

**Mark 8:27-38**  
**CORRECTING THE LORD — NOT GOOD**

*Now Jesus and His disciples went out to the towns of Caesarea Philippi; and on the road He asked His disciples, saying to them, "Who do men say that I am?" So they answered, "John the Baptist. But some say, Elijah. And others, one of the prophets." He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ!" Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him.*

*And He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He spoke this word openly. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. But when He had turned around and looked at His disciples, He rebuked Peter, saying, "Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men."*

*When He had called the people to Himself, with His disciples also, He said to them, "Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it. For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels."*

Do you ever correct other people? Why? To show them and others how ignorant they are and how smart you are? that your way is right? If so, that is a very egotistical, self-centered, unloving thing to do.. OR is your "correcting" from motives of helping and teaching? and done so in humility? That is commendable.

There is correcting going on in our text for today. Jesus and His disciples were staying away from the population centers of the Jews. Confrontations with the religious leaders were becoming more common. These leaders were plotting to kill Jesus (Matthew 12:14), but it was not the Lord's time for the breaking point. So, Jesus and His disciples—His "students" ("disciple" does not mean "follower," but "student")—had gone to the deserted area on the east side of the Sea of Galilee. The crowds followed Him on foot, and when hungry He fed them—5000+ hungry people. They departed to the regions of Tyre and Sidon, cities outside of Israel, where He healed the daughter of a Canaanite woman who humbly trusted Him as her Savior. She is the one who after He first "refused" her said, Yes, Lord, even dogs eat crumbs from the master's table. He complimented her faith. He and His disciples then went to the east side of the Sea of Galilee again. The crowds followed Him. He fed 4000. Finally, our text for today, Jesus took His disciples to Caesarea Philippi, a city 30 miles north of Jewish territory.

As they walked, He asked His disciples (His students) who people said He was. Jesus of course knew, but He wanted to "draw out" the disciples and hear their personal confession of faith. The disciples responded with the various incorrect answers they had been hearing. He asked what THEY thought. Peter answered for the group—bold and forward Peter. *You are the Christ!* Matthew's account also adds, *"the Son of the living God!"* (Matthew 16:16). Right on! Peter and the disciples understood, Jesus was their promised Savior.

But do you always understand too—whether just for yourself, OR when sharing Bible Truth with another? How do you answer: Who was/is Jesus of Nazareth? A good man? Too vague. -- A great teacher? Sure, but much more than that. -- A miracle-working prophet? Not clear enough. --- The perfect example of how we should live! True, but still lacking --- God, right? That's better, but still missing the sweet spot. --- He's the Son of God come down to earth to die for the world's sins and to rise in victory, our sins forgiven, death defeated, the resurrection and heaven awaiting, OUR SAVIOR! Nailed it! -- Remember that for yourself. Strive to get that out when talking with another, lest you settle for one of those weak answers which are not helpful in opening heaven's doors to anyone. Jesus is your Savior from God's wrath for sin.

Peter said, *You are "the CHRIST.* "Christ" is not just Jesus' second name. It's a "position." He is "the Christ," "the Messiah" promised in the Old Testament. OR in straight English, He is "the Anointed One"—the one set apart by God to come down to earth. He is our messenger from the Lord—the Prophet. Prophets were anointed with special anointing oil as a blessing from God. Jesus is our priest and sacrificer for sin at the altar—our Priest to offer up Himself at the cross. Priests were anointed. Jesus is our great leader, bringing us safely through every battle, even death, to life on the other side—our King. Kings were anointed. Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah—our Anointed Prophet, Priest, King—Savior forever. Always cling to Him.

Surprisingly, Jesus did not want His disciples to tell anyone that He was the Messiah. Why? The term “Messiah” in Jewish thought had become associated with a “glory man” coming to live on earth. Jesus wanted people to listen to His words, to see His love and power, and to come to their own conclusion as led by the Holy Spirit without outward glory, that He was the Christ, the Anointed Savior! Like a math teacher who does not just give the students the answers before they do the problems, but lets them plow through the problems repeating the process until they master it, Jesus wanted the “light” to come-on in their own hearts through His words and works.

The disciples clearly saw that Jesus was the Christ, not just a teacher, good man, miracle worker, or example. Jesus led them to the next step. A tough one. *The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, He spoke this word openly.* He clearly told them that He had come to die in cruelty, facing hatred and rejection, an outward failure. What a blow to the 12! Their minds must have been aghast. Inconceivable! Hadn't He come to be the “glory man”? Now He's talking about being put to death like a criminal? No!

Peter, bold and outspoken, could not take it. He felt compelled to correct Jesus. He took Jesus aside to correct Him. Likely he was saying, “Lord, that's wrong. You don't understand Your own mission. You can do anything. We've seen it. You won't die. You don't have to die. All would be lost.” Peter hadn't listened very well, had he? He missed last of Jesus' words, *And after three days rise again!* -- Do you ever fail to hear the whole story which someone is explaining? Your emotion blocks your reason and you draw conclusions based on part of what you hear? -- Jesus turned to look at all the disciples. Had they all been in on it? Or at least had they figured out what Peter was privately telling Jesus and mentally were applauding Peter? The Lord corrected Peter, who was trying to correct Him. Jesus gave Peter a hard thumping, *“Get behind Me, Satan! For you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.”* “Peter, Stop! You are Satan talking. The devil has you. He wants you to discourage Me from My real purpose in coming. Stop assuming that you know the will of God! You only know what sin-blinded, “dim-witted” sinful man knows. [Or shall we say “sin-witted” man.] Don't correct Me. That's the devil in you.” Peter's intentions were ever so good, but he was ever so wrong.

How often do you try to correct God and help Him out? Like clay telling the potter how he should form it. Like a five-year old telling dad how to change the oil in the car. Abraham and Sarah did and had a child by Hagar the servant girl. Jacob and his mother Rebecca did, deceiving Isaac into giving the blessing to Jacob. Harm and bitterness followed in both cases. Does “the end justify the means”? Do good intentions make doing wrong OK? No, it's poor thinking, bad theology, and just plain wrong. Consider, “I know the Lord wants me to get married and be happy, but the right guy is not in my life, so I'll just take things into my own hands and marry the first one who is willing to look twice at me.” OR “Forget about marriage, we'll just move in together.” OR “The Lord wants me to be happy. This marriage is tough sledding. I'll ditch it for a d-i-v-o-r-c-e.” OR “The Lord doesn't want me sad all the time, so I'll drink or get a lift from other drugs.” Etc. etc. Do not try to correct the Lord. You will face His displeasure, and your own great sorrow. With heart bowed, come before Him, “Father, for Jesus' sake, have mercy on a sinner.” Forgiveness awaits. He will heal you, and help you. Life is not a vacation or a picnic. Be willing to listen to Him and to walk His way.

Jesus then called more people to Himself with the disciples and said, *Whoever desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me.* No picnic. Whether it's hard or not, the Lord's way needs no correcting. Often it is beyond sin-witted understanding. Deny self, “Not my will, but Thine (Yours) be done.” Even if my little baby has died, my health was compromised at age 35, I have M.S., I have depression and emotional struggles, my father continues to suffer from a stroke, my wife is in very critical condition after an accident—trust your Savior. He gave His life for you. Do not correct God or try to help Him out. He loves you dearly.

*For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake and the gospel's will save it.* Jesus is number one priority, not riches or wealth, not ease or pleasure, not family—even father, mother, son, daughter—not friends. Nothing surpasses the Savior and the Gospel of salvation. *For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? NOTHING.*

*For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him the Son of Man also will be ashamed when He comes in the glory of His Father with the holy angels.* To try to correct the Lord means you think He is wrong, means you are embarrassed and ashamed of how He operates and how He thinks. If you so disagree with Him and are so ashamed of Him, you are no longer part of His flock. Jesus will disown you. He will be ashamed of you when He returns at the End. That is where “superior thinking” gets you. Do not correct the Lord. *Whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish, but have everlasting life! (John 3:16).*

So be it! Amen.

Pastor Kanzenbach---