Christian gives a twelfth to the Lord, not a tithe to the Lord.

The key thing to remember is that God is concerned we give to him what is first and best, not last and leftovers. That is what he deserves. Let's look at some verses.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. Luke 12:34 (ESV)

You can also say that where your heart is, there your treasure will be. Not only does how we give reveal our hearts, but how we give guides our hearts. One of the ways we can grow our love for Jesus is in faith we give what is first and best to Jesus.

Honor the Lord with your wealth and with the firstfruits of all your produce; then your barns will be filled with plenty, and your vats will be bursting with wine. Proverbs 3:9–10 (ESV)

Proverbs says that as a general rule of thumb if you want God's hand of blessing on your life and your work, develop the habit of giving him the first-fruits of your income. God loves to bless the people who live that way.

Let us not be like Peter in this areas. Let us not claim Jesus is the Christ, but when it comes to our finances, tell Jesus we don't like his plan. God doesn't know what he is talking about. It doesn't work that way.

**We think sex outside of marriage is innocent fun, not sinful and destructive.**

Sex is a great gift of God. Can I have a show of hands from the married couples who think sex is enjoyable? I hope every married person's hand is up. Sex is great. It bonds people together. It adds excitement to life. It is better than sitting in front of the computer watching reruns on Youtube.

But outside of marriage, sex will destroy you. I know there are plenty of people today who call Jesus the Christ but don't think Jesus knows what he is talking about on this topic. They claim there is nothing wrong with living together before marriage and sleeping together before marriage. They claim they will get married in the future. We live in the modern era. Today it is try before you buy.

Today we need to make sure we are sexually compatible before we get married.

Jesus really needs to modernize his views on sexuality and loosen up a bit.

Everybody else is doing it. Really? Look what the Bible says about this.

Flee from sexual immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the sexually immoral person sins against his own body. 1 Corinthians 6:18 (ESV)

God promises us that premarital sex and extramarital sex is not just sin. It will hurt you. God promises that living together without that lifelong commitment, will always hurt you. It will never help you. It may feel good, but over time God tells you it won't be good. Sex inside of marriage will always help your relationship. Sex outside the covenant of marriage will always hurt your relationship.

Sex inside of marriage is a good thing. In 1 Corinthians 7, married couples are commanded to not abstain from sexual activity with one another. God commands married couples to be sexually intimate frequently!

On the other hand, God promises judgment on people when they choose intimacy outside of marriage.

Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled, for God will judge the sexually immoral and adulterous. Hebrews 13:4 (ESV)

Some of you here this morning are living together. If that is you, God calls you to repent. Make the hard choice to either move out or to get married. Others of you have lived with someone in the past or been intimate with someone in the past that is not your spouse. If that is you, God calls you to confess your sin to him and confess your sin to those you have sinned against, then trust in his forgiving and restoring power. It doesn't mean there will not be consequences to

sin. There are always consequences for sin, but Jesus forgives sin and offers to restore and use broken people.

How many of us are like Peter on this one? We claim Jesus as the Christ but tell Jesus he doesn't know what he is talking about when it comes to sex and relationships. We think we know better than God. It doesn't work that way.

**We think a successful child is more important than a godly child.**

**For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? Mark 8:36 (ESV)**

In our culture, there is a lot of pressure to raise successful children who go to a good college, get a great education and start an amazing job to secure a good financial future. Unfortunately, many parents make it their highest priority to raise successful children, not to raise godly children. If you raise a financially successful son or daughter but his or her character stinks and he or she walks away from the faith, you will be heartbroken. At the end of the day, you will not care about how much money your children make if their character or their walk with Christ is obliterated. On the other hand, if you raise a son or daughter that loves Jesus, that is a man or woman of character, but they are average, you will be thrilled.

Peter said, "Jesus, you are the Christ, but let me tell you how to run things because I know better." We wouldn't do that? Would we?



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