

The secret Jesus, the suffering Jesus, the sifting Jesus

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[0 : 0 0] again let's pray for a moment as we turn back to the passage in Mark our heavenly father we thank you for these prayers that you you give us in the the psalms and we would ask with the psalmist that you would show us your ways and that you would teach us your paths that you would lead us in the way of truth lord that in the power of your spirit you would be our teacher we know that there is salvation in no other name and no other place no other way except through christ and we pray that as we hear his words recorded for us that they would come to us in the power of the holy spirit that we would we would hear jesus speaking to to us just as as peter saw the eyes of jesus meet his own eyes we pray that we would have that personal touch through your word that this would not simply be a message far removed from us by history and geography but lord that you would meet with us and that we would have a a new encounter with the living and true god so be near to us we pray help us we ask for we pray this in jesus name amen mark chapter 8 and if you could look at the the passage that we read when you look back on on your life and various of us are we're all at different stages in life some are relatively young some are middle-aged some are at about longer than the tooth but when we look back over our lives even if we're in the young category there's certain points that you recognize in life to have been critical points decisions that we've made that have had a real impact on on the subsequent years answers to questions that we have have had directed towards us we can think back to conversations where questions were asked and we we gave an answer and and that answer was a weighty one and it shaped a lot of the course of the of the years following situations we've been in responses that we've we've made that have shaped the whole course of our life from that point and this was one of these points in the life of jesus disciples and peter especially jesus asked him a question in verse 29 he says who do you say that i am and peter's response to that question that was to shape the course of the rest of his life and our response to that question which comes to us which comes to us today in and through the word of god as we we hear jesus speak he speaks to us and he says to to you and i as individuals what he said to peter he says who do you say that i am and our response to that question which we will make before we walk out that door it is a response that will shape our lives our response to that question will determine whether we live for ourselves for our comfort for our security for our reputation for our glory or whether we live for christ

and his glory our response to our glory our response to this question that that comes to us in god's word as we hear it today it will determine how we spend our money it will determine how we use our time it will determine what we do with the the talents that and the gifts that god has given us our response to our response to that question will have a big impact on on the person that we marry if we marry it will have a an impact on the place that we work and what we put our hand to our response to that question will affect virtually everything about our lives here in time but it won't stop there our response to that question will determine where we will be for all eternity whether we will be with christ forever in heaven or whether we will be apart from christ forever in torment and torment and in hell these are stark realities that come from this very direct question it is the most important question you and i will ever be asked and so our response to it is critical what's uh peter's response as it's recorded here in this section well peter says to jesus in verse 29 he says you are the christ and that was the the biggest moment possibly in peter's life he responds to jesus by saying you are the christ you're not just another prophet you're not just another rabbi in a line of rabbis you're just not another teacher that that comes along our way you're not simply a philosopher that seems to be head and shoulders above the rest you're not simply a miracle worker but you are the christ says peter you're the promised messiah you're the the the holy one you are the only one who can save your people peter he saw it do you see it you know that's the first question in application this morning before we go any further do you see this do you have the clarity that the holy spirit gives and that peter had and that he spoke out do you see this this is why mark wrote the gospel as the holy spirit inspired him it's the gospel about jesus christ the son of god mark doesn't simply want you to be interested in the story that he tells he wants you through this to see and believe that jesus is the christ he is the son of god because it's only through believing in christ that we are saved and now that peter sees who jesus is jesus begins to teach him why he came and what kind of christ he would be there's three points this morning in the time that we have the first thing that jesus makes clear is that he is in that in that time the secret christ and the second thing we'll see is that

he is the suffering christ and the final thing we have in these verses is that he is the suffering christ first of all in the secret christ i haven't said much about this on route through mark although uh this is probably the most commonly asked question i've had at the door in relation to some of the passages that we've studied that quite a number of of times jesus warns people not to tell who he is and that to us it just seems to be a bizarre thing why would jesus want to keep his identity as as the christ as the son of god secret and yet he certainly does right up through to this point if you have your bibles open let's just look in a couple of places now so you can see this mark chapter 1 verse 44 the account is the account where jesus heals the man with leprosy and after the man is healed in verse 44 jesus sent him away it says with a strong warning see that you don't tell this to anyone seems strange because the gospel from verse 1 of chapter 1 is the good news about jesus christ the son of god it's news you don't bury news you tell news so why is he saying in the same chapter don't tell this to anyone mark chapter 5 verse 43 i'm not giving you an exhaustive list just a sample after raising up jesus' daughter jesus gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this he's raised a little girl from the dead but he wants no one to know mark chapter 7 verse 36 this is the situation where jesus has healed the deaf and the mute man and yet jesus commanded them not to tell anyone mark chapter 8 and verse 26 just in the previous section after healing the blind man jesus sent him home saying don't go into the village why was he not to go into the village because if he went into the village he would speak because although he told all these people don't tell they blabbed it things became more and more difficult as they did and so jesus says don't go into the village and now mark chapter 8 verse 30 after peter's good confession this is a point to celebrate we think peter who's actually quite dense on some occasions which is of great encouragement to people like me and yet when he sees finally that jesus is the christ you would think that jesus would be saying let's tell everybody for their encouragement peter he now sees it but jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him so the question is why why is jesus the secret christ at this point why does jesus not want people to know that he is the christ that's the question and the answer to the question i think is that the people and we're including the disciples in this they didn't yet understand what it meant to be the christ we've heard a whole lot of rhetoric over the past few weeks perhaps months even about the need for a leader who would unite this country and lead the country from a position of apparent chaos and weakness

into a position of stability and strength make great britain great again is a cry that we've heard on not a few occasions in past months that's where as a country we've been that's what our news headlines have been talking into and actually that's not too far from where the jews were at this point in time that was the ambition of the jew they were under roman rule at this point the harsh tyrants and their rule were over the jewish people so as a nation politically they were oppressed you know in themselves they were depressed and so they were looking for one who would come in great power and might to save them there was a messiah that was spoken of in the pages of scripture the prophets spoke about a messiah a saviour who would come and they were looking for this saviour they were looking for this warrior king who would come and give the romans what they deserved they were looking for this political genius who would be able to come in and overthrow the roman empire and lead them into times of prosperity they were looking for the christ but the christ they were looking for was not the christ that jesus came to be and if they were paying attention to their old testament it's not the christ they should have been looking for jesus didn't come to be the commander of armies he didn't come to be the one who would dominate world politics he didn't come to to be some master economist who would deal with their flagging economy the work that jesus came to do was far greater than that jesus didn't come to be the christ that so many of them wanted but he came to be the christ that they needed and until they knew their need until jesus preaching and teaching began to penetrate the souls of the disciples who would be charged to carry this gospel message forward jesus demanded that his identity be kept secret that's the reason i think that jesus required that he would be the secret christ meantime the people needed to know their need in order that they would see and seek the christ do you and i know our need this morning of jesus do we see and do we feel our need of the christ there's lots of people who want a little bit of jesus in their lives they want a jesus who will dance to their tune they want a christ who will fit into their busy schedule without too much disruption there's lots of people who want a christ who will give them an injection of health when they're feeling a bit off colour who will give them a bit of a financial boost when they're getting into the red who will give them some direction and assurance and steadiness when they're confused

and feeling unstable but who will stay out of the way the rest of the time and that's not the christ jesus was or ever will be jesus would not fit in with the religious and the political expectations of the jews and he will not just fit in to the compartments of our lives that we invite them into and stay out of the areas of our lives that we would rather he does not touch he's a much greater christ than that he demands much more than that as we're going to see so first of all the secret christ secondly jesus reveals himself he teaches the disciples that he will be the suffering christ look at verse 31 he then began to teach them that the son of man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders chief priests and teachers of the law and that he must be killed and after three days rise again he spoke plainly about this and peter took him aside and began to rebuke him but when jesus turned and looked at his disciples he rebuked peter get behind me satan he said you do not have in mind the things of god but the things of men the word that i want to underline in that section there from verse 31 to verse 33 it is the word must underline it in your bible must he then began to teach them the moment that he reveals to peter and peter sees that jesus is the christ instantly jesus begins to teach him the son of man must suffer not may suffer but he must suffer that's why jesus came jesus knew that he came not to be a celebrity he came not to receive a warm embrace from the world but he came to be despised and he came to be rejected jesus knew that there could be no christ without a cross jesus knew and was making clear that there could be no salvation without suffering and that was the message that that came through so clearly 600 years before christ came and probably the the clearest portrait of of the messiah that we have in the old testament we cannot miss the fact that he came to suffer isaiah 53 if you'd go there just for a moment please isaiah 53 as isaiah speaks beyond himself as the holy spirit inspires him he gives a portrait of the christ that was to come it says there in verse 3 he was despised and rejected by men a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised and we esteem to him not surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows yet we considered him stricken by god smitten by him and afflicted but he was pierced for our transgressions he was crushed

[20 : 08] listen to the language of suffering he was crushed for our iniquities the punishment that brought us peace was upon him by his wounds we are healed we all like sheep have gone astray every one of us has turned to his own way and the lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all see the christ must suffer if we are to be saved sin bears a cost i think because we have been conditioned these days to take sin so lightly we struggle to come to terms with this but we come to the bible to learn true economics and the fact is sin bears a cost each offence carries a price and a god of justice rightly demands that the price be paid and yet a god of love and grace pays the price himself for us imagine you're in a home to be invited for your dinner and just finish your pudding and you're relaxing and you stretch out put your arm back and bam always wakes up one or two over goes the vase smashes into a thousand pieces and you instinctively say I'm sorry I'm so sorry

I'll pay for it and usually the host will say don't be ridiculous don't be daft you don't need to pay for it don't worry about it just forget about it let's just enjoy the coffee and the chocolates and so you leave the house and the vase is smashed and you haven't paid for it then in three months time you're back to the same house and you glance over to the place where the vase was there's a new expensive looking vase on the table the vase is replaced you didn't pay for it somebody had to though and that's gospel economics sin carries a cost someone has to pay for it because God is a God of justice he's a God who is not prepared to turn a blind eye to the horrors and the injustices of this world and the horrors and the injustices of our hearts sin carries a cost someone has to pay for it but the question is who and the teaching of scripture is for those who do not trust Christ they will pay eternally for their own sin through the sufferings of hell it's not a popular truth but it's a very crystal clear truth that Jesus returned to more than anyone else in all of scripture if we will not trust him if we will determine that we will remain in our sin our sin must be paid for and hell is the place that we will have to go to pay the sufferings for our sin that's the bad news but the good news of the gospel is that for those who do trust

Christ for those who come in faith to him for those who ask Jesus to deal with their sin Jesus would go to a cross to suffer that's what he's teaching them he would go to a cross to pay the price for the sin that he did not commit but that we have committed he suffered in order that we could be forgiven he suffered in order that we could be saved he suffered in order that we could escape the sufferings of hell and enter into heaven he's the suffering Christ and this is the offer of the gospel he offers to suffer for your sin and mine so that we could be forgiven and he warns us that if we will not allow him to we will have to suffer for our sin eternally how could anyone resist such an offer how could any of us say no to Christ unknowingly and recklessly career into a lost eternity

J.C. Ryle says his death and passion were necessary in order to make atonement for man's sin without shedding his blood there could be no remission without the sacrifice of his body on the cross there could be no satisfaction to God's holy law he must suffer to make reconciliation for iniquity he must die because without his death as a propitiatory offering sinners could never have life he must suffer because without his vicarious sufferings our sins could never be taken away in our word he must be delivered for our offenses and raised again for our justification here says Ryle is the center truth of the bible peter didn't yet understand this and that's why he takes Jesus aside and in verses 32 and 33 peter tries to take Jesus off the course of the cross and in doing so peter echoed the words of Satan who in the temptation offered Jesus a kingdom without a cross and so when Jesus heard these words of Satan through Peter he rebukes him sternly the son of man the Christ must suffer said Jesus you know anyone who tells you there's a lot of you I don't know here today I don't know where you're from I don't know where you worship but if you worship anywhere if you get your theology from a newspaper I'm not sure but let me say this clearly anyone who tells you that you can be saved apart from the sufferings of Christ is singing the devil's song anyone who tells you that you can have peace with God apart from the cross of Christ is doing the devil's work and I don't care whether they wear a clerical collar or not anyone who takes you away from the sufferings of Christ and seeks to distract from that is motivated by Satan Christ had to suffer if we were to be saved and he was willing to suffer in order that we could be saved take a moment just to think about that think about the absolute necessity of the sufferings of Jesus let me do that it should fill us with the deepest sorrow that our sin my sin should cause Christ to have to suffer but at the same time this truth should fill us with the greatest joy that we should be so loved that he would be willing to suffer so that we could be saved

the secret christ the suffering christ finally briefly the sifting christ to sift is to separate when i think of the word sifting i can see the man in the country in western films you know with the cowboy hat and he's shaking the sifter in the river looking for gold separating the gravel and the sand and the dross from the metals that are precious sifting it's a sifting that goes on and jesus he begins to sift here the crowds were growing many many people and i wanted something from jesus some wanted more bread some wanted another healing touch some wanted to hear and just be taken by the amazing oratory of of christ they were there for all kinds of reasons they wanted to see more miracles they wanted they wanted to follow him for for what they could get whether it was material value or entertainment value and now jesus he says to the crowds to follow me as christ to follow me as christ means taking the same course that the christ will take which is a course of suffering and dying to self and to sin verse 34 then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said if anyone would come after me he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me for whoever wants to save his life will lose it but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it what good is it for a man to gain the whole world yet forfeit his soul or what can a man give an exchange for his soul if anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation the son of man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his father's glory with the holy angels when we think about leaders and crowds we are accustomed to hearing politicians make promises that will win votes we're often not convinced that they'll make good in the promises but they make promises to win votes they say attractive things so that the crowd will grow and stay with them but here Jesus makes some promises that will lose votes he says if you want to follow me you'll need to be willing to die is that literal but for many of the disciples almost all of them it was they would go on because of their faith in Christ and martyrdom and in many countries still today that's the that's the cross that some believers have to bear you know for us here in this place we're unlikely to face that anytime soon but we're still called to die we're called to die to sin and you know the sins that you struggle with just as i know the sins that i struggle with we're called to die to them not to play with them not to make room for them not to try and justify them but to die to them we're called to

[33 : 42] die to self in a self obsessed age Jesus calls us to die to self die to putting me and my and my and my plans and my ambitions and my comfort and my security and my reputation we're called to die to that we want to put that first Jesus says no put that aside die to all that die to self and rather he says you're going to have to put me first and follow me if you're going to call yourself a Christian JC Ryle says let us often ask ourselves whether our Christianity costs us anything listen to this this is a this is a sharp word into our day i think let us often ask ourselves whether our

Christianity costs us anything does it entail any sacrifice has it the true stamp of heaven does it carry any cross if not says well we may well tremble and be afraid we have everything to learn a religion which costs nothing is worth nothing it will do us no good in the life that now is it will lead to no salvation in the life to come let me finish today by by saying to each of us let's be sure that we are truly following Jesus we can sit in these chairs we can have our name on a church row but let's be sure that we are truly following

Jesus if an hour and a Wednesday night in the place of prayer prayer it is too high a price to pay as it seems to be for many are we truly following Christ stepping back from a relationship that is taking you further away from Jesus rather than closer to him is too much of a cost to bear we truly following Christ if cutting back on the hours that we spend in the workplace that we don't need to spend or in leisure and whatever it is that's got a grip of us or on our phones or in front of the television or in our beds in the morning if cutting back on these hours that we cherish so much is not something that we are prepared even to consider to spend time in prayer and being with

Jesus in the word are we really following Jesus if we're too ashamed if we're too ashamed to ask a friend to come to church if we're too embarrassed to speak to them about Jesus if we're too polite to speak up when the name of Jesus is taken in vain around us can we expect on the final day that Jesus will not be ashamed of us these are uncomfortable they're searching they're sifting questions but they're ones that Christ puts to us and we must face them in time before we meet him in eternity let's pray

Lord God you call us to follow you and we pray that as we as we meditate upon your word and as we ask that the Holy Spirit would not allow that word to be snatched from us but would press it upon our hearts we pray that you would give us clarity on where we stand before you we pray that there would be no one here who may be part of a church membership list or a regular attender in a church fellowship here or elsewhere who on the final day will hear Jesus say depart from me I never knew you we ask

[39 : 28] Lord that you would search us and that you would know us that you would show us where we are before you and if we are still strangers to God even though we may be engaged in the practices and rituals of religion we pray that even today even before we leave this place we would bow before you repent of our sin and that we would turn away from the self worship that we are inclined to and seek your help in putting self to death and following Jesus so hear our prayers cleanse us from sin empty us of self save us in our souls and fill us with the Holy Spirit that we may be enabled to follow you and we pray this in Jesus name

Amen Wyoming Praise Himself for the His His Him LD Him Hy hy His making him Hum to He His Version installed Him by himula