

Seeing More Clearly

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A puzzling miracle

8:22 And they came to Bethsaida. And some people brought to him a blind man and begged him to touch him. ²³ And he took the blind man by the hand and led him out of the village, and when he had spit on his eyes and laid his hands on him, he asked him, “Do you see anything?” ²⁴ And he looked up and said, “I see people, but they look like trees, walking.” ²⁵ Then Jesus laid his hands on his eyes again; and he opened his eyes, his sight was restored, and he saw everything clearly. ²⁶ And he sent him to his home, saying, “Do not even enter the village.”

Seeing more clearly

1. **The Christ:** who Jesus is
2. **The Cross:** why Jesus came
3. **The Christian:** what it takes to identify with Jesus
4. **The Consequences:** results of denying self versus denying Jesus

The Christ: who Jesus is

²⁷ And Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. And on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” ²⁸ And they told him, “John the Baptist; and others say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets.”

²⁹ And he asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.” ³⁰ And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

What is this?

Who is this?

“What is this? A new teaching with authority! He commands even the unclean spirits, and they obey him.”
(Mark 1:27)

“Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?” (Mark 4:41)

Who is Jesus?

The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. (1:1)

- **God:** “You are my beloved Son.” (1:11)
- **Demons:** “You are the Son of God.” (3:11)
- **Family:** “He is out of his mind.” (3:21)
- **Scribes:** “He is possessed by Beelzebub.” (3:22)
- **Crowds:** “He is a prophet, like one of the prophets of old.” (6:15)
- **Herod:** “John, whom I beheaded, has been raised.” (6:16)

Who is Jesus?

- **Peter:** “You are the Christ.” (8:29)
- **God:** This is my beloved Son; listen to him.” (9:7)
- **Blind Bartimaeus:** “Son of David” (10:47)
- **Jesus:** The high priest asked him, “Are you the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?” And Jesus said, “I am.” (14:61-62)
- **Cross:** “The King of the Jews.” (15:26)
- **Centurion:** “Truly this man was the Son of God!” (15:39)

The Christ: who Jesus is

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²⁹ And he asked them, “**But who do you say that I am?**” Peter answered him, “You are the Christ.” ³⁰ And he strictly charged them to tell no one about him.

The Cross: why Jesus came

³¹ And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again. ³² And he said this plainly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. ³³ But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”

The cross remained a blur

Three times Jesus told his disciples of his upcoming death and resurrection. How did the disciples respond?

1. Peter rebuked Jesus. (8:32)
2. The disciples were confused but scared to ask—so they argued about who was greatest. (9:32-34)
3. James and John asked for thrones on either side of Jesus. (10:37)

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The Christian: what it takes to identify with Jesus

³⁴ And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.

- Jesus is our leader and model as well as our substitute and savior.
- Christians are Cross-tians: we bear Jesus’ cross as well as his anointing.

Deny the self-life

- Deny sinful self. Instead, desire new self.
- Deny self righteousness. Instead, trust Jesus' righteousness credited to you.
- Deny what makes sense to you. Instead, believe God's revelation in Jesus.
- Deny your desires and goals. Instead, join Jesus' mission and follow where he leads.
- Deny your pleasure, comfort, and safety. Instead, endure pain, shame, and death.
- Deny self-life. Instead, have Christ-life.

The Consequences

³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it.

³⁶ For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? ³⁷ For what can a man give in return for his soul?

³⁸ For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels.”

Seeing more clearly

1. **The Christ:** who Jesus is
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5. **The Comfort:** if your sight is still blurry, Jesus will heal you fully.