

***Following the Good News about Jesus, ICB 2011***  
**The Gospel of Mark, Chapters 1-8**  
**“For Further Reflection”**  
**Manuscript Study**  
**May 15 2011**  
**(2 pages)**

**From Mark 8:22-38**

**Title:** Confessing Christ

**Focus of Message from this Section**

Over the past few months at ICB, we have been following the good news about Jesus in the gospel of Mark. This week, we come to the end of Part I of this two part series (Note: Part II will be from January – May 2012, Mark 9 – 16). In doing so, we will focus on the question Jesus asked of his disciples, “Who do you say I am?” In doing so, we will bring this series to specific personal applications.

As we consider this question, we will see that “confessing Christ” involves

1. Confessing what Jesus has done for you, the mercy he has shown to you (Mark 8:22-26); notice that this healing takes place in Bethsaida, a village that refused to repent (see Matthew 11:20-22)
2. Confessing that Jesus is the Messiah, the chosen anointed one of God (Mark 8:27-30); notice many confessions about who Jesus is and who others are that are wrong (e.g. city to which they were headed was named after Caesar, who was considered a god, and Philip, a “wannabe”).
3. Confessing the work of Christ on the Cross (Mark 8:31-33); notice that when Peter wanted Christ to fulfill his expectations, Jesus rebukes him as an agent of Satan, for it was the cross for which Christ came.
4. Confessing what Christ calls of those who would follow: repent of (i.e. deny) one’s self-centred life, take up a life (i.e. cross) of dying to self for Christ, and keep following Christ

**For Further Reflection: PERSONAL APPLICATION QUESTIONS**

1. Read Isaiah 52-53. How does Isaiah’s prophecy add meaning to Jesus self-description as the “Son of Man?”
2. How does Jesus concern about Bethsaida’s lack of repentance (see Matthew 11:20-22) possibly explain his approach to the healing of the blind man? Try to imagine what it would be like for the blind man to share what Jesus had done for him in such an unrepentant community.

3. Try to understand what was in Peter's mind that would have led him to take Jesus aside and "begin to rebuke" Jesus? What are your thoughts about why was it essential for Jesus to so firmly rebuke Peter as he did?
4. What details do you learn about the call of the disciple from the words of Jesus in 8:34-38? Especially, what do you learn about some of what Jesus calls those who follow him to "deny?"
5. Personal Application Questions
  - As you consider your confession of Christ, what would you include with respect to what Jesus HAS done for you, the mercy he HAS shown to you?
  - As you consider your confession of Christ, what Old Testament longings for the coming Messiah have deepened your own understanding of Jesus as the Messiah?
  - Is the Cross of Christ central to your confession of Christ?
  - As you consider Christ's invitation to all who would be his disciples to "deny themselves, take of their cross, and follow him," what are ways this challenges your life or thinking at this time?
6. **What other good news about Jesus have you come to see from this section?**