# **The Gospel According to St. Mark**

**Mark 8:31-9:1**

**Concordia Commentary – Dr. James Voelz, 2013**

## **Mark 8:31-9:1 – “What do you see?” Part 2**

* A new teaching
  + How is He to be seen?
    - As the Christ (8:29)
    - So He is going to teach what “the Christ” is going to do.
  + And it is SHOCKING!
    - Rejected
    - Killed
    - Raised
      * Basically all negative and weak
        + They have only seen strength and victory
  + What did Isaiah prophesy concerning the Messiah?
    - Receives the Spirit
      * Isaiah 61:1
      * Mark 1:10
    - Proclaims the Good News
      * Isaiah 61:1
      * Mark 1:14
    - Calling out the year of the Lord
      * Isaiah 61:2
      * Mark 1:15
    - Comforts those who mourn
      * Isaiah 61:2
      * Mark 6:34
    - Jesus has assumed the Servant role
      * Yet Jesus refers to Himself as the “Son of Man” here
        + With the consequences the Son of Man will suffer, Jesus aligns Himself with that of Isaiah’s Suffering Servant

Isaiah 42:1-9; 29:1-13; 50:4-11; 52:13-53:12

* + - * + As the Son of Man, Jesus willingly stands in for His people to bear their sins.

Mark 10:45

Isaiah 53:6, 12

* + Note that Jesus is plain/bold about this declaration
    - And there is no command to keep this quiet!
      * Peter responds with a rebuke!
        + A misunderstanding of what the Christ (8:29) is

Who Jesus truly is and how He is to be characterized…

Or the revelation of Him as the Son of God or the Christ in the contemporary understanding of such terms.

* The teaching continues with a rebuke
  + Why so public?
    - Were the other disciples of the same understanding as Peter of who Jesus should be?
    - It is a denial of the Christ
      * Mark 3:29?
  + Is Peter and Satan in cahoots?
    - “Satan” is not really a factor in Mark’s Gospel up to this point
      * We were referenced the temptation in the wilderness (1:13)
      * We saw Jesus being accused of being in cahoots with Satan (3:22)
    - It is here that we see the enemy called out
      * Previously he was behind the scenes with demon possession and even storms
      * Now we see him work through Peter to tempt Jesus NOT to fulfill His mission of the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 53:6)
        + Glory not suffering
        + Temptations appear at important parts of Mark’s Gospel

At the beginning of His ministry (1:13)

Now at the beginning of Jesus expanding what He was sent to do…

Take upon Himself the sins of the people and suffer for it

Other aspects of temptation for Jesus

His family in 3:31

His entry into Jerusalem in 11:9-10?

* + - Things of God or men?
      * Things of God
        + Jesus fulfilling His mission

Suffering/the cross

* + - * + To think of the things that are of a primary concern to God
      * Things of men
        + Seeing only the physical world

Understanding God’s reign and rule characterized by earthy power, glory, and honor.

What so many were looking the Messiah to bring them.

* + - * Isaiah 55:8-9
    - Remember our progression
      * The two-stage healing of the blind man (8:22-25)
      * “Who do you say I am” (8:27-30)
        + The Christ!

First healing… but not entirely…

* + - * Peter rebukes
        + Peter gets it but not fully.
    - Although the disciples will not fully “see” Jesus until 16:7…
      * We, the hearers of Mark’s Gospel who know the full account, see everything more clearly at this point.
* Gather round
  + It is not just Peter at fault here
* To deny or not deny, that is the question.
  + What does this mean?
    - Exodus 20:3
    - To take oneself out of the idolatrous position of “god” and, in following Jesus, keeping your eyes focused on the Lord.
    - One who denies self follows in the footsteps of the Son of Man…
      * Who has denied His own rights and privileges by suffering and bearing the sins of many (Isaiah 52:13-53:12)
* Grab your cross
  + It is important to look at a cross on the other side of Good Friday and Easter Sunday
    - Josephus records a giant cross (60-cubits) constructed by Haman for the execution of Mordecai in Esther
    - Used in Roman executions in Israel
      * Varus, governor of Syria at the time of the death of Herod the Great crucified 2,000 insurrectionists and bandits
      * In the Jewish revolt in the late AD 60s there were not enough crosses to go around
  + Literal or non-literal here?
    - Examples in the Greco-Roman world where it is used metaphorically.
      * A Roman philosopher speaks of crosses as something from which people wish to release themselves from, whether external factors or those of their own making
    - For the disciples this would have been mysterious and odd
      * For the hearer of Mark’s Gospel, it takes on a whole new meaning.
  + Note 15:21
    - Simon is literally taking up Jesus’ cross
      * Done as a necessity laid upon him
      * Not because it is “a” or “his” cross
    - Whatever is imposed upon a believer BECAUSE OF JESUS
  + Such crosses are NEVER easy, and may even result in a death like His
* To save your life
  + Difficult passage
  + John 11:25-26 for help
  + Possible that Jesus understands “life” as a continuum of the physical earthly existence we know and the life that extends beyond death.
  + What may cost you your life?
    - The Gospel
    - 1:14-15
    - Romans 10:9
    - 1 Corinthians 12:3
      * Were Mark’s initial hearers undergoing persecution?
* Profit and forfeit
  + For what help is there to gain all of this world (temporary positive) but to suffer loss beyond earthly life (negative)?
  + Or, for what help is there to gain the whole world (positive) and to suffer the loss of earthly life?
    - By embracing Jesus and the Gospel, we become an heir of God’s promises
      * Romans 4:13
  + Or, for what help is there to gain the whole world (temporary positive) and to suffer the loss of earthly life?
    - Is there something in this life more important that the hum-drum of the world?
      * Non-Christian battle
        + “At least you have your health”
* Personal cost of a ransomed soul/life
  + For what shall a man give to receive in exchange beyond earthly life?
    - Everything, including earthly life?
    - Nothing, it is a gift from God?
* Ashamed
  + Daniel 7:13-14
  + Jesus will respond to people as they responded to Him
    - No one should presume His mercy
  + But, 2 Timothy 2:11-13!
    - Mark 4:12
    - Mark 4:33
    - Peter’s denial and restoration
  + Note “in the glory of His Father and the holy angels”
    - Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14
    - Matthew 26:53
    - Philippians 2:10-11
      * Isaiah 45:23
* Lack of taste
  + Note the use of “sight” again
    - The kingdom of God comes in humility and hiddenness
    - Jesus’ suffering, death, and resurrection are more powerful than Peter and the disciples see right now