

Oak Grove Church of Christ Newsletter - 2025.07.27

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Sermon recordings

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Speaker-AM: Josh Vinyard

Title: Exceeding Righteousness

Recording:



Speaker-PM: Patrick Hite

Title: Calvinism: Irresistible Grace

Recording:



Matthew 5:20;

20For I tell you, unless your righteousness exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven.



Articles

Who do People say that the Son of Man is? 7/28/2025 By Robbie Moreland

The city of Caesarea Philippi was extremely pagan, and has changed names over time (Panias, Phnias, Banias). It was known for its pagan rituals offered to the Greek god Pan, the deity of animals, the wild, and desolate places. Pan was believed to live in a cave on the side of the cliff, which had a spring gushing from it in Jesus' day. The locals would throw animal sacrifices into the spring, and if it sank, they believe it was "rejected", and that Pan was angry so the people would eventually offer other sacrifices, up to and including a child by throwing it into the water to appease him. Crazy stuff.

So, to escape the crowds and busyness of his ministry, Jesus led his disciples into this remote, but highly pagan environment, then Jesus asked his disciples what the crowds had concluded about his identity.

Matthew 16:13-20

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" 14 And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, others say Elijah, and others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" 16 Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

The group seems to have responded fairly quickly and offered four ideas:

(1) John the Baptist, (2) Elijah (3) Jeremiah or (4) one of the other prophets.

The talk in the crowds revealed a level of prophetic expectation and excitement, but it overlooked some clear facts and teaching. Let's look at the four options.

(1) Jesus was not the recently murdered John (Matthew 14), but was the one whom John foretold the arrival of.

(2) Jesus was not the prophetic "Elijah", that was also John the Baptist (Matthew 17)

(3) & (4) Jeremiah or the prophets. Perhaps some Israelites were looking for the return of multiple Old Testament prophets. However, Jesus was much more than any resurrected prophet.

Then, Jesus personalized the question and asked, Who do you say that I am? Peter spoke first, and possibly for the group. "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Peter's answer of "You are the Christ, Son of the Living God" also shows that Jesus was more than just another prophet, but someone with a unique relationship with the Father. Their grasp of his sonship would deepen and mature over time.

Peter said more than just Son of God here! He said Son of the Living God.

At first glance, it doesn't seem significant, but it makes a big difference when you compare it to the area they were in. In contrast to the dead, lifeless idols worshiped around them in Caesarea Philippi, Jesus was the Son of Jehovah, the God who was alive! This contrast between God and idols is found throughout scripture.

Do you believe that claim? Is your life showing that you believe that claim? Are you doing what you can to be the example for others to believe that claim? Are you bringing others to Christ? Or are you letting them live their lives not knowing our Lord?