



The Market Research of Jesus Christ
(Mark 8:26-38)

1

Scripture

- *Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, “Who do people say I am?” (Mark 8:27 NIV)*
- *They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” (Mark 8:28 NIV)*
- *“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” (Mark 8:29a NIV)*
- *Peter answered, “You are the Christ.” (Mark 8:29b NIV)*

2

Scripture

- *Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him. (Mark 8:30 NIV)*
- *He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again. (Mark 8:31 NIV)*
- *He spoke plainly about this, and Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. (Mark 8:32 NIV)*
- *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 things of God, but the things of men.” (Mark 8:33 NIV)*

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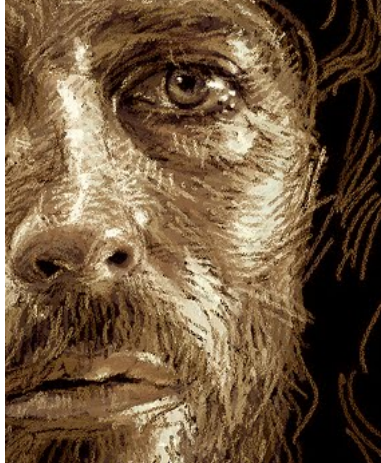
Scripture

- *Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: (Mark 8:34-37)*
 - *“If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*
 - *For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for me and for the gospel will save it.*
 - *What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, yet forfeit his soul?*
 - *Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?”*

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Scripture

- *“If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this adulterous and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father’s glory with the holy angels.” (Mark 8:8 NIV)*



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Introduction

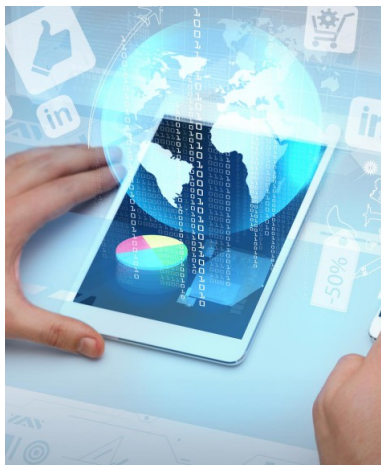
- If you’ve ever been on one of the main streets of a major city, you’ve likely run into an energetic young person who want to interview you on a topic about which they are passionate.
- Many of us politely decline.
- In a world where people are in a hurry and attention spans are short, these old methods of data collection are often cumbersome and intrusive.



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Introduction

- **Marketers** know this, which is why the technology boom of the last few decades has been a godsend for them.
- In a high-tech world, companies and pollsters will still get information from us and about us whether we want them to or not.



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Introduction

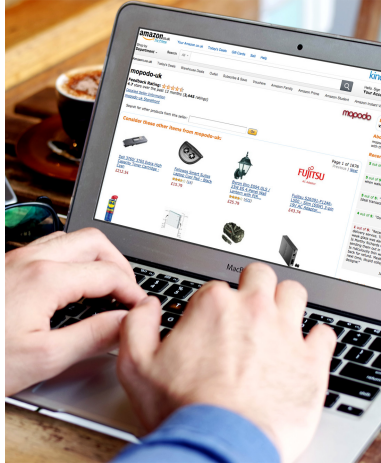
- Let’s say you head to Kroger to buy a certain brand of candy that delights your sweet tooth.
- You purchase it at a discount showing your Kroger Card and head home.
- The next week, you get a coupon emailed to you for that candy and for several other kinds that are related to it.
- The grocery store knows what you like without you ever having to tell anyone.



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Introduction

- Or let's say you are searching **Amazon** for a new pair of shoes.
- You surf through images of several styles, types and brands.
- Then you then decide to see what's happening on **Facebook**.
- Suddenly, ads for those same shoes are plastered all over your page.
- And you will continue to see them until you search for something else.



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Introduction

- Add to that the fact that just about every time you make a purchase, a little survey pops up asking you about your shopping experience; and every time you stay at a hotel, you get an email from the booking site asking you to rate it.
- Not only is the rating helpful to fellow travelers, it also tells the booking site what kind of hotels you might want to check out in the future.
- It's little wonder that we have begun to believe that marketers know more about us than we know about ourselves, and they know what we want even before we do!

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Jesus Takes a Survey

- When Jesus took his disciples to Caesarea Philippi, he gave them a couple of survey questions too.
- Jesus knew his disciples better than they knew themselves, and he knew that their understanding his ministry needed refining and redefining.
- Here, in this largely **Gentile** region near the Cave of Pan at the foot of Mount Hermon, Jesus begins to turn his disciples' attention from their needs and desires toward the deeper things of God.

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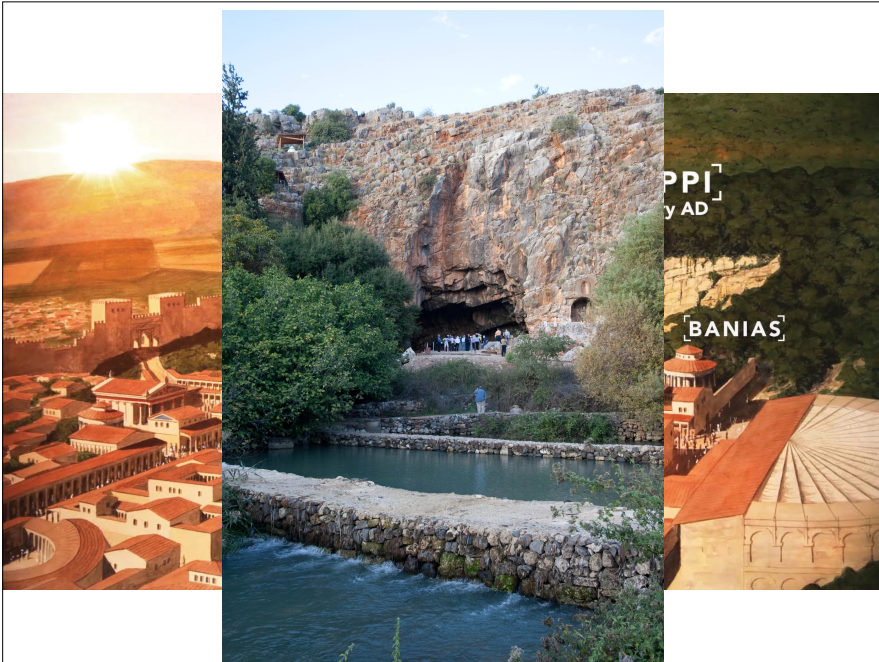
Mount Hermon

- However, before we go much further, we need to address the region that Jesus and His disciples were gathered.
- Not only were they adjacent to the "Cave of Pan."

(BTW - Pan was a fertility god of wild, which was worshipped there—also known to as one of the "Gates of Hell.”)
- But they were also at the foot of **Mount Hermon**.



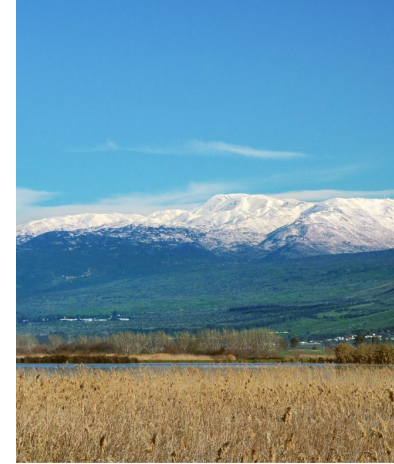
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Mount Hermon

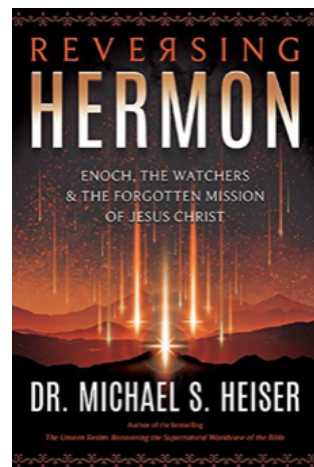
- Mount Hermon is a mountain cluster on the boarder of what is today Lebanon and Syria.
- Its summit is 9,232 feet above sea level, which is not only the highest mountain in Syria, but the whole region.
- Pagan worshipers referred to Mount Hermon as the "Throne of Baal."



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Mount Hermon

- According Dr. Michael Heiser, in Jewish apocalyptic literature, Mount Hermon was also the place where a special class of fallen angels called Watchers conspired against the will of God.
- They swore that they would take wives among the daughters of men and produce children.
- Teach mankind magical arts, cosmetology, and warfare.



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Mount Hermon

- If you would ask a devout Jew of Jesus' day on why there was so much evil in the world, they would not necessarily refer to the fall of Adam & Eve.
- They would rather point to what happened on Mount Hermon with the Watchers.
- So then, when Jesus went to Mount Hermon with his disciples, he wasn't just going on a vacation.
- He was going to the place of a huge angelic rebellion and making a statement to his true identity to his disciples.



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For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

(Ephesians 6:12 NIV)

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Jesus Takes a Survey

- *As they were walking, Jesus suddenly gives them the first survey question: “What’s the word on the street about me? Who do people say that I am?” (Mark 8:27 SBT).*
- One significant **data point** seemed to dominate the survey: The crowd believed Jesus was a **prophet** in the mold of John the Baptist, Elijah or one of the others who dominated Israel’s history.

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Jesus Takes a Survey

- Interestingly enough, in the **story** immediately preceding this one, Jesus heals a blind man who at first sees but **not** with the full clarity of vision.
- He sees people, but they look like **walking trees**.
- After a second application of Jesus’ healing ministry does this man see things clearly and in perspective.



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Peter’s Survey Response

- So, Jesus then asks a follow-up survey question of his disciples: “***But who do you say that I am?***”
- Peter, gives his opinion without hesitation: “***You are the Christ!***” (v. 29).
- But that kind of crystal clear revelation would be too much for the crowds, so Jesus **commands his disciples** to tell no one.

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Jesus Clarifies His Mission

- So why would Jesus tell his disciples to be quiet about such a revelation?
- The answer is simple, there was more to Jesus' ministry than just being the Messiah, he first had a work to do.
- *Jesus tells his disciples that he will be rejected, undergo great suffering and be killed. but then he will rise again after three days (v. 31).*
- But this new piece of information didn't fit Peter's messianic profile, so he took Jesus aside and began to "rebuke" him (v. 32).



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Jesus Clarifies His Mission

- Jesus was talking about rejection, suffering and death.
- How can you be the **Messiah** if you're dead?
- That kind of data made no sense to Peter and probably the rest of Jesus' disciples as well.

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Jesus Clarifies His Mission

- Jesus was moving in a **different direction** — one in which few want to go and we may choose to opt out as well.
- Jesus makes it clear: It's not about comfort; it's about the **cross**.
- "If any want to become my **followers**, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and **follow me**" (v. 34).
- To get behind Jesus is to walk on a road of putting the **Father's will** before our will be done, which is to make Jesus Lord of our lives.

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Jesus Clarifies His Mission

- It's a life of doing what's right and at times hard, rather than wrong, easy, and what at times comes natural.
- Following Jesus is not something trendy, cool, or popular. And if it ever is, we've probably got the wrong Jesus.
- Marketers easily prey on the fact that we want things for ourselves and will always prefer things that match our own best interests.
- Jesus calls us to check a different box.
- Real profit only comes through giving our lives over to Jesus, living for his sake and the sake of his kingdom (vv. 35-36).

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Jesus Clarifies His Mission

- It's easy for those of us who are **21st-century** disciples of Jesus to want to tailor our message and our methods to better fit market trends.
- We'd all like to be popular, trendy and have a lot of people following us.
- We're tempted, like Peter, to answer Jesus' question, by making him into a **Messiah** who fits our profile.

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Jesus Clarifies His Mission

- But Jesus won't have it.
- There's only one real answer to that question, which is that **Jesus is Lord and Lord of all**, who calls us to follow him and by grace and help from the Holy Spirit obey his commands.
- While it is the way of **self-denial, self-sacrifice** and **self-giving**; it does produce the good fruits of love, joy, and peace with God.
- So then, who do you say Jesus is?
- Our answer matters!

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