



THE STORY OF  
*Everything*  
LUKE 24:27

Mark 8:22-10:52

Within this frame Mark presents:

- 1) Three Foretellings of Jesus' Death and Resurrection
- 2) Three Misunderstandings
- 3) Three Teachings on Discipleship

8:17

They can see, but like the blind man, they see only dimly. They do not fully understand his identity and mission. He has warned them (8:15) of the "leaven of the pharisees". They are in the crowd, but will they follow Jesus on the way?

"Who do people say that I am?"

"Who do you say that I am?"

Peter answers rightly – he recognizes Jesus as Messiah (the Christ)

"But who do you say ..." – the sharp transition forces the issue. Their way will be at odds with the culture, at odds with political objectives, at odds with religious leadership, at odds even with their own presuppositions. Will they follow in the way of Jesus?

-we see already the distance between the masses and his closest disciples

-compare with Mt 16

-not that Mark doesn't affirm the Christ's sonship (recall Mark 1), but this speaks to the purpose of Mark's Gospel. Matthew's is the Gospel of the King; Mark's is the Gospel of the Servant.

-the identity question also prepares their hearts and minds for Mark's central theme: the Cross

-inevitably, a rejected Messiah will become a slain Messiah

-thus, clear, plain, firm faith in who the Messiah was, and in particular, what was his mission, in order to stand firm. The significance of the cross is only seen in the light of the great confession. Yes, confusion is there, they see only dimly, but they do see the Messiah before them. Who do you say that he is? A misapprehension of Jesus reduces the meaning and import of his life and teaching – that is undeniable; but more importantly, it impoverishes the infinite preciousness and purpose of his death. His inevitable death was ever before his eyes: he came to die. Don't we all love to anticipate good things? The anticipation of good multiplies the good. of Our recent visit to see our far-away daughter and her family for instance. Does not the anticipation of sorrow multiply the sorrow? How much more wonderful is the life of Christ than we can imagine: in the face of the impending cup of bitterness, what we see is his patience, his kindness, his tireless toil, his sympathy, self-forgetfulness.

The Way of the Cross – Mark 8:22-10:52  
CBC Ilderton

Rev. G. S. Prickett  
13 March 2022



THE STORY OF  
*Everything*  
LUKE 24:27

How brilliant is the fruit of the obedient son set against the dark background of his journey toward rejection and death.

**Scene 1: 8:31-9:1**

i) Foretelling (8:31)

*“And he began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes and be killed, and after three days rise again.”*

In light of his identity as the Christ, as he makes his way toward Jerusalem he reveals to his disciples the implications, and Peter hastily takes him aside and rebukes him.

ii) Misunderstanding

*“And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and seeing his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man.”*

There are “things of God” and “things of man” – or if I may, “the way of God” and “the way of man”. Peter has in mind the way of man. He cannot stand for this kind of defeatism. His Davidic Messiah comes to overthrow the Romans, and any sympathisers, to re-establish an autonomous kingdom of Israel. How can a suffering Messiah be a conquering Messiah? Jesus, however, reorients messiahship.

They would have anticipated the messianic hope, knowing Psalms 2, 89, 110; the promise of Isaiah 9; Jeremiah 23; Ez 34; and Micah 5. But they still saw this hope dimly, through earthly rather than godly means. And so “he began to teach them”. Matthew perhaps emphasises even more dramatically, “From that time on...” And so Jesus teaches them a fuller picture of his identity: the Messiah is not a conquering earthy king, but a suffering servant in the suffering way of the cross.

He turns from Peter and calls the crowd and his disciples to him not to shame Peter, but because they all shared the same misunderstanding (Peter just happened to be the one to say it out loud!).

*34 And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. 35 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel’s will save it. 36 For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? 37 For what can a man give in return for his soul? 38 For whoever is ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful*



THE STORY OF  
*Everything*  
LUKE 24:27

*generation, of him will the Son of Man also be ashamed when he comes in the glory of his Father with the holy angels."*

In his foretelling Jesus spoke of the *necessity* of the Messiah's suffering: "*the Son of Man must suffer many things ... and be killed*". He must die because this is who he is. He is the Messiah who "love us and gave himself for us." He is the Messiah who came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." There is no salvation without the one who would die as a ransom for many!

Richard Niebuhr:

*"A God without wrath brought men without sin into a Kingdom without judgment through the ministrations of a Christ without a Cross"*

### **(1) Sacrificial Service**

How does he define a disciple's service? We will see three ways. In this first instruction we see sacrificial service. If any were to follow him in *his way* he must "deny himself and take up his cross and follow me". Though Jesus must have had in mind his own cross as he taught, we note it is not his cross we pick up. His sufferings stand alone, are sufficient for salvation; they need not, nor cannot, be repeated. But in light of *the Cross* we pick up *our* cross. Each follower has his own a cross that my character and calling requires. My faults and failures. Denying yourself does not mean living a life of self-discipline and denial. It is a denial of self-sufficiency and autonomy. We renounce all claims for self and submit our desires, ambitions to Christ. As Paul would say it in Romans 12, we become "living sacrifices". Furthermore, taking up our cross does not mean to purpose to take on hardship or poverty, but to subject ourselves to the crucifixion of our 'old man' as we put on the 'new' and his 'way'. This is why the apparent paradox of v35 follows logically ("whoever seeks to save his life loses it, whoever seeks to lose his life saves it); The life of self leads to death; the death of self leads to true life. We know the man who lives absorbed only in care of his own well-being is denied the joy of all that makes life noble and real. You do not need flagrant sin to kill your real self, respectful selfishness does the trick quite effectively.

And so, our first lesson along the way of Jesus is that discipleship requires sacrificial service.

### **Scene 2: Mark 9:30-37**

***30 They went on from there and passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, 31 for he was teaching his disciples, saying to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And when he is killed, after three days he will rise."***



THE STORY OF  
*Everything*  
LUKE 24:27

Again Jesus makes his destiny plain: he will be killed, and yet will rise. There is an interesting addition. In his first foretelling, he spoke of the necessity of his suffering – he *must* suffer many things. This time he says, “the Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men”. The sense of this is a “handing over” from one to another. This is a purposeful, ordained, delivery.

***32 But they did not understand the saying, and were afraid to ask him. 33 And they came to Capernaum. And when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you discussing on the way?” 34 But they kept silent, for on the way they had argued with one another about who was the greatest. 35 And he sat down and called the twelve. And he said to them, “If anyone would be first, he must be last of all and servant of all.” 36 And he took a child and put him in the midst of them, and taking him in his arms, he said to them, 37 “Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me.”***