

Study on Mark 8:27-30

***Jesus said, “The right time has come (*lit.* “the time is fulfilled), the Kingdom of God is at hand. Turn away from your sins (*lit.* “repent”), and believe the good news” (Mark 1:15).**

***The blind will be able to see
and the deaf will hear.
The lame will leap and dance,
and those who cannot speak will shout for joy
(*Isa. 35:5-6; cf. Matthew 11:3-6*).**

***Then Jesus and his disciples went away to the villages near Caesaria Philippi. On the way he asked them, “Tell me, who do people say I am?”**

**“Some say that you are John the Baptist”, they answered;
“others say that you are Elijah, while others say that you are
one of the prophets”.**

“What about you? Who do you say I am?”, he asked them.

**Peter answered, “You are the Messiah, *God’s promised King*”
(*Mark 8:27-29*).**

**DVD SPOT: Watch Chapter 16 of Matthew, the Visual Bible
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=woAhReBytBk>**

Discussion Questions:

1) Has anyone asked you recently, “Why are you a Christian?” What happened? What did you say?

What would you say, if someone asked you in the future?

2) Who does Peter confess Jesus to be?

Read Mark 8:27-30

On what does Peter base his answer?

Read Isaiah 35:1-6; Matthew 11:1-6

Is Peter’s faith a “blind faith”, as the New Atheists like Richard Dawkins say?

3) Is your faith a “blind faith?”

What do you base your faith on?

4) What is it that you love and admire most about Jesus?

5) Why are you a follower of Jesus?

Why do you continue to be a Christian?

Quotes:

The following are quotes from Sunday's message on the theme, "Why are you a Christian?":

***To understand why Peter responds this way, you have to understand the Old Testament hope. The old Testament prophets looked forward to the day when there would be divine revolution, when the whole world would be at peace again with God and under the rulership of His King. When that day came, the prophet Isaiah further writes:**

**The blind will be able to see
and the deaf will hear.**

**The lame will leap and dance,
and those who cannot speak will shout for joy**

(Isa. 35:5-6; cf. Matthew 11:3-6).

*** If Peter was later asked, "Why are you a follower of Jesus?", he would have surely responded, "Because Jesus is the One who we have been looking to: he is God's promised King, *no more than that, he is the Son of the living God*" (Matt. 16:16). This is something that I'm sure of, because I've walked with him and I've heard all that he said, and I've seen all that he's done....**

Let me share with you where I'm up to in my thinking about this.... I think that I would make the following points:

1) I'm a follower of Jesus because I love and admire Jesus....

I have often quoted M. Scott Peck who stated that after he read the Gospels for the first time:

"I began to fall in love with Jesus"

That's me ☺ After reading and re-reading the Gospels, I love and admire the person that Jesus is! I love his compassion for people, *like the leper who came up to Jesus asking for healing.... I love the way that he dealt with the sad, and the lonely, and the lost, like Zacchaeus, the chief tax-collector in Jericho.... I love the way that he showed loving care to the*

many struggling women who he met, like Mary Magdalene who he drove evil-spirits out of, like the woman at the well in Samaria, and like the woman caught in adultery....

2) Secondly, I am a Christian because I trust what Jesus says. His words have “the ring of truth” about them (J.B. Phillips). They make sense, and they ring true with my experience of life. Not only that, there’s the miracles and the resurrection....

3) Moreover, I am a Christian because Jesus gave his life for me on the cross. Not too many people in my life are willing to give their life for me, because they love me that much. Maybe, my wife and my sons....

4) Furthermore, I am a Christian, I follow Jesus, because Jesus has utterly changed my whole life: for the better, *the much better*. As I’ve followed Jesus, and trusted in him as my Saviour, I have peace of mind, due to Jesus suffering and dying for me on the cross; I have a Friend who I know is there for me, because he has answered my calls for help in all sorts of ways; and I have certain hope for the future, that no one, and nothing can separate me from the love of God, and his ongoing forgiveness, that is mine through Jesus (Matt. 28:20; Rom. 8:1, 38-39).

And I know what life is all about: it’s about loving and caring for others, as Jesus loved and cared for others. My whole life has been changed through the Spirit of Jesus working in me as I’ve followed Jesus. There is no other way that I can explain it. My life is completely changed as I’ve followed Jesus and been open to his Spirit working in me.

5) And finally, I am a Christian because Jesus enables me to understand “the big picture” of life (Alistair McGrath). Jesus enables me to comprehend that this life isn’t all there is....