

Session 54 Resource Sheet

Mark 8:27-38

Reading:

27 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?"

28 So they answered, "John the Baptist; but some say, Elijah; and others, one of the prophets."

29 He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered and said to Him, "You are the Christ."

30 Then He strictly warned them that they should tell no one about Him.

31 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. 32 He spoke this word openly. Then Peter took Him aside and began to rebuke Him. 33 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."

34 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. 35 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. 36 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? 37 Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 38 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."

Why does Jesus ask for their thoughts about His identity, instead of just telling them who He is? – Our Lord Jesus Christ often used questions in His teaching. In this way He stimulated the apostles' thinking and got them to reflect on and assess their beliefs.

How did the disciples answer?

How does Peter answer?

What does it mean when we say that Jesus is "the Christ"?

"Christ" is the Greek translation of the Hebrew "Messiah", which means "Anointed One". This term was used in Old Testament times of kings, priests and prophets which were chosen by God for a particular task. Kings, priests and the prophets were anointed. During the years, people move away from spiritual understanding of Messiah and started to expect a political king.

How does Jesus respond to Peter's answer and why?

His disciples should understand He is not a political king, and to correct their views and to accept that Messiah should suffer – something unacceptable for Jewish at that time – Jesus Christ mentions His future passion. And because He mentioned His future passion for the first time for the disciples were not easy to accept it.

Activity:

Fill in the omitted words and expressions, using the glossary below:

....., always impulsive and quick to speak, although he has just confessed that Jesus is the Messiah (Mk 8:29), is scandalized at the announcement of the Jesus, instead of answering Peter directly, chases away his thoughts, since they come from the Devil: "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not on the side of God, but of men" (Mk 8:33). Having mentioned the passion for the first time, Jesus immediately talks to his disciples about the For all (including us today, since we are in turn Christ's disciples) must bear the with our Master, if we wish to share in his glory: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mk 8:34). The cross and the are inseparable; suffering and glory are united to reveal the Kingdom of God.

(The Incarnate God: The Feasts of Jesus Christ and Virgin Mary, vol.2, pp.33-34)

Glossary: Peter, load of suffering, Cross, passion, resurrection

Key:

Peter, always impulsive and quick to speak, although he has just confessed that Jesus is the Messiah (Mk 8:29), is scandalized at the announcement of the passion. Jesus, instead of answering Peter directly, chases away his thoughts, since they come from the Devil: "Get behind me, Satan! For you are not on the side of God, but of men" (Mk 8:33). Having mentioned the passion for the first time, Jesus immediately talks to his disciples about the Cross. For all (including us today, since we are in turn Christ's disciples) must bear the load of suffering with our Master, if we wish to share in his glory: "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mk 8:34). The cross and the resurrection are inseparable; suffering and glory are united to reveal the Kingdom of God. (The Incarnate God: The Feasts of Jesus Christ and Virgin Mary, vol.2, pp.33-34)

Some ideas about: What does "to carry your cross" mean?

In a certain village in Umbria (Italy), there lived a man who was always bewailing his lot. He was a Christian, and found the weight of his cross too heavy to bear. One night, before going to sleep, he begged God to let him change his burden. That night he had a dream; the Lord led him to a warehouse. "Go ahead and change it," he said. The man saw crosses of all sizes and shapes, with the names of their owners. He picked an average size cross -- but when he saw the name of an old friend written on it, he left it aside. Finally, as God had permitted, he chose the smallest cross he could find. To his surprise, he saw his own name written on it. – source:

<http://www.spiritual-short-stories.com/spiritual-short-story-249-Carrying+A+Cross.html#sthash.0rd4VmZp.dpuf>

A troubled and burdened man prayed and prayed that God would lift his burden. Day after day he prayed that his life would be easier and he begged for God's intervention.

One day, Jesus came to the man and asked, "My child, what troubles you?" The man replied that his life was full of turmoil and that it had become too much to bear. He again asked for help stating that he just couldn't continue to go on.

Jesus, feeling the man's anguish, decided help was in order. The man was so happy that his prayers were about to be answered that his burden already felt lighter.

Jesus took the man to a room and stopped in front of the door. When he opened the door, what the man saw was amazing. The room was filled with crosses; little crosses, big crosses, giant crosses. The man,

bewildered, looked at Jesus and asked how this would help him. Jesus explained that each cross represented a burden that people carry; small burdens, big burdens, giant burdens -- and every burden in-between.

At this point, Jesus offered the man the opportunity to choose his burden. The man, so excited that he was finally able to have some control over his life, looked around the room for just the right cross. He saw a tiny little cross way back in the corner. It was the smallest cross in the room. After a bit of thought, he pointed to the cross and said, "That one, Lord. I want that one." Jesus asked, "Are you sure, my son?" The man quickly replied, "Oh, yes Lord. Most definitely, yes."

Jesus turned to the man and replied, "My child, you have chosen your own cross. It is the burden you already carry."

~Author Unknown~

source: <http://www.all-creatures.org/stories/theburden.html>

<http://www.morningliberty.com/2010/07/02/christianity-the-cross-we-bear/> - **cartoon**