



CANYON HILLS

COMMUNITY CHURCH

Series: The Book of Mark

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Who is Jesus?

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Good morning, everyone. My name is Koby. I'm one of the worship pastors here. I always love the opportunity to share God's Word when given the chance. I love that we've been worshipping the Lord in his holiness today. It fits so nicely with where we're headed in Scripture, and so I'm going to ask you to get your Bibles open to Mark, chapter 12. As you do, I want to tell you a story.

In the spring of 1980, a boy named Martell Hamilton, who was 14 years old at the time, was shown a picture of a man named Collin Warner, whom the police indicated was a suspect in the murder of his brother. Hamilton, 14 years old, exhausted, and stricken by grief, said he may have seen the man in the picture before.

Based on his testimony and a witness account, Mr. Warner was arrested, tried, and convicted of killing Martell's brother with a single shot to the head on a Brooklyn street. Twenty-one years later, a man named Norman Simmonds came forward and admitted to being the true killer that night. The police and Martell had the wrong man, and their mistake cost that man 21 years of his life. No apology or amount of money could ever make up for the years that had been stolen from him.

See, misidentification can be costly, because the truth is it doesn't matter whom we think someone is or whom we want someone to be. Ultimately, the only thing that matters is who they actually are. The police, the justice system, and Martell thought they had the right guy. In reality, they didn't have him.

I can believe with all of my heart that Pastor Steve Walker is a red-headed Samoan woman. I can believe that with all my heart. The truth remains he's still a hairy, white Italian guy. Nothing is going to change that. It doesn't matter who we think someone is. What matters is who they actually are.

My question for all of you as we begin our time together this morning is... *Who is Jesus?* Do you truly know who he is, or is there a chance you've misidentified him? See, misidentification cost

Mr. Warner 21 years of his life. Calling my boss a red-headed Samoan woman in front of 1,000 people could cost me my job. Misidentifying Jesus is far costlier.

With that, I'm going to ask you all to get to your feet with your Bibles open to Mark, chapter 12, out of respect for God's Word. We read together, beginning in verse 35.

"And as Jesus taught in the temple, he said, 'How can the scribes say that the Christ is the son of David? David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared, 'The Lord said to my Lord, 'Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.'" David himself calls him Lord. So how is he his son?' And the great throng heard him gladly." Let's pray.

Father, we are grateful for your Word and we are grateful for this truth. I pray, Lord, that in these next few minutes we have together, you would just prepare our hearts for whatever you would plan to do in us. Lord, for those of us who know you, love you, and follow your Son, I pray this passage would bring us hope and joy and would drive us to worship. For anyone here, Lord, who has not surrendered their hearts to you, I pray that today would be the day of their salvation. We love you and we commit this time to you. In Christ's name we pray, amen.

I'll be honest. When I first read this passage in preparation for today, I had no idea what it meant. In fact, I have read this passage on numerous occasions, any time I've worked my way through one of the Gospels. I would always come to this passage, going, "Yep, I still don't know what that means," and then just move on.

One of my habits as I get more opportunities to preach is, when I know it's coming, I'll look forward in the text and say, "I wonder what passage is going to be mine." I was actually hoping and kind of praying that this was not going to be the one that fell on my week. Full disclosure. You've heard it said that all of Scripture is inspired, but not all of it is inspiring, right? If you want to know what I'm talking about, spend a month in Leviticus. It's good and it's profitable. It's not an inspiring moment.

As I looked at this passage, I was afraid this might be one of those spots, but as I began to dig into it, I realized I could not have been more wrong. I am really excited to share with you the meat behind this passage.

Just to clarify before we get started, Jesus is quoting King David in Psalm 110 here. He's quoting an Old Testament passage. This is important for us to understand, because part of the thing that was confusing, to me anyway, as I read it, was, "**...The Lord said to my Lord...**" Who is "the Lord" and who is "my Lord"? I didn't understand who was even talking.

It's important to note here that "the Lord," the first one there, is the name *Yahweh*. It's the proper name of God, given to Moses. This is God Almighty. God on high says to "my Lord," which is the Hebrew word *adonai*, which means Anointed One. They would have seen this and understood it to mean, "The Lord on high says to the Anointed One [or the Messiah, whom we know to be Jesus], 'Sit at my right hand until I put your enemies under your feet.'" This is important to understand. In a few moments, you'll understand why.

1. *Jesus is God.* This simple statement is what separates Christianity from every other religion on the face of the planet. We believe Jesus is God. This is the first point because this is the point Jesus was making. There's so much significance behind Jesus' quote of Psalm 110. See, historically, the Jews believed that the Messiah was just going to be an earthly ruler.

He was going to be a human who would come and establish his earthly kingdom. His presence would usher in all the fulfillment of the prophecies and promises God had made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. They never expected, nor do they expect today, that he was going to be divine, their eternal ruler. They thought he would just be an earthly ruler.

This is the point Jesus is making. Jesus points to the words of David to point out that there was more to the identity of the coming Messiah. See, titles in the Jewish culture meant a lot. The father in the family had the most honor. He was honored above the son. The patriarch of the family received the most honor in the family, so if the Messiah was simply going to be a man, David would have never called him, "my Lord." That was title of prestige and honor that would not have applied to him. In their culture, it didn't work that way.

Jesus' point was if David calls the coming Messiah, "my Lord," then he must be superior in power and prestige. Therefore, he cannot simply be a human descendant. There has to be more to it. The next portion of our passage just expands that idea further. Look back at our text.

David writes that Jesus says that God said to the Messiah, "**Sit at my right hand...**" This simple statement is God himself elevating the Messiah to an equal position of power, symbolizing that he is co-equal in position, authority, and ultimately in deity. So, for anyone who would say that Jesus never claimed to be God (and there are a lot of people in our world today who make that claim), this verse proves otherwise.

For those listening to him that day, there was no doubt in their minds that Jesus was making a case for the divinity of the Messiah. Jesus was making a case that he himself is that divine Messiah. Jesus said he was God, and both the Old Testament and the New Testament corroborate his claim.

Honestly, I think logic and history would suggest the same thing. They would suggest that he was telling the truth. Just consider for a moment that Scripture has never been proven to be wrong on any point, scientifically or historically. In fact, I would make the argument that over the last 2,000 years, Scripture has spoken truth and secular history and science have slowly been catching up to what Scripture has already said.

I came across this article this week, and I thought it was really interesting. I know many of you have probably heard of it already, but seeing as I'm the one with the microphone and I get to make decisions for the next 20 minutes, we're going to talk about it again because I want to.

I should probably preface this for a moment. I was homeschooled. Math was never my thing. Math has never been my thing. When I tested into college, I tested into middle school algebra,

Math 91. I took four math classes before it even counted toward my two-year degree. Math is not my thing. I was much more gifted in the art of wearing Birkenstocks and socks and making my own clothes. That being said, what I'm about to talk about is someone else's (who is much smarter than I am) math.

In his book, *Science Speaks*, Peter Stoner does the math to figure out what the probability would be for one person to accidentally fulfill eight prophecies made about the Messiah. These prophecies were things foretold about the Messiah, but they were written hundreds and thousands of years before Jesus was ever born.

If we were to accept that Jesus was simply a man, then this would include things he would have no control over, like where he was born, who the parents would be that he was born to, how he would be betrayed, and eventually, how he would be murdered. He did the math. I encourage you to Google it.

It really is incredible. The math of one person accidentally fulfilling eight prophecies would be 1 in 100 quadrillion. That is a lot of zeros. If anyone were to say you have a 1 in 100 quadrillion chance of anything, we would expect it to be impossible. None of us would expect to get whatever that thing was.

Stoner then goes on to try and illustrate this point to help our minds wrap around the significance of this number. He says if you were to take the state of Texas and fill it knee-high with silver dollars, and then you were to take one of those silver dollars and put a little black check mark on it and hide it somewhere in the state of Texas...

Now turn a blindfolded person loose in the state of Texas, and the odds that they would pick the coin with the black mark on their first try are the same odds of one person fulfilling eight of these prophecies made about the Messiah. That's mind-boggling.

Now, the problem with that statistic is that Jesus did not fulfill eight prophecies made about him in the Old Testament. He fulfilled 108. The math on that is incredible, and the point is that Jesus is God. Scripture confirms it. History and logic prove it. So, the question is and remains for all of us in this place today... *What will we do with Jesus?* Who do we believe him to be?

C.S. Lewis famously made the argument that really, when it comes to Jesus, we only have three options. We can only pick one of these three things. He was a liar, he was crazy, or he was truly God. Much of our world would like to relegate Jesus to being a good person or a moral teacher, but C.S. Lewis argues that those aren't options for us.

Here's the problem. Jesus claimed to be God. He claimed to be God in the flesh. Either he was that, or he was lying. If he was lying, that's not a small lie. That's a lie that changed the course of history. That's a lie that has cost millions of people their lives over the course of church history. You cannot tell that lie and be a good person.

The other option is that he wasn't lying; he actually did believe he was God, but he was crazy. That may be the case, but if you look at the historical account of the person of Jesus and what his followers did immediately following his death, it's hard to make a case that the man was insane. So, if he's not a liar and he's not crazy, our only other option is that he actually was who he said he was. He's God.

I'll ask you again. Who is he? If you were forced to answer that question, would you classify Jesus as a liar, a lunatic, or Lord of heaven and earth? I believe history, science, and Scripture make the truth clear, but that's a decision you have to make for yourself. This is where we begin. Jesus is God. That's who he claimed to be.

2. *All things will be subjected under his authority.* Jesus is God and all things will be subjected under his authority. The time is coming when everyone and everything will bow before the majesty and authority of Christ.

Look back at our text, verse 36. **"David himself, in the Holy Spirit, declared, 'The Lord [God] said to my Lord [the Anointed], 'Sit at my right hand, until I put your enemies under your feet.'"** Stop for a moment. You are either for Jesus or you are against him. You are either an enemy of Jesus or you are a friend of Jesus. There is no neutral option given. David, in Psalm 110, is speaking of a time when all things will come into submission to the supremacy of Christ.

I want you to see some of the other verses in this psalm that David wrote. They just help give us a bit of context to what David was seeing happening. It starts out very familiar. **"The LORD says to my Lord: 'Sit at my right hand, until I make your enemies your footstool.'"** Then, toward the end of the chapter, he writes,

"The Lord [Jesus, *adonai*] is at your [God's] right hand; he will shatter kings on the day of his wrath. He will execute judgment among the nations, filling them with corpses; he will shatter chiefs over the wide earth. He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head."

The point being made here is that the day is coming when every knee in heaven and on earth will bow before Jesus. On that day, he doesn't return as the humble Servant-King who went to the cross to be humiliated, tortured, and brutally murdered. No, on this day, he returns as the King of Glory.

Some of you are sitting here today and you would agree with me on the first point. You would say, "Yes, I understand. Jesus is God. I get it, but that Jesus, the Jesus of Psalm 110, is not my Jesus. My Jesus is a God of love. He's a God of compassion. My Jesus is a God of mercy. Doesn't it say somewhere in the Bible that God is love? I get it. If or when he comes back, we'll be good. He and I are good. I've done good things. I've done more good things than bad. I've left the earth better than when I found it."

Church, I would respond yes, absolutely, Jesus is a God of mercy. Jesus is a God of compassion. Jesus is the God of love, and he is all of those things in their fullest capacity. But do you know

what else Jesus is? He is justice, righteousness, and holy wrath. Romans 1:18 says the day is coming at the end of time when God will pour out his wrath on all unrighteousness.

In that day, there will be peace, reconciliation, and restoration of all things, and we all love that part, right? Yes and amen! We look forward to that day, but this peace won't necessarily be voluntary. Peace is not simply the absence of conflict. Peace is almost always established by war. I mean, just think about our own world history and the times we've been at peace.

Look at how our conflict with the Japanese in World War II ended. It didn't end because we all just decided to lay down our arms and just get along. No, one side dropped an atom bomb and scared an entire nation into submission. So, there will be peace one day, but it will be because a war has been fought, decisively won, and Christ's rule is eternally and absolutely established on this earth. I love what Paul writes in Philippians 2:9-11. Speaking of Jesus, he said,

"Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

The day is coming when every knee in heaven and on earth, where all of creation will bow the knee before Jesus Christ, the King of Kings. The question for you and me, as we sit here today, is on that day, will we bow willingly or will our knees be bowed for us? I want you to look at me for a moment. This may be the most important thing you hear from me all morning.

It does not matter what we think about Jesus. It does not matter what we want to be true about Jesus. What matters is who he actually is. What matters is, on that day, when every single one of us faces him face to face, what is that day going to look like? Again, remember the Bible has never been proven to be wrong. In fact, in everything it has predicted up to this point, it has been absolutely accurate. Scripture tells us this day is coming, so I would ask you again, what will you do with Jesus?

Jesus is God, and the day is coming when all things will be subjected under his authority and rule. I understand this message is heavy and may come across as a little aggressive. I would be willing to bet there are a few of you sitting here today who are thinking to yourselves, "Koby, you need to breathe a little bit, brother. Don't you get it? We are all Christians. That's why we came. We are all Christians, gathered in this room because we love Jesus, so why are you yelling at us like none of us know Jesus?"

I love it when you ask questions that fit perfectly with my outline and for which I already have answers, so thank you for asking. As I see it, there are three groups of people represented in this room today. Every single one of us falls into one of three camps.

A. *The ones who love Jesus.* I think there are many people in this room here today who genuinely love and follow Jesus. This passage should cause us to worship and celebrate. This is good news, and we're going to get more into that in a moment.

B. *Those who don't know Jesus and you know it.* You've never considered Jesus beyond being simply a good man or a moral teacher. I'm excited for you today because I believe this is the day the Lord has set aside for your salvation. Our God is not a God of chaos. He's a God of intentionality and purpose. You are sitting here today on March 8, 2018, for a purpose, and I believe it's to hear this message, that today would be the day of your salvation. We'll talk more about that in a moment as well.

C. *The people who think they have a relationship with Jesus, but they are living in a false hope.* I'll be honest. This group has been the group I have prayed for the most this week, and it has probably been weighing the most heavily on my heart. I think the hardest people to convince that they need Jesus are the ones who already think they have him.

I would just caution you before we go on: don't quickly put what I just said on someone else. Stop for a moment and consider whether or not this person may be you. See, there are some here who bear the name *Christian* and have borne the name *Christian* for a long time, like I bear the name *Irish*. It's a title of heritage, but it has absolutely no bearing or weight on my day-to-day life.

I believe the scariest passage in all of Scripture is found in Matthew, chapter 7. Jesus has just finished teaching the Sermon on the Mount, the most famous sermon ever preached. In verses 21-23, he says,

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' And then will I declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.'"

Simply acknowledging Jesus with your lips while not believing in him in your heart will do you no good. It'll do us no good. See, these people in this passage thought they were good with God. They stood before the judgment seat of Christ and thought they were covered, and then they heard words that were absolutely terrifying.

Immediately, they made a defense. "But God, didn't we prophesy in your name? Didn't we go to Bible study? Didn't we go to church? Didn't we go on mission trips?" Jesus' response was, "I never knew you." How did he identify them? As workers of lawlessness. Why? Because our actions will expose our hearts every time.

Jesus said, in John 14:15, **"If you love me, you will keep my commandments."** The flip side of that statement is true as well. If you don't do his commandments, you don't love him. We cannot afford to make the mistake, as we sit here today, to bury our heads in the sand on this one. I would encourage all of us to look at our own lives and evaluate if anything outside of our word or profession would attest to our relationship with Jesus being real.

If your life is not marked by obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ, if it is marked by habitual and enslaving sin, then do not make the mistake of thinking your interaction with him at the end of this age will be a good one. Please, if nothing else, don't lie to yourself. This is a question only you can answer. It doesn't matter. You might look like the best Christian in the world on the outside. I might believe you to be one of the most dedicated Christians I've ever seen. The problem is God doesn't ask my opinion about you in the end. He knows.

No matter what category you fall into today, I want you to leave this room with hope, because believe it or not, these truths are good news for every single one of us sitting in this room today. For the believer, here are a few things that just brought my soul joy as I studied this text this week.

First, *we don't fear death or the return of the Lord*. As believers, we don't fear the end, because when Jesus returns in his glory, we will finally see with our eyes what we have longed for in our souls our entire spiritual life. When we stand before the judgment seat of Christ, we will be at peace because we know we stand in a righteousness we did not earn, but it was purchase for us by the blood of Jesus and gifted to us by the grace of God. On that day, we don't fear, but we wait and anticipate as we step into eternity. We don't fear Jesus' return. We eagerly long for it.

Secondly, *we know perfection is coming*. I think a lot of you sitting here today need to be reminded of that. I needed to be reminded of that. Revelation 21:4 promises that for all who are sick, broken, and tired, on this day, restoration will come. There will be no cancer. There will be no sadness. There will be no broken relationships. There will be no death. All things will be as God designed them to be on that day, and that is a good thing. We don't fear death. We know perfection is coming.

Thirdly, *we should be driven to share our faith*. This is something this truth should drive us toward. If we acknowledge that Jesus is God, that he is returning, then we should be driven to share our faith. That's an application point. This has been a huge burden in my heart recently, because the more I wrap my head around the finality of Jesus' return, the first people who come to my mind are the people, my friends and family, whom I know have rejected Jesus.

A few weeks ago, I had a dream. Before any of you freak out, I don't believe my dream was prophetic. I don't believe any of this is coming true. I believe the Lord gave me this dream because he needed to kick my butt into action, because there has been an apathy in my life when it comes to sharing the truth of the gospel with my family, because it is so much costlier when they reject us. It means so much more than someone we're never going to see again.

In this dream, I found myself coming up on a car accident. It was one of those dreams I would have sworn was real. As I walked up, the EMT met me and told me it was someone in my family and she hadn't made it. The dream was so real, and as I walked away from that car accident, one of my friends came to meet me and they said, "Hey, I know you're grieving and I'm so sorry for your loss, but we don't mourn as those who have no hope. She is in a better place. She is with the Lord."

In that moment, I believe for the first time, the weight and reality fell on me in a different way than it ever has when I recognized she did *not* go to be with the Lord, because she wasn't even neutral toward my God; she straight-out rejected him.

I remember grieving in that moment, not only the loss of her but the reality that she was not with the Lord. When I woke up, I was thankful. I was thankful that I'm completely Reformed in my doctrine of salvation. I believe my family's salvation rests in the hands of God, and that is good news.

Yet what set in as well as there were conversations I am supposed to have that I have not had. I have pushed them off. I tell myself I have more time, but we don't know that! I have been guilty of standing by silently as people I care for deeply have marched themselves toward the gates of hell, and that has to stop. If we believe this to be true, it should drive us to share our faith with people we love. Jesus is coming, and that day will be final.

Fourthly, *we should be driven to worship*. Man, we should be celebrating this truth. We sang all morning about the holiness of God. Our God is holy! He demands perfection! In his mercy, he provided Jesus to be the perfection we could not be, to be our righteousness. That is a reason to worship. In a few moments, we're going to have the opportunity to respond together in that way.

That's the hope this passage brings the believer, but I just want to spend a moment speaking to the nonbeliever in the room as well. See, for any of you here today who would look at your life and say, "I am not a follower of Jesus," this is good news for you too, because God in his sovereign goodness has seen fit to draw you into this place on this day. You are here for a reason. You are hearing this message for a reason. God, in his mercy, has extended to you the opportunity to lay aside your pride and to step into the life and hope that only Jesus can provide.

The only application I have for you today, the only thing you have left to do is *repent and put your faith in Christ*. There are no magic words involved in putting your faith in Christ. It's not an incantation. This is just simply the decision that, "I'm going to leave behind my old ways. I'm going to stop living for myself and I'm going to start living for Jesus. I'm going to put my hope and faith in him, because he is my only hope for salvation."

God, in his holiness, demands justice. God would not be God if he wasn't fair. His justice is perfect. God, in his justice, cannot turn a blind eye to sin. It's impossible. The debt must be paid. Every debt must be paid, but because our God is merciful, he sent Jesus to pay the debt for you. The cross of Christ where Jesus hung and died is where the justice and mercy of God intersect. God didn't leave us to fend for ourselves, but he sent Jesus to absorb the wrath of God that we so deserved, and that is something you can step into today, right here and right now.

I'll ask you again, like I did at the beginning, who is Jesus? What are you going to do with him? Was he a liar, was he crazy, or was he the Son of God? I'm going to just ask everyone to bow their heads and close their eyes for a moment. We're not done yet, so don't start packing up. We're just going to take a moment to be quiet before the Lord. I just want to ask you to honestly

ask yourself that question: who is Jesus? In the quietness of your heart, would you answer that question honestly? Let's bow our heads and close our eyes. Let's do that together right now.

Jesus asked the apostle Peter, "**But who do you say that I am?**" Peter's response was, "**You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.**" Some of you have come to that point this morning where you realize for the first time that Jesus is not just some good teacher. He is not simply a historical figure, but he is the Son of God and your only hope for salvation.

Some of you are sitting here today and you have never honestly given thought to who Jesus might actually be. Yes, you've acknowledged that he may have existed, but you've never considered his claim to be God, and that is changing as you sit here right now. If that's you, while no one is watching and everyone's eyes are closed and heads are bowed, I'm going to ask you to stand up. It's nothing weird. We're not going to make a spectacle of it. It's just you and me right now. If that's you and you have never bowed the knee to Jesus Christ, would you stand?

Some of you are sitting in this place and you know you should be standing. Here's the problem with us. We always think we have time. You know about 7,000 people die every day in the United States, and we always assume it'll be someone else. God is giving you this moment.

I want to especially call any of you who have maybe worn the name of *Christian* for a long time, but nothing in your life would suggest that you actually love him and honor him first. I would invite you to make this the day when you put that stake in the sand where you are no longer a knower of Jesus but you are a follower of Jesus. If that's you, would you stand to your feet? Make a stand for what you believe.

Father, you see those who are standing here today. God, I am so thankful that you, in your goodness and mercy, would continually offer us the invitation to turn to you. I pray, Lord, that as they have the courage to stand, they would have the courage to follow you each and every day. God, you have been so good to us. Thank you for how you love us. In Jesus' name we pray.

I'm just going to ask that everyone in the room get to their feet. We're going to take a moment to just respond to our God. We needed him the moment we put our faith in him. We need him each and every day moving forward. Pastor Jeff is going to be down here. We have some people off to my left.

If you stood, I would ask you to have the courage to come forward as we're going to be singing here together. Just come forward. We have some people who would love to just give you some more information about what it means to be a follower of Jesus, to help you in that next step. For all of us right now, let's just take a moment and respond. Let's sing this together.

[Song]

Lord, I come, I confess

Bowing here, I find my rest
Without you, I fall apart
You're the one that guides my heart

Lord, I need you, oh, I need you
Every hour I need you
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need you

Where sin runs deep, your grace is more
Where grace is found is where you are
Where you are, Lord, I am free
Holiness is Christ in me

Where you are, Lord, I am free
Holiness is Christ in me

Lord, I need you, oh, I need you
Every hour I need you
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need you

Lord, I need you, oh, I need you
Every hour I need you
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need you

My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need you

[End of song]

Dave Morgan: If you're here this morning and you didn't walk up, our counselors will be up here after the service. I encourage you to come on up. Don't hesitate. They'd love to talk with you and pray with you. It has been a good day of church. Thanks for being here. We'll see you next Sunday.