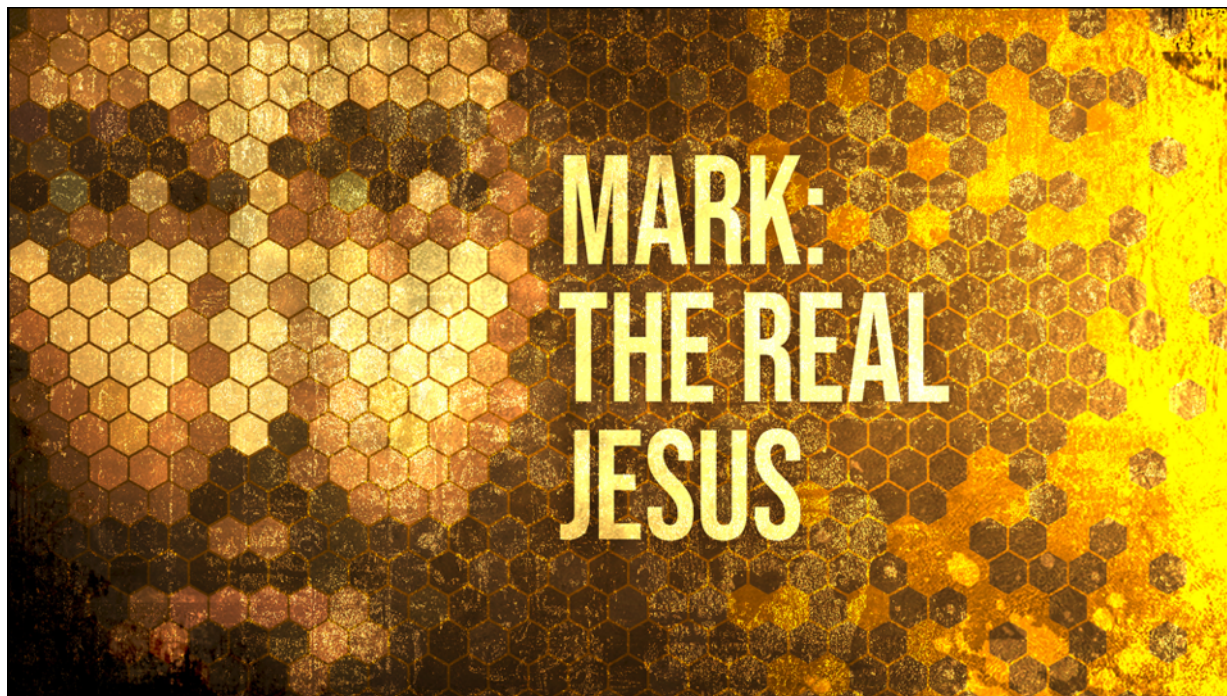


Today we are continuing in the Gospel of Mark, in the 8th chapter. We are in the midst of our series ***THE REAL JESUS***.

This series is trying to focus us on who Jesus truly is...and that is really important because over the past 2,000 years the name of Jesus has meant a lot of DIFFERENT of things to a lot of DIFFERENT people.

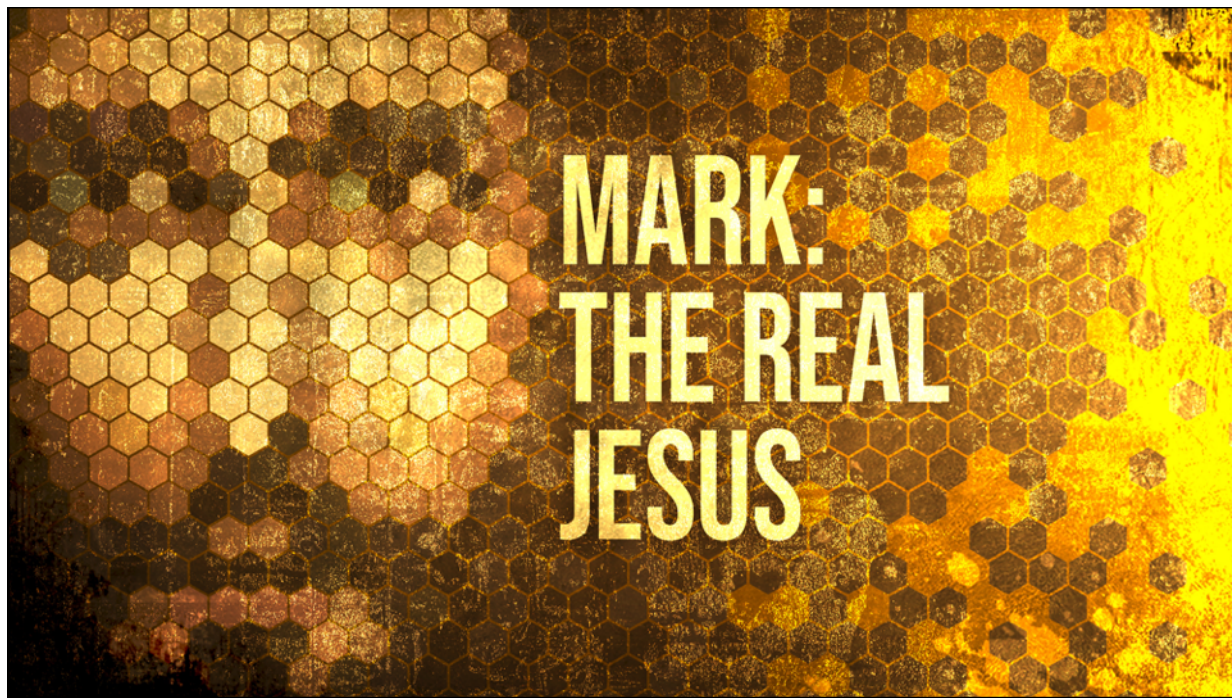
And I think we can all agree that it isn't helpful to have a picture of Jesus that isn't accurate, and so in part this series is aimed at helping us navigate to THE REAL JESUS. In spite of who we want Jesus to be, in spite of cultural leanings/opinions. It is vital that we are following the Jesus of the Bible and none other.



And this morning in our text Jesus asks His disciples a question, he asks ***"Who do people say that I am?"*** and this question provokes a discussion where Jesus begins to reveal to His true identity and purpose to His disciples.

You see the disciples knew Jesus, they had walked and talked with Him. But they didn't REALLY know Jesus entirely.

And what we are going to see here this morning is Jesus invite His followers/disciples deeper into His story...deeper into blessing, as they discover THE REAL JESUS.



PRAY:



Illus:

By a show of hands, how many of you have ever seen the TV show Undercover Boss?

I think it's on it's 11th season.

For those of you who are unaware, Undercover Boss is a reality television show where a leader at a large company works (usually the CEO) is disguised as an entry-level employee in an effort to discover faults in the company.

So imagine, what would happen if the CEO went and spend to day on the loading dock, or at the front reception desk. This show explores what happens when the BOSS leaves the office suite and comes down to do the grunt work.



And at the conclusion of the show the Boss gives a report to the employees he or she worked with. Sometime the employees get a promotion...and other times people get fired.

In one of the more impactful episodes of this show. Mitchel Modell CEO of Model's Sporting Goods dressed up like this...so that he could work with the everyday employees of Model's.

One of the employees he encountered was a working mother named Angel. And as Mitchell got to know Angel over the course of the work day, he discovered that Angel was living in a homeless shelter with her children. He couldn't believe it, it brought Him to tears that someone he felt responsible for couldn't even afford a roof over her own head.

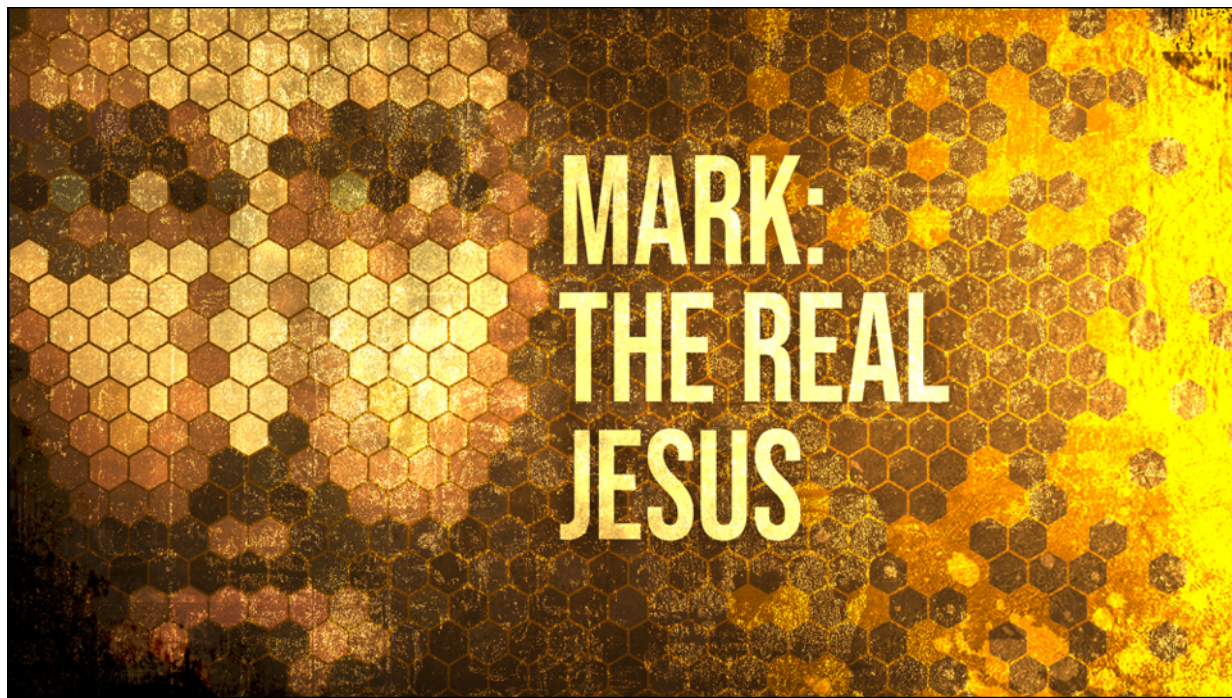


This is the moment at the conclusion of the show, when Mitchell revealed to Angel who he truly was, that he in fact was the Undercover Boss...and inspired by her hard work and struggle he was going to give her a Quarter Million Dollars to buy a home for her and her children...no strings attached.

Don't worry, Angel isn't having a heart attack here...she collapsed in a heap of tears and rejoicing.

And who wouldn't!?!?! Angel made a friend one day at work, but that friend turned out to be more powerful than she ever imagined, and capable of blessing her in ways she could only dream of.

I think the Gospel overtones of this are obvious.



The Real Jesus came into this world as the ***Ultimate Undercover Boss***.

Christ's humble beginnings on this Earth disguised His true power.

But friends, Jesus hasn't come to give us a new house.....he has come to give us ***NEW LIFE***.

And as we now turn to our text, Jesus begins to pull back the curtain to reveal to His disciples who He is and what He has come to offer ALL OF US.

Mark 8:27-30 (NIV)

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, ***“Who do people say I am?”***

²⁸ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.”²⁹ “But what about you?” he asked. ***“Who do you say I am?”*** Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.”³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

Read:

And so Jesus and His disciples seeking solitude head North for Caesarea Philippi. And on the way Jesus asks about the public’s opinion of Him, asking ***“Who do people say I am?”***

Jesus asks this question clearly as an on-ramp towards a deeper discussion. To this point Jesus has rocked the world of His disciples and countless others throughout Judea, no doubt discussions swirled around the question, WHO IS JESUS...REALLY.

Is He Elijah, or another Prophet returned? Many who saw Him heal and drive out demons were no doubt searching for a context to fit Him in.

Mark 8:27-30 (NIV)

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, ***“Who do people say I am?”***

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And here Jesus asks the follow up question, ***“Who do you say I am?”***

And guess who is the first to speak up? Of course none other than Peter. But instead of putting his foot in his mouth Peter’s reply hits the nail on the head. **“You are the Messiah.”** Peter here is recognizing Jesus as The Messiah, The Christ, The Anointed One.

Perhaps Peter had known this intellectually before this moment. But this passage is described as the watershed moment in Mark’s gospel because this is when the disciples really started to get it. *[I say started because Peter is going to insert his foot into his mouth a few verses ahead.]*

Mark 8:27-30 (NIV)

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, ***“Who do people say I am?”***

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Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.”³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

You see friends Jesus opens up the dialogue on the nature of His reality because it is imperative that His disciples who are following Him know Him deeply.

The disciples needed to have a profound, personal appreciation of who Jesus is before He could share with them the pathway ahead and invite them to follow Him in deeper and fuller ways.

Illus:

To illustrate this point, years ago when we were living in Colorado I made friends with a guy named Rick in our church and he invited me to go flying with him. He said that he had an airplane and that he gave people rides.

Mark 8:27-30 (NIV)

²⁷ Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, ***“Who do people say I am?”***

²⁸ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.”²⁹ “But what about you?” he asked. ***“Who do you say I am?”***

Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.”³⁰ Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

Now I'm from New Jersey, where they only breed skeptical people, and so I'm like, “I don't know about this Rick.”

All I could imagine is this prop plane falling out of the sky while I reconsidered my life decisions.

But then Rick told me he was a commercial pilot and that he flew for ***Frontier Airlines***, and then I was like SURE *why didn't you lead with that fact!* I was a Youth Pastor at the time and we made it into a Youth Group event. I had the kids I didn't like go up first just to make sure everything was ok. *[Just kidding 😊]*.

And I tell that story to illustrate what we all know. Credibility matters in relationships.

**If Jesus is the Messiah, we must
live for Him in total
abandonment.**



If Jesus was the Messiah then Peter **MUST** live for Him in ***total abandonment***.

And you see Jesus is trying to invite His disciples here into that ***total abandonment***. The ***total abandonment*** that is predicated on the fact that His name isn't just high IT IS THE HIGHEST!

And that brings us to our first truth this morning.

If Jesus is the Messiah, we must live for Him in total abandonment.

This passage brings us to the heart of Christian discipleship, because it forces us to consider our commitment to Christ.

**If Jesus is the Messiah, we must
live for Him in total
abandonment.**




Jesus knows that these very disciples will be the ones who will carry the gospel from Jesus' empty tomb to the ends of the Earth.

He knows that it will cost some of them everything [from an earthly perspective] and so this is a watershed moment in the book of Mark and the Gospels as a whole because Jesus is examining WHO IS WITH HIM.

And as we continue on in our text Jesus opens up to His disciples like never before to share what lies before them all.


Mark 8:31-33 (NIV)

³¹ He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. ³² He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

A decorative graphic consisting of a cluster of golden, three-dimensional hexagons arranged in a roughly triangular shape, pointing towards the bottom right corner of the text area.

Read:

³³ But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”




Read:

Oh there is a lot to unpack here.

Jesus often spoke in riddles and parables, but here He is direct, the text says that he spoke plainly. That he would ***#1 suffer, #2 be rejected, #3 be killed and #4 rise again.***

Peter could not accept this vision of what Jesus was proposing. You see we have the benefit of knowing of the resurrection in detail. But Peter was just stuck on the words suffer, rejection, and the thought of Jesus being killed.

³³ But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”




You see friends even for Peter, you have to understand that Jesus as Messiah was something that needed to happen physically in the present.

Peter didn't want to hear anything about Jesus dying because then who would overthrow Rome?

Peter didn't want to hear about his friend who he loved suffering. He didn't want to hear about them being rejected as a fellowship....he wanted to WIN.

You see Peter liked the idea of Jesus as Messiah, the Conquering King, but he had no use for the resurrection power, because he didn't understand it.

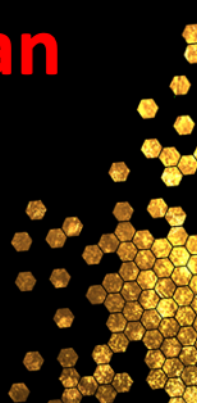
³³ But when Jesus turned and looked at his disciples, he rebuked Peter. “Get behind me, Satan!” he said. “You do not have in mind the concerns of God, but merely human concerns.”



Verse 33 says that Jesus **turned and looked at His disciples** in response to what Peter was saying. As if to say, *“If I do not go to the cross, how can these, My disciples, be saved?”*

And in the strongest of words Jesus replies, **“Get behind me Satan!”** Not that Jesus was accusing Peter of being Satan or being possessed by Satan. I think what Jesus meant was that Peter was talking like Satan would. You see Satan is the one who is always trying to discourage us from living for God with total abandon. Satan entices us to take the easy path, and here Peter’s words are infused with HUMAN CONCERNS rather than the CONCERNS of GOD.

We must be careful to place godly concerns above our human concerns.



And that brings us to our second truth for this morning. **We must be careful to place godly concern above our human concerns.**

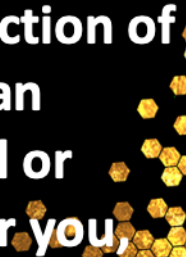
Friends if we are not careful WE WILL prioritize the Earthly over the Eternal.

Jesus just told his disciples that he was going to rise from the dead after 3 days and all Peter could hear is YOU'RE GOING TO DIE!

Peter squarely fixed with his eyes on the here and now without any vision for the larger perspective/eternal perspective that Jesus is trying to invite him into.

1 Peter 1:3, 4 (NIV)

Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and into an inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade. This inheritance is kept in heaven for you,



Here is what 1 Peter 1:3, 4 says about the Eternal Promises for those who are IN CHRIST.

Read: 

The world can't mess with this, the world can't beat this or offer us any more than this.

The world will dress up temporary gain to make it look enticing, this world will even take good things and make them distractions that obscure us from the best things.

It seems that Peter learned about placing godly concerns above his human concerns after all 😊.

"When I have learnt to love God better than my earthly dearest, I shall love my earthly dearest better than I do now. Insofar as I learn to love my earthly dearest at the expense of God and instead of God, I shall be moving toward the state in which I shall not love my earthly dearest at all. When first things are put first, second things are not suppressed but increased."

-C.S. Lewis

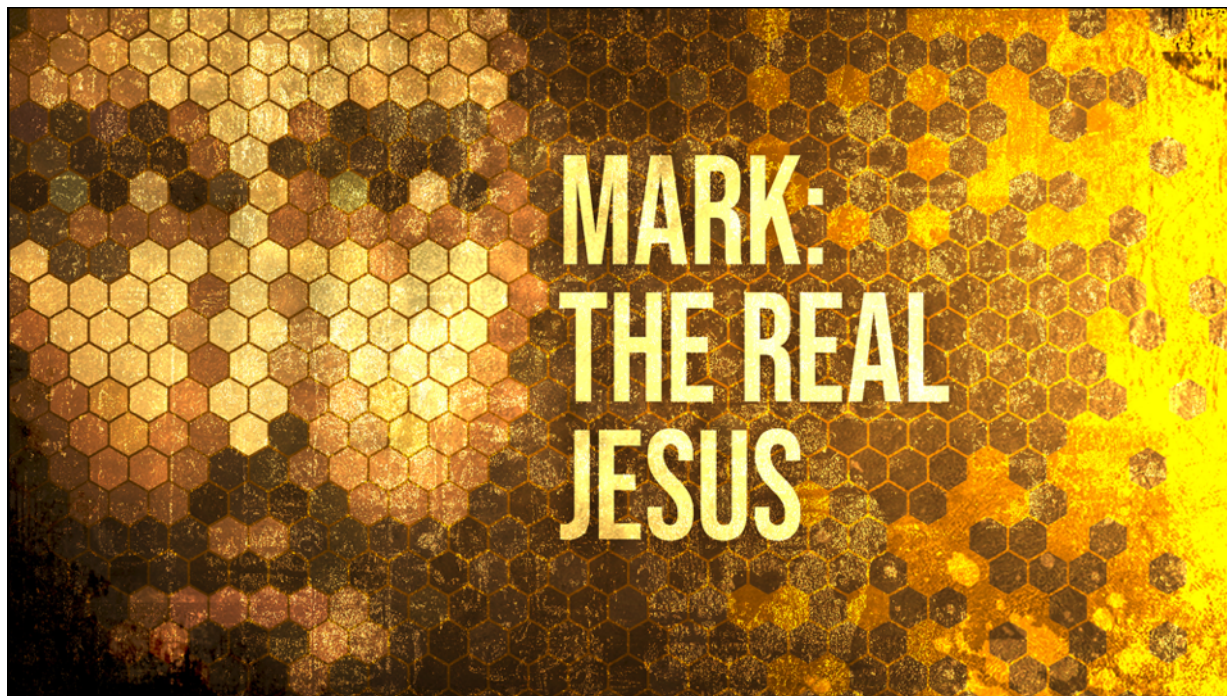
Here is what C.S. Lewis has to say about our priorities as Christians, placing God above our earthly concerns.

This quote was from a letter he wrote a dear friend.

Read: 

What Lewis is saying simply put, when God's priorities are our priorities it enhances EVERYTHING ELSE IN LIFE.

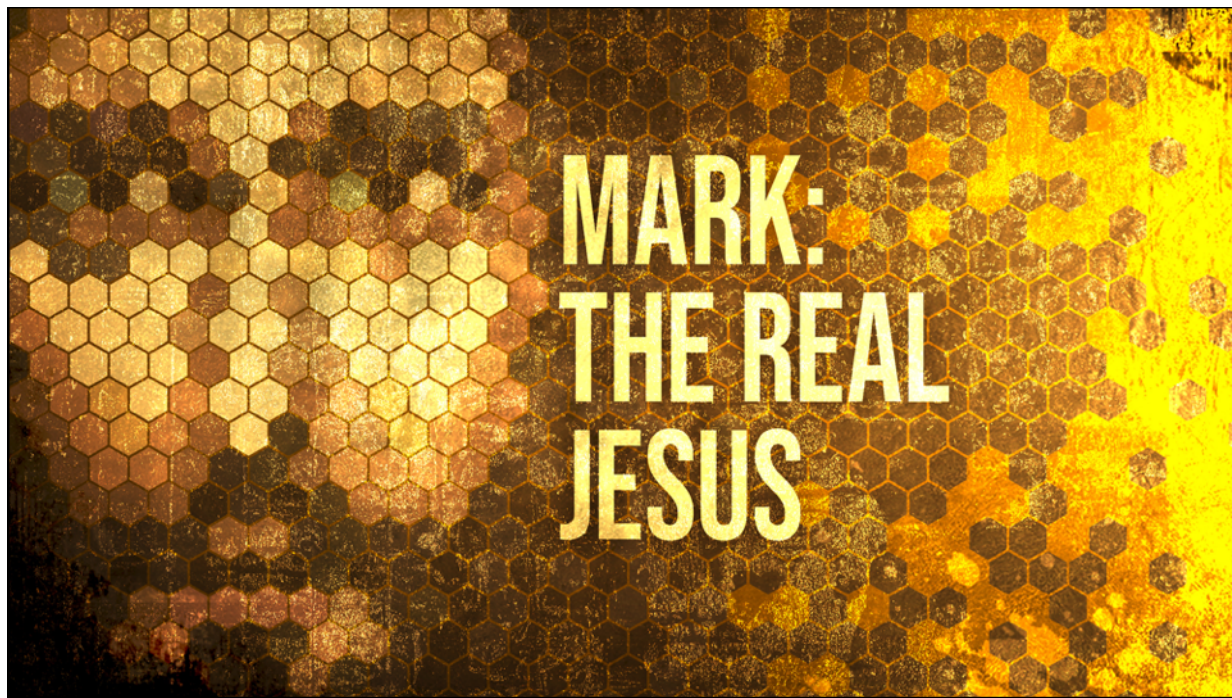
When God is tops, your marriage is golden, your work is enhanced, your friendships are nourishing.



But the converse is also true. When God's priorities for us are buried underneath all the trappings of this world we are pursuing.....we wind up empty.

We chase after the approval of men...thinking it will satisfy. It never does. We think that if we just get that promotion or if we can just go on that vacation or if we can just...then we will be OK.

But the truth is THE REAL JESUS says, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. ²⁹Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.³⁰For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Matthew 11:28-30



It seems counterintuitive that not trying to carry a burden actually makes it lighter. We think that we need to get stronger to carry our burdens when in fact we don't need to get stronger we need to get ***surrendered***. This is what Peter is learning here.

It seems impossible sometimes that doing it God's way, in spite of what we think, is the route to our own contentment. But that is exactly the way of our Lord.

And as we move on in our text, Jesus is going to SPELL IT OUT. What it means to follow Him, what it will cost, what our mindset needs to be.


Mark 8:34-38 (NIV)

³⁴ Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it. ³⁶ What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?

Read:

Mark 8:34-38 (NIV)

Or what can anyone give in exchange for their soul? ³⁸ If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels."

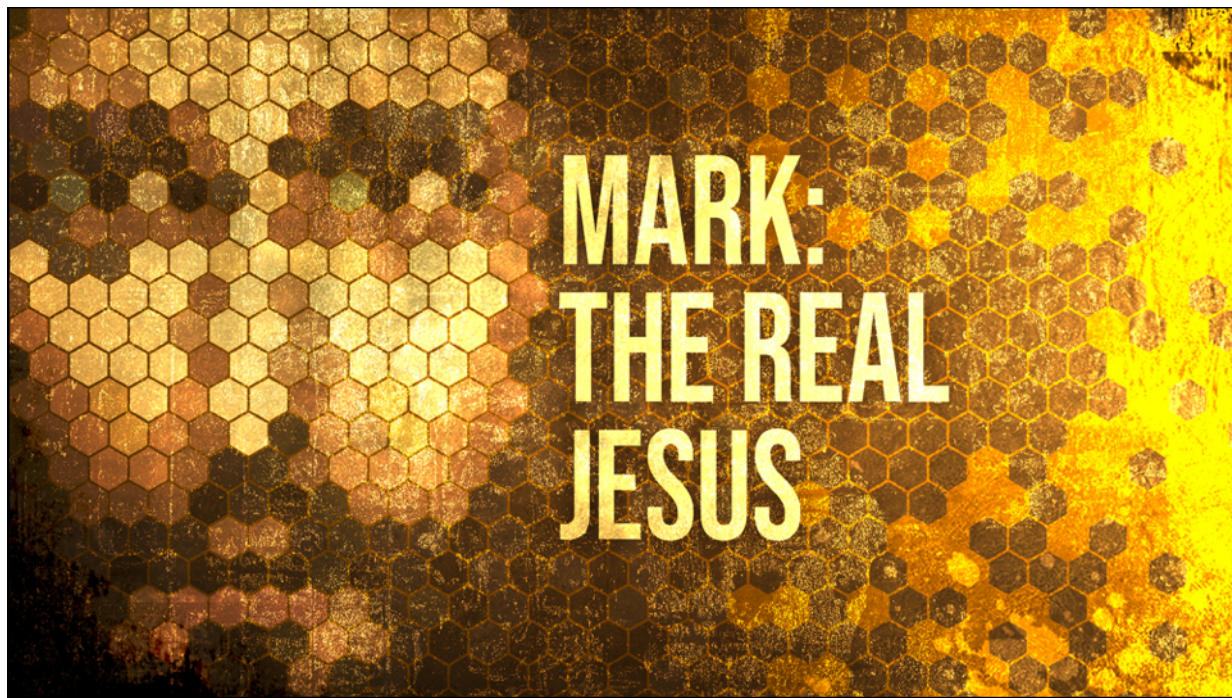


Read:

Here is a stark depiction of what it means to follow Jesus. Jesus said to them in effect, "I am going to suffer and die so that mankind will be saved. If you want to follow me (be my disciple) you must deny yourself."

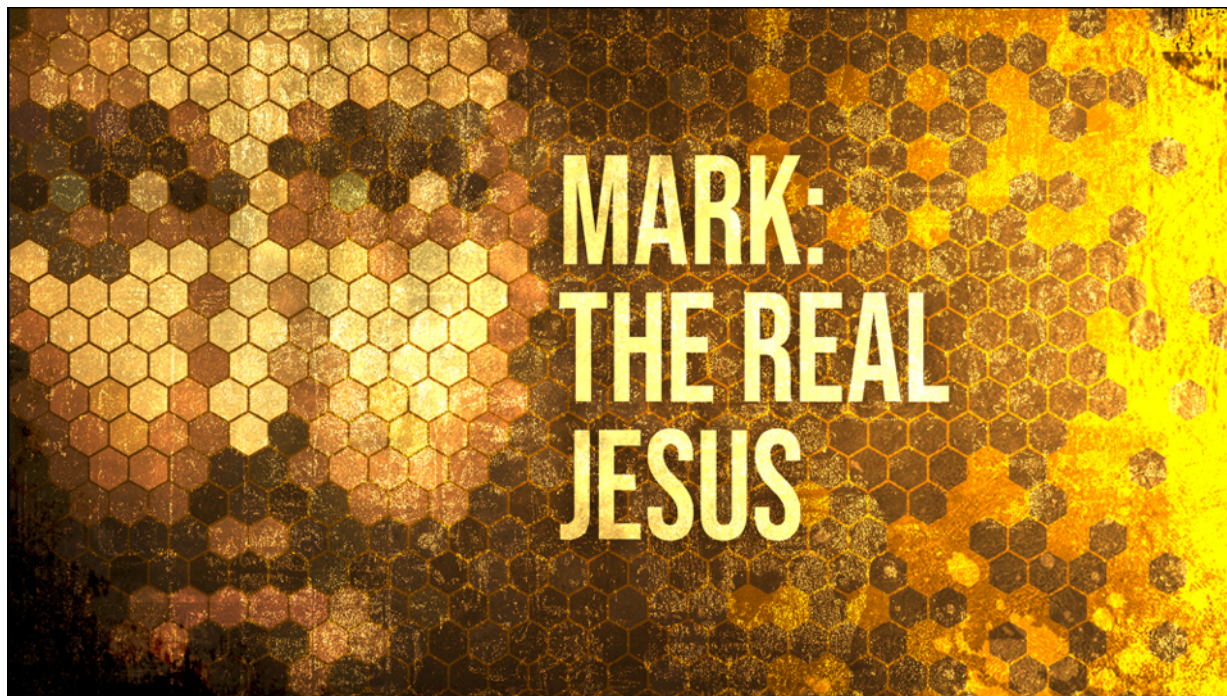
This is ***The Real Jesus***...he doesn't just come and offer us life, He demands that His followers ACTUALLY follow Him.

Take up their cross, and sacrifice.



And you know this type of talk makes many people feel uncomfortable, because it carries with it the idea that we might actually have to do something we don't want to do in order to follow Jesus. And guess what, that is exactly what Jesus is talking about here.

Jesus is describing the Christian life as one of self-denial. A life where we are not overly consumed with getting what we want and winning down here, because we already know that treasures forevermore are kept for us ***in eternity where winning truly matters.***

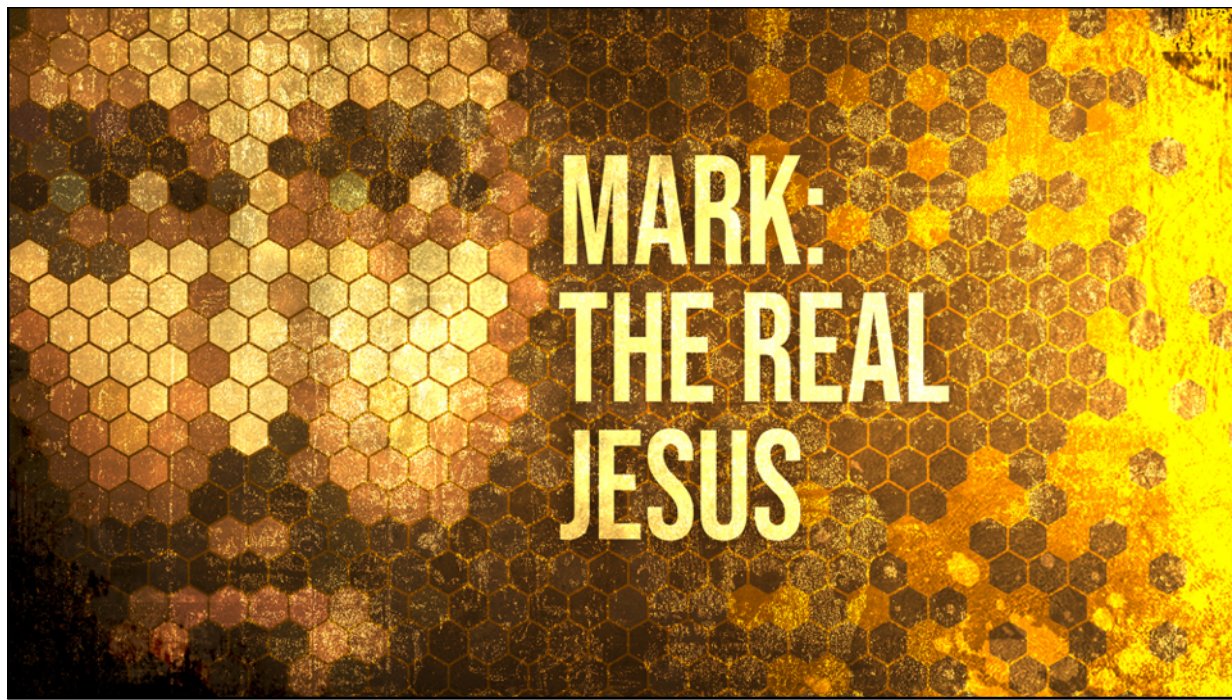


Jesus asks perhaps the best question ever in verse 36, ***What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, yet forfeit their soul?***

You see our soul is the immaterial part of ourselves that makes us...us.

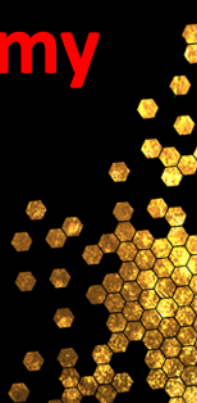
Biblically speaking your body is a tent of flesh that will die one day but your soul is forever.

If we gain everything down here, if we have top model looks, as much money as Elon Musk, all the friends a person could wish for and the approval to go with it. It is all temporary. Here today, gone tomorrow.



Jesus is alerting us to the fact that the biggest mistake we could make...that's not hyperbole either....literally the biggest mistake we could make is to gain the world at the expense of our souls. And yet we live in a world and culture where millions are trading in eternal treasures for temporary gains.

**Following Jesus means I surrender
my Earthly life and secure my
Heavenly home.**



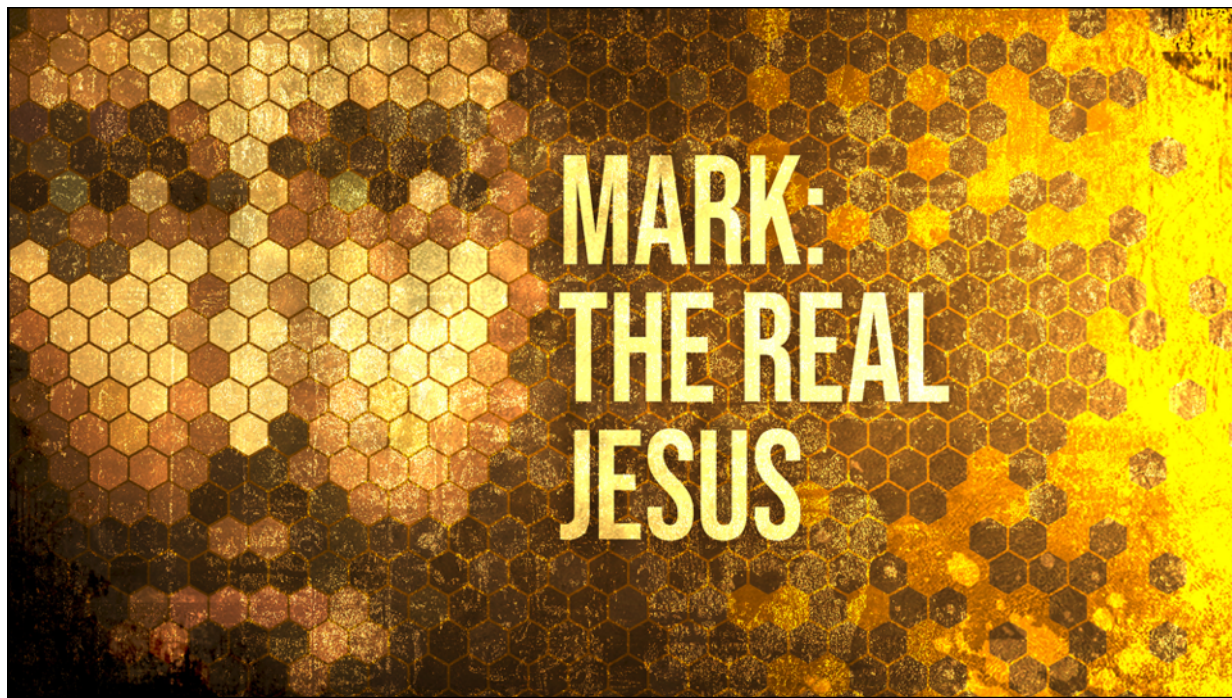
And this brings us to our third and final truth for this morning.

Following Jesus means I surrender my Earthly life and secure my Heavenly home.

Peter here is struggling to surrender what he does not understand.

He is failing the test of trusting God with his life and future.

Similarly many of us struggle with surrender don't we? ***I know I do.*** One of the things that helps me in my surrender is the realization that life is short and that eternity is forever.

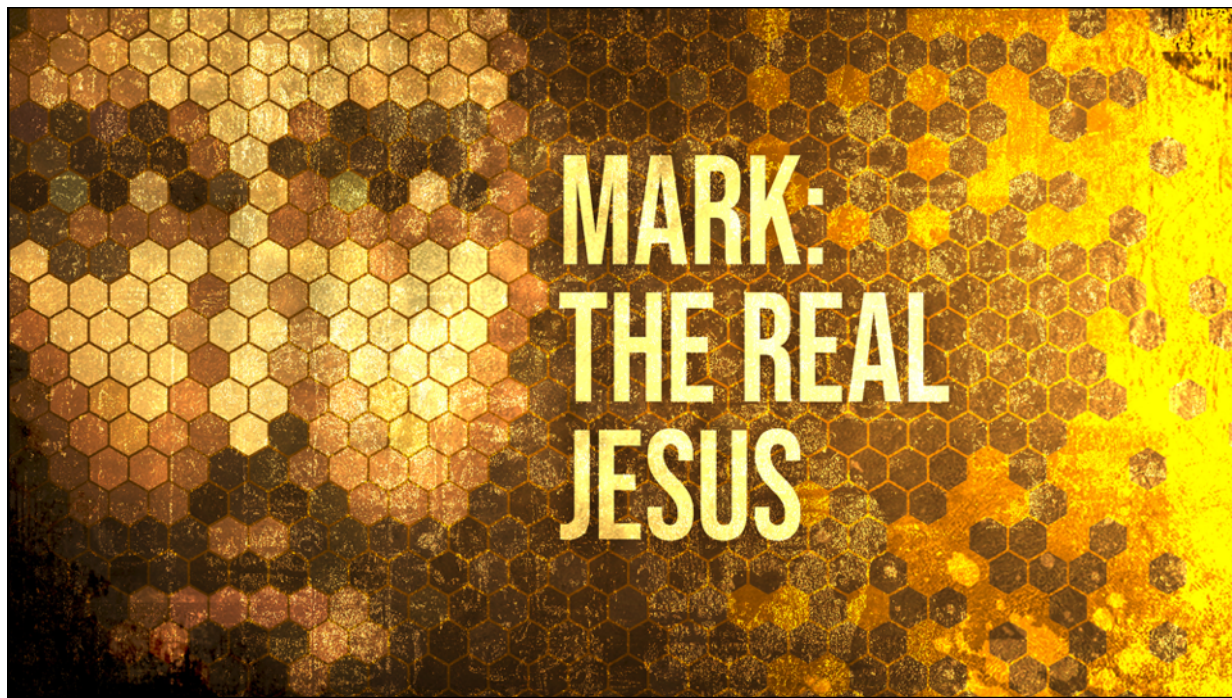


We are fortunate that God made us fully aware of our own mortality. We know that our days are numbered. Jesus underlines this truth in our text as an onramp for us to elevate the eternal over the temporal.

Illus.

This a few years ago I heard about a story that took place back in my hometown area of South Jersey. This story underlines how fleeting life is, and how a near death experience can reorient what we think is important.

A man named Rufus Graham was on his way to a 4th of July party and he was riding his motorcycle when he lost control of his bike...he then hit a road sign which immediately severed his leg.



The good news was that he was wearing a helmet and the rest of his body was fine.....but the bad news was due to his severed leg he was bleeding out and close to death.

Rufus remembered that some people started to get out of their cars, and they just called 911 for help....but no one could help him with what he really needed at that moment....he needed to stop bleeding....and just before he blacked out a man named Walter Rives stepped in.



Walter Rives was a former NASA ARMED GUARD.....basically he was on the SWAT TEAM at NASA (who knew NASA had its own SWAT TEAM) nevertheless Walter hopped out of his car and immediately swung into action.....he made a turnicate from his belt and kept Rufus calm until the Ambulance arrived.

Here is the picture of Rufus and Walter meeting 5 months after the incident.

When Walter walked into the room.....Rufus walked over to him with his brand new prosthetic leg.....no words were spoken, and they embraced.



It is easy to tell just by this snapshot of Rufus' face the IMMENSE amount of gratitude he feels for the man who STEPPED IN AND SAVED HIM WHILE HE WAS BLEEDING OUT.

Now it would be unconscionable if instead of embracing Walter.....Rufus simply said "oh yeah, thanks for saving my life the other day.....and then sped away on his "new" motorcycle.

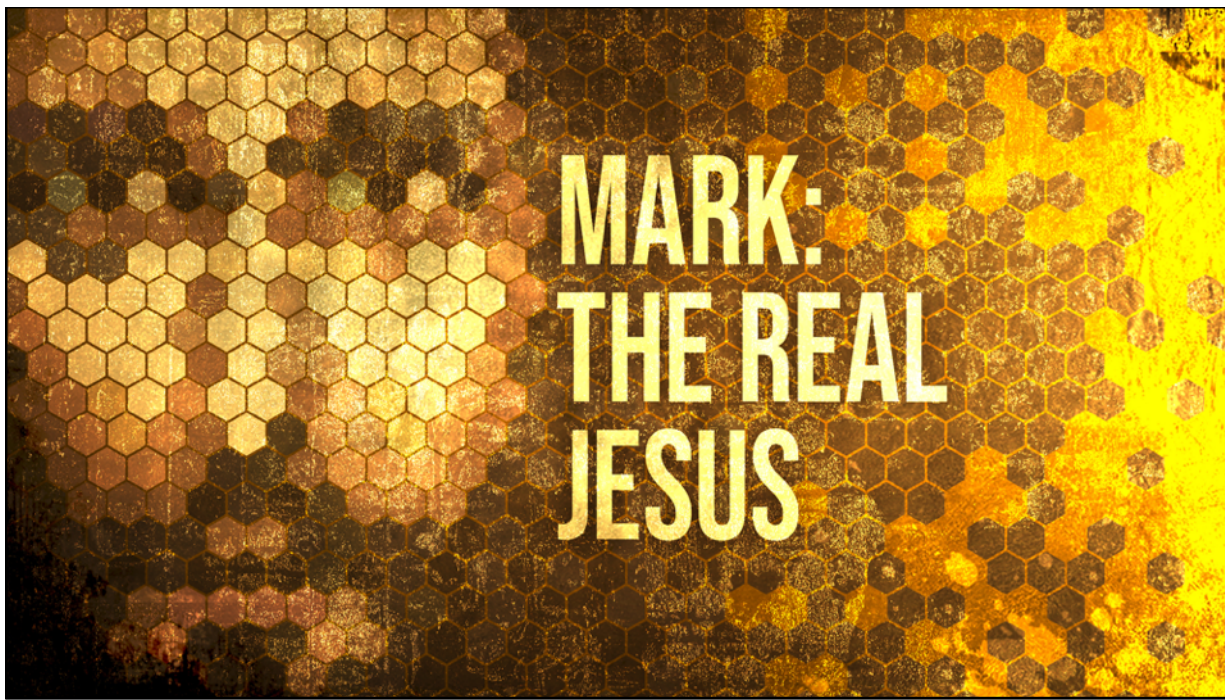
But that's not what Rufus did.....no you see Rufus can clearly remember lying on route 130 close to death, **he knows he was saved and he knows who saved him and he is grateful.**



Rufus told NBC 10, "I've been wanting to meet him." [the man who saved my life] "I think I'm really blessed to be here," and "I want to make the best of it now because not everybody gets second chances."

Rufus has immense gratitude because he knows he was saved and he knows who saved him.....the reality of death was right before him.....and somebody stepped in and gave him a second chance.

Rufus realizes that he didn't save himself.....in fact he realizes that he initiated the problem that almost led to his demise....and now boy is he grateful **HE HAS BEEN SAVED.**



And Church the implications of this are obvious.

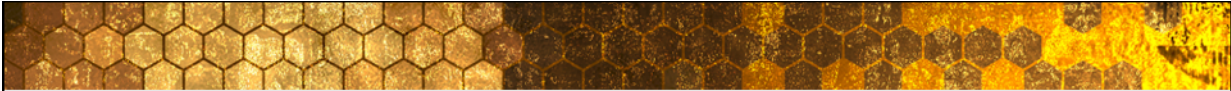
Do you know what you have been **saved from**?

Do you know **who has saved you**?

And is Earthly life you are living an **expression of your gratitude**.....realizing you have been shown MERCY AND GRACE?

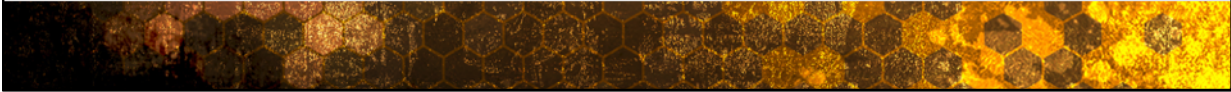
That you could do nothing to save yourself.....but that the work has been done on your behalf.....by ***The Real Jesus***.

[Pause]



“Too many of us think too lightly of sin, and that is why we think too lightly of the Savior. The one who weeps for joy at hearing the Gospel, the one who extravagantly pours out his possessions in response is the one who believes he has stood before his God with the noose of condemnation rightfully around his neck, and before he is condemned hears a voice that says, I will take that noose and I will wear it in your place.”

- Charles H. Spurgeon



Charles Spurgeon has this to say about the seriousness of Christians understanding their own redemption and need of surrender.....”*Too many of us think too lightly of sin, and that is why we think too lightly of the Savior. The one who weeps for joy at hearing the Gospel, the one who extravagantly pours out his possessions in response is the one who believes he has stood before his God with the noose of condemnation rightfully around his neck, and before he is condemned hears a voice that says, I will take that noose and I will wear it in your place.”*

Spurgeon says that this is the one who will joyfully offer his life in response to the good news of redemption in Jesus’ name.

COMMUNION



We celebrate an open communion here at Brandywine, which means you don't have to be a member in order to partake with us, but we do ask that you be a believer in Jesus Christ.

We observe communion here at Brandywine because we see clear instructions from Jesus in scripture to remember Him in this way. In Matthew 26:26-28 we read, "While they were eating, Jesus took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying, 'Take and eat; this is my body.' Then he took a cup, and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, 'Drink from it, all of you. This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.'"

COMMUNION



These are the words that Jesus spoke to his disciples as he was preparing himself to be our sacrifice. And within the observance of Communion we see several opportunities to reflect and confess.

First, we should look back. We are to participate in Communion in remembrance of Christ. Communion also speaks of the intimacy and fellowship we now have with God. And so we look back. We look back to the cross. We remember what Christ accomplished for us. And we are reminded of His love for us.

Second, we are to look ahead. The Scriptures say to do this "until he comes again" (1 Corinthians 11:26).

COMMUNION



The first time Jesus came to this earth, He came as the Suffering Servant. The next time, He will come as our glorious forever King.

Communion is also an observance to remind us that Jesus is coming again.

And Third, Communion is a time to look within. We are to look within and ask the Holy Spirit to show us any areas of our lives that we have not surrendered to God. And once we acknowledge these areas, we are to seek forgiveness, looking for God to transform us from the inside out.

***Let's take a moment to reflect and confess.**

COMMUNION



Bread:

Taking the bread Jesus broke it and gave it to His disciples, He said, “take eat this is my body”, do this in remembrance of me.

Cup:

In the same way Jesus took the cup, saying “this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many,” do this in remembrance of me.

Prayer:

Thank you for your sacrifice

May we live to honor what you have done for us

May we look forward to your glorious 2nd coming.