

# Life and Ministry of Jesus Christ

## Revelations at Caesarea Philippi, Part 4

### Salvation

Caesarea Philippi, a very worldly and pagan place of worship, is a place of revelation of mysteries of God

- truths kept secret from the foundation of the world now being revealed by God in time
  - transcending realities in heaven and on earth
1. the mystery of Christ, of “God with us”, of the Incarnation
  2. the mystery of the Church
  3. the mystery of God’s Plan of Redemption
  4. the mystery of Salvation
  5. the mystery of the Kingdom of God

<u>Mystery</u>	<u>Matt</u>	<u>Mark</u>	<u>Luke</u>
Christ	16:13-17	8:27-30	9:18-21
Church	16:18-19		
God’s Plan of Redemption	16:21-23	8:31-33	9:22
Salvation	16:24-27	8:34-38	9:23-26
Kingdom of God	16:28	9:1	9:27

Three weeks ago:

1. the mystery of Christ

Two weeks ago:

2. the mystery of the Church

Last week:

3. the mystery of God’s Plan of Redemption
  - Jesus Christ MUST be rejected, suffer, be killed, rise again the 3<sup>rd</sup> day
  - And based on Peter’s rebuke and then Jesus’ rebuke...
  - There is only one way to be redeemed from death...God’s way
  - All of man’s ways are lies

This time...another revelation at Caesarea Philippi

4. the mystery of Salvation

This remains a study where the location is part of the lesson

Caesarea Philippi is 25 miles north of Bethsaida

- at the base of Mount Hermon...a massive rock formation
- site of the headwaters of the Jordan River
- previously known as Paneas or Panium, the center of worship for the Greek god Pan, the lord of the underworld
- site of an immense cavern/cave  
(pagan belief: caves were gateways to the underworld)
- the cave at the rear of the temple was considered the 'Gate of Hades' because it was believed that the lord of the underworld would enter and leave the underworld through it
- the Roman city was originally built by Herod the Great and dedicated to Augustus Caesar (beginning of Caesar worship)
- later enlarged by his son Herod Philip, and dedicated to Tiberius Caesar
- Philip's capitol
- the city sits at the foot of Mount Hermon, which was known as the 'Rock of the Gods', referring to the many shrines built against it
- a very pagan site on the Via Maris (Egypt to Mesopotamia), the road to Damascus
- was a center of Caesar worship...and all other gods of the nations

And remember, the key, the essentials, to understand the other mysteries revealed at Caesarea Philippi is the dichotomy (separation from, contention between) **flesh** and **Spirit**

We will be in Matt 16, Mark 8, and Luke 9

*The Mystery of Salvation*

## Matt 16

v24    come after Me...deny...cross...follow:  
      Jesus speaks to all 12 of His disciples

      If any...whosoever...(man)  
          The Creator's definition of "man" is in Gen 1:27

      will...individual choice, free will  
          contrary to Reformed Theology/marketplace Calvinism

      come after Me...to follow, to accompany, to walk with (behind)

      Here in Caesarea Philippi, having told Peter to get behind Him...  
          to follow Him according to God's will

      vs

      to lead Him according to man's will...  
      the Lord tells His disciples what it means to follow Him, the Savior

1. deny himself
  - denial of Self (will, wants of the flesh, "leader-ship")

      denial of Self is NOT self-denial  
      Those who seek to glorify/exalt self  
          (e.g. professional athletes, celebrities)  
          are very adept at self-denial  
      self-denial is still self-first and still leading

      denial of Self is the humble setting aside, laying down,  
          of my will, my plans, my ways (flesh)  
          to embrace God's will and God's ways (Spirit)

Matt 11:28-30

      The Son humbly denied Self to be the  
          Servant of God  
      When a person takes Jesus' yoke, they  
          humbly deny Self and follow Him

      denial of Self is self-last and is following vs leading

      A re-orientation of Self is required...from Self-first to Self-last

Rom 12:2-3, 16

Rom 15:1-3

Eph 5:1-2

2. take up his cross

- Roman Cross, instrument of horrific execution, well known to the disciples
- a place of suffering and death for the flesh

3. follow Me

to accompany, to be in the same way/road with

Matt 7:13-14 Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide *is* the gate, and broad *is* the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in there at: Because strait *is* the gate, and narrow *is* the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it

Where is Jesus the Savior going, where are His disciples to follow Jesus' leading?

- to suffering...saying "No" to the flesh and "Yes" to the Spirit of God
- to eternal life, to salvation from death

No man, without Jesus, can be pleasing to God

All of man's ways must be abandoned in favor of following Jesus, the Son in Whom the Father is well-pleased

Jesus has already spoken of this, when He was training them for the 1<sup>st</sup> Mission Trip without Him (Matt 10:37-38)

God's way to salvation for fallen man (the only way) includes

- denial of Self (will)...a re-orientation of Self from first to last
- the Cross...dying to Self
- following Jesus into
  - right relationship with God
  - eternal life

Being worthy of Jesus is trusting Him and God's ways vs man's ways

Luke 11:23 he that is not with Me (following Me) is against Me

There can be only one Lord of a person's life

Self as Lord will lead to destruction, eternal death

Jesus as Lord leads to eternal life

v25    save...lose...exchange:

A person must follow Jesus to be saved

- a. from death (eternal), the wages of sin
- b. from the wrath of an offended God

whosoever...any person of Adam's race, not just Jew

will save his life...preserve/maintain/insist on his will/way...

- refuse to deny Self (will) and die to Self and follow Jesus
- be the lord of his life
- live his life on his terms and not God's terms
- try to save himself from death and the wrath of God
- proudly lead rather than humbly follow

shall lose it...will fail, will find destruction, will die eternally,  
no matter how "high" his morals might be

whosoever...any of Adam's race

will lose his life for My sake...will deny his flesh, trust in Me to save him

shall find it...preserve/secure life, will be given eternal life

This is the 2<sup>nd</sup> of 4 times Jesus will teach this mystery, that is an oxymoron to unbelievers

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|---------------|--|
| 1. Matt 10:39 | preparation for 2x2 1 <sup>st</sup> Mission Trip |
| 2. here       | in Caesarea Philippi                             |
| 3. Luke 17:33 | His Perean ministry, 3 <sup>rd</sup> year        |
| 4. John 12:25 | His final week, days before going to the Cross   |

This mystery is further revealed in Acts, Epistles

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| • Rom 8:1-13   |  |
| • Gal 2:19-21  |  |
| • Gal 5:13-18  |  |
| • Eph 2:1-9    | denying self is suffering to the flesh |
| • Phil 2:1-11  |  |
| • Phil 3:3b-11 |  |

The mystery of Salvation...a personal choice must be made,  
Pros and Cons must be weighed, the cost must be counted:  
Self must be re-oriented, from first to last

v26 profited...gain...lose...give:

If a person rejects God's way of salvation (v24-25)...

What is a man profited/benefited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

What is the "profit" in owning even the entire world (cursed, condemned, temporary) if a person is separated forever from God upon his last breath?

What shall a man give in exchange for his soul...how many possessions, how much wealth, how much money is needed to ransom his condemned soul (John 3:17)?

Ps 49:6-9, 14-15

Prov 10:2 Treasures of wickedness profit nothing: but righteousness delivereth from death

What value do you place on your eternal soul?

What value does God put on your eternal soul?

The Cross of Christ, the blood of His Lamb

v27 Son of Man:

God's Plan of Redemption is the only way fallen man can be redeemed from death (v21) and God accomplished His Plan

Every person must choose

- whether or not to believe that (v16, 21)
- to favor the things of God or the things of man (v23)
- to re-orient Self or not (v24)
- to "save" his life or to lose his life (v25)

God will reward every person according to their choice

God's Messiah, the Servant of God's Gospel/Plan of Redemption for Adam's fallen race, mankind's Kinsman-Redeemer, once His work is finished on "this visit", will return in the glory of His Father as God's King (Ps 2) to reward every person according to their work/choice

Rev 22:12 behold, I come quickly; and My reward *is* with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be

Clearly spoken of is man's responsibility to respond to the work of God's Messiah before he stands before God's King

## Mark 8

v34 the people:

In this account, Jesus

- “called the people unto Him”...more than just the 12 are present, another crowd is too
- “said unto them”...the 12 and the others hear Jesus speak of salvation  
In Matt 10:37-39, it was just the 12 during their training  
Now, it is the 12 AND others...a much bigger audience

Key to both times: without Him

The intense preparation Jesus is giving His disciples is to carry on His new work...without Him

v35 save...lose...and the gospel's:

Another piece of information in this account: lose one's life for

- Jesus' sake (to please God vs self)
- AND the gospel's...v31

will save/preserve/secure it

Jesus gives every man a choice: Eternal Life or Eternal Death

The choice of Eternal Life is

heard...by his answer to the Question for the Ages (v29)  
seen...by his lifestyle of holding onto the Cross and onto Jesus,  
by living the Gospel

The choice for Eternal Death is

heard...by his answer to the Question for the Ages (v29)  
a good man  
a prophet  
a good teacher...a rabbi  
but NOT

The Christ

The Son of the Living God

God

seen...by his lifestyle of rejecting the Cross and Jesus,  
opting for a lifestyle of  
self-indulgence  
self-help  
self-centeredness

or in the hope of a Gospel of salvation in good works

Jesus Christ is the dividing line between Life and Death

v36-37 profit...give in exchange:

In the world, a person's value is: what he "has"

- possessions
- wealth
- riches
- money
- influence
- power
- a number

To God, man's value is: who he "is"...identity

- in Christ
- His child (John 1:12)

The mystery of Salvation: The choice to forfeit "has" to gain "is"

v38 ashamed of Me and of My words:

Whosoever...Jew or Gentile...is ashamed of/denies

- Jesus
  - the Christ, the Son of the Living God
  - God's Messiah/Servant
  - rejected and executed on a Roman cross
  - buried
  - raised again on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day
- Jesus' words
  - The Gospel
  - v31

in this adulterous and sinful generation

- in this life
- as long as they have breath in this world

Jesus will be ashamed of/deny

- at His Judgment Seat
- when He comes in the Father's glory as God's King

Matt 10:32-33 (confess/deny before men/Father) already, to just the 12

Now again to the 12 but for the first time to other people too



## **Luke 9**

v23 said to them all:

Jesus teaching the mystery of Salvation to...all  
The 12 plus the other people there  
In Caesarea Philippi, was this a mixed multitude?

Notice an additional piece of information: daily  
We are to deny self and die to Self...daily  
1 Cor 15:31 I die daily

v24-26 what is a man advantaged:

The world offers NO advantage to our eternal soul, regardless of how much of it  
we have  
Heaven and earth will pass away but Jesus' words will never pass away...  
cling to Jesus and His words instead of the world!

## **Application**

**Rom 13:11-14**

Self must be re-oriented...from Self-first to Self-last

Lay down

- Self-will (Self-first)
- flawed and finite ways
- flesh, the old man
- sin and death

Take up

- The Lord's will (Self-last)
- His infinite and perfect ways (by faith)
- Spirit, the new man
- eternal life

“He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose.”

Jim Elliott

The Mystery of Salvation

- a. The work of God
- b. The response of man...choice, exercise of one's free will