

Series: The Gospel of Luke

Sermon: The Christian Confession

Passage: Luke 9:18-22 (ESV)

Illustration:

Need: Faith in Jesus begins with the true confession of who He is.

I. Who do the crowds say that I am? (9:18-19)

- Matthew & Mark reveal that much more happened after the feeding of the 5000 that Luke leaves out.
- Matthew & Mark reveal this takes place around Caesarea Philippi (25 miles north of the Sea of Galilee).
- The “crowds” were primarily those who were curious about but not certain what to make of Jesus.
- Jesus asks the disciples about what they were hearing from the crowds about His identity
- 3 prevailing theories: (1) Most Popular - John the Baptist reborn or resurrected, (2) Elijah returned according to Malachi 4:5, (3) one of the OT prophets reborn, resurrected, returned.

II. Who do you all say that I am? (9:20-22)

- This is the most important question anyone will, everyone must answer.
- The “you” in this question is plural and emphatic: “We’ve heard what they say but what say you?”
- Peter answers for the group; “You are the Christ of God” [*christos* (Grk) of *mashiach* (Heb) meaning anointed one]. Matt. 16:16 - “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.”
- In Israel’s historical practice and in the minds of her people, kings were identified as God’s anointed.
- They confessed Jesus as God’s chosen, anointed Messiah, His beloved Son, & rightful King of Israel.
- Matt. 16:17 Jesus says that God, not man, had revealed this truth to them.
- Jesus prohibited public declaration to squelch any misguided revolts against the Romans (see John 6).
- Jesus then reveals His strange Messianic mission: Suffering - Rejection - Death - Resurrection.
- These things “must” happen because they are God’s sovereign plan for redemption (Isa. 53).
- Matt. 16:22-23 Jesus rebukes Peter for suggesting that His mission could avoid His suffering & death.
- Even more strange will be Jesus’ expectation of His followers to follow the same road (next week).

III. Lessons for the church:

- A general belief in God is not the Christian confession.
- All true Christians must have a true confession of Jesus:
 - He is the promised Christ/Messiah/King of the OT.
 - He is the unique Son of God who suffered, died, and was raised (Apostles’ Creed 40 AD).
 - He is God the Son, eternal, co-equal with the Father and the Holy Spirit (Nicene Creed 325 AD).
 - He is the God-man, fully divine and fully human (Definition of Chalcedon 451 AD).
 - He is the exclusive means through which one is reconciled to God (John 14:6).
- We should evaluate every teacher, church or ministry first on the basis of who they say Jesus is.
- Faith in Jesus is a true confession followed by an intentional choice (NEXT WEEK)!