



WOODLAND HEIGHTS

CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Questions Jesus Asked: Drawing Near to the Lord Part #1 – Who Do You Say I Am?

Small Group Discussion Guide on Mark 8:27-30

Woodland Heights Christian Church Core Value Connection

This sermon on Mark 8:27-30 directly connects with the core value of **Outreach** at Woodland Heights Christian Church. Outreach is about reaching out to others to share the Gospel and help them come to a deeper understanding of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

This core value emphasizes the church's mission to reach people with the Gospel, teach them the truths of Scripture, and serve others in the name of Christ. The sermon reflects this value by focusing on the pivotal question of Jesus, "Who do you say I am?" which challenges individuals to personally engage with His identity, authority, and authenticity as the Savior of the world.

Section #1 – ENCOUNTER

"Observing God's Word"

Imagine you're lost in a vast wilderness at night, surrounded by dense trees and unfamiliar sounds. Without a map, your only guide is the North Star, shining brightly to point you home. In Mark 8:27-30, Jesus' question, "Who do you say that I am?" is like that North Star, piercing through the darkness of worldly opinions to guide us to the truth of His identity. Just as the North Star provides direction, this question challenges you to anchor your faith in the reality of Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Savior of the World.

Let's start by anchoring ourselves in Scripture. Read Mark 8:27-30 (ESV) as a group, family, or an individual, letting God's Word sink in. Picture the scene: Jonah fleeing, the storm raging, the sailors trembling.

Core Questions

- What stands out to you about the setting (Caesarea Philippi) or the context of Jesus' question?
- What are key words, phrases, or themes that grab your attention in this text?
- What is the main lesson or lessons that God wants you to remember from this passage?

Section #2 – EXPLORE

“Understanding the Passage and Sermon”

Let’s unpack the two big questions that Jesus asks in this passage with reflection questions that connect the sermon’s insights to our lives. Discuss these as a group or reflect on them as an individual.

Quote – “Without Christ, all is lost. Without the Way, there is no going; without the Truth, no knowing; without the Life, no living.” – **Thomas à Kempis**, *The Imitation of Christ*

- Why is it essential to wrestle with how our culture would answer the question that Jesus asks, “Who do people say I Am?”

Answer the following questions to deepen your understanding of Mark 8:27-30 and the sermon’s insights. Encourage group members to reflect on how the sermon connects to their lives.

Stage #1 – The Core Question

The sermon notes that Jesus asked, “Who do people say that I am?” to help the disciples understand the culture’s beliefs about Him.

- Reflect on the sermon, what were some of the common views about Jesus in His time?
- How do these compare to modern beliefs about Jesus (56% of Americans believe Jesus was God, 26% see Him as a religious leader)?

Stage #2 – The Confusion of the Crowd

The sermon highlights that many in Jesus’ day were curious but confused about His identity, often honoring Him as a teacher or prophet but missing His true nature as the Christ.

- What are some ways people today misunderstand or misrepresent Jesus?
- Share an example of a misconception about Jesus you’ve encountered. How can we lovingly correct these misunderstandings while sharing the Gospel?

Stage #3 – The Clarity of Confession

Peter’s bold declaration, “You are the Christ,” is described as the only acceptable answer. The sermon emphasizes that confessing Jesus as the Christ compels us to live and speak as His people.

- Why is Peter’s confession so significant, and how does it challenge you personally?
- The sermon cites a 2023 Barna survey stating that only 44% of Christians regularly share their faith due to fear or lack of confidence. What holds you back from sharing your faith, and how can you overcome these barriers?

Quote – “We must not become preoccupied with a Christ of our own imagination. He must be the Christ of Scripture.” – **John Stott**

Section #3 – EMBRACE

“Applying God’s Word”

Go deeper by exploring how Mark 8:27-30 and the sermon’s insights can shape your life today. Discuss these application questions and commit to one actionable step this week.

Personal Reflection: Jesus’ question, “Who do you say that I am?” is deeply personal. Take a moment to answer this question for yourself. Write down or share how your confession of Jesus as the Christ shapes your daily decisions, relationships, or priorities.

- **Challenge:** Commit to one specific way you will live out your confession of Jesus this week (Examples: sharing your faith with a friend, serving someone in need, or studying Scripture to know Jesus better).

Scripture Connection: The sermon references 1 John 4:14, “We have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world.” Read this verse together and discuss how it reinforces Peter’s confession. How does testifying to Jesus’ identity strengthen your faith and impact others?

- **Activity:** As a group, brainstorm practical ways to “testify” about Jesus in your community (e.g., hosting a Bible study, volunteering, or sharing a testimony on social media). Choose one idea to pursue together.

Inspirational Example: Reflect on the story of Fred “Snow” Rhoades from the sermon, who risked his life as a Coastwatcher to serve others faithfully. How does his example of courage and commitment inspire you to stand firm in your faith, even when it’s difficult?

- **Challenge:** Identify one “risk” you can take this week to boldly proclaim or live out your faith, such as having a spiritual conversation with a coworker or standing up for a biblical truth in a challenging situation.

Prayer

Close your time by praying. Invite group members to pray, asking God to give them clarity and courage to confess Jesus as the Christ in their words and actions. Thank Him for being the Savior of the world and for guiding us through His Word.