

SUNDAY OCTOBER 16, 2016

the

# Reminder

The weekly newsletter of the church of Christ in Bellaire, Texas

## The Gospel of the Suffering Messiah

**“This is the beginning of the gospel of Jesus the Christ, the son of God.” (1:1)** Mark begins his gospel with this declaration of who Jesus is. He is the Christ—the Messiah anointed by God that has been anticipated for generations by the people of Israel. Furthermore, he is the Son of God—the divine presence in human form. Jesus is the Messiah and the son of God; the rest of the book is written to back up this astonishing claim.

The first half of the book focuses on Jesus’ power, or—more true to Mark’s language—his authority. Through the first eight chapters, Jesus performs miracle after miracle. He heals the sick, casts out demons, cleanses lepers, and is constantly amazing the growing crowds. Intertwined with the miracles is the record of Jesus’ profound teaching. Whether he is rebuking the religious leaders, enlightening the crowds with parables, or instructing the disciples, Jesus coupled his undeniable miracles with authoritative teaching.

As a result, when Jesus asks His disciples in chapter 8, “Who do you say that I am?” Peter—speaking for all the disciples—is able to astutely respond, **“You are the Christ.” (8:30)** The disciples are correct; Jesus has clearly demonstrated that He is the promised Messiah. But Jesus tells them on that occasion to tell no one what Peter just confessed. Why would Jesus prohibit them from telling people about His identity?

One reason may be that the disciples didn’t fully understand what it meant for Jesus to be the Messiah. So far, Jesus’ demonstration of power and authority reinforced their expectation that the Messiah was a conquering king that was going to overthrow the Romans and establish an earthly kingdom. This, however, was far from the truth. Over the next several chapters, Jesus works to teach his disciples that He is a suffering Messiah. Three times in three chapters (8, 9, 10), Jesus predicts his coming arrest and execution. Each time, the disciples respond in confusion. Ultimately, of course, His prediction comes true when the Jews hand him over to Pilate who orders him to be crucified. And it is while Jesus hangs on the cross that the full picture of Jesus the Messiah comes into view. At that moment, the Roman centurion looks up at the cross, sees Jesus dying there, and declares, **“Truly this man is the Son of God.” (15:39)**

This is the Jesus that Mark wants his readers to see. **The Christ, the Son of God.** The promised Messiah who came to fulfill all the promises that God made for His people. But the divine presence of God who accomplished all of that by coming to earth, living in this broken world, suffering as a reject, and ultimately dying a criminal’s death. It is **“the gospel of Jesus,”** because as the story ends, Jesus has been raised and ascends to sit at the right hand of God. His disciples, and those who read Mark’s account, are left to make up their mind about who Jesus is, and whether or not they will follow Him down the same road of suffering to His ultimate hope of glory.

### Bellaire

church of Christ  
8001 South Rice Ave  
P.O. Box 1029  
Bellaire, Texas 77402  
[bellairechurchofchrist.org](http://bellairechurchofchrist.org)

### Who Are We?

A group of God’s children, striving to maintain the organization, doctrine and worship as taught in the New Testament.

### Schedule of Services

**Sunday:**  
9:30 AM Worship  
11:00 AM Bible Study

**Wednesday:**  
7:30 PM Bible Study

**“If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me.” Mark 8:34**