

What about you?

Mark 8:27-9:1

Introduction

What are the everyday things that you are familiar with and use but really have no idea or understanding of how they work? If you could choose just one thing to better understand what would you choose?

There are times when we can be very familiar with something but lack any real understanding of how it works. Who really does understand how their mobile phone works, or the internet works or their microwave? We use these things everyday but most of us have no real concept of what makes these things work. In the gospel of Mark even though the disciples had spent a lot of time with Jesus and had seen all that he had been doing and heard all that he had been teaching they seemed to be slow to understand him. In chapter 8 of the gospel things start to change for the disciples on the way up to Caesarea Philippi. Please read 8:27-9:1 of Mark's gospel.

What about you?

Caesarea Philippi was approximately 40 kilometres away from Bethsaida (as the crow flies). It was north of the Sea of Galilee at the foothills of Mount Hermon at the headwaters of the Jordan. It was along the way to Caesarea Philippi that Jesus asked the disciples a couple of questions to help them begin to understand him and his mission better. Please read Mark 8:27-30.

1. Jesus asked the disciples, “Who do people say I am?” What were people saying about Jesus? Why do you think they were saying these things?

2. Jesus moved the discussion from what others had been saying to what the disciples thought about Jesus. Who did the disciples believe Jesus to be?

Think about it

The disciples right back in chapter 4 when Jesus had calmed the storm had asked “Who is this man?” Why do you think it took them this long to come up with this answer?

Why do you think Jesus did not want them to tell anyone?

If you were to ask people in our world today about Jesus what sort of answers do you think you would get?

What about you? Who is Jesus to you and what difference does this make to the way you live your life?

What he came to do

From this point on in the gospel the public ministry of Jesus seems to wind back, as the Lord Jesus spent more time with his disciples teaching and getting them ready for what was up ahead of them in Jerusalem. Please verse 31 to 33 to understand what Jesus taught them about what was up ahead of him.

3. What did Jesus say would happen to him and why was it necessary for it to happen this way?

4. Why do you think Peter took Jesus aside to rebuke him? What did Jesus say that Peter would not have liked and why?

5. What did Jesus say was the problem with Peter?

Think about it

The disciples might have realised who Jesus was, but they really did not understand what he had come to do even after Jesus had told them plainly.

Why do you think the disciples had so much difficulty comprehending what Jesus was telling them?

Why do people today have difficulty with the idea that Jesus had to suffer and die on the cross?

In what ways can we sometimes fall into thinking that is merely human and how can we avoid this?

What it means to be his disciples

After explaining what being the Messiah meant for him, Jesus explained to the disciples and the crowd what it meant for anyone to be his disciple. Please read Mark 8:34-9:1.

6. What are disciples of Jesus called to be doing and what is Jesus talking about?

7. What reason does Jesus give for giving up your life to follow him?

8. Who will Jesus be ashamed of when he comes in his father's glory and why will he be ashamed of them?

9. What did Jesus promise the disciples and what was he talking about? When was this promised fulfilled?

Think about it

If you are a follower of Jesus, then you have been called to deny yourself and take up your cross. What does this mean?

In the gospel of Luke, he has included the word “daily” (see Luke 9:15). We are to take up our cross daily and follow him. How do you go about it each day?

Why are believers tempted to be ashamed of Jesus and his words? What influence can the people that we living among have on believers?

What about you? What do you find hard about being a disciple of Jesus?

What do you like about being follower of Jesus?

What might you say to someone who was afraid of what it might cost him or her to follow Jesus?