

Day 25

*And he said to them, “But who do you say that I am?”
8.27-9.1; 9.30-32; 10.32-34*

Peter’s confession of Jesus as the Christ takes us right to the heart of the gospel. The gospel – or good news – is not a moral code or a religious system, but the person of Jesus the Christ. This is Peter’s finest hour and a rare moment of perfect clear-sightedness from the otherwise dim-sighted disciples.



Jesus’ response reads like a dramatisation of the parable of the talents. Peter has displayed one talent, professing *who* Jesus is, so Jesus is encouraged to entrust him with a much deeper knowledge about what that means: “He began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things...” Immediately Peter takes fright and thrusts his talent into the ground as he rebukes Jesus. Blindness descends once more as his attention reverts to “the things of man.”

Jesus’ hurt and grief, and the fullness of his humanity, is palpable in the subsequent narrative. Three times he will try to get the disciples to understand what he must suffer and why. He is wanting their support, but all he meets is their incomprehension and fear.

Instead of backing off, he makes a wider appeal (8.34-9.1), “calling the crowd to him with his disciples,” and appeals to every one of them “to deny himself and take up his cross and follow.” He knows this appeal will fall on even more deaf ears, but he makes it nevertheless. His only consolation is in the knowledge that their blindness (deafness) will not be permanent: some, at least, will see the kingdom of God after it has come with power *before* they themselves taste death.

? To what extent are you willing to embrace suffering as a disciple of the Christ?



Heavenly Father, I acknowledge that your glory is revealed supremely in the suffering of your dear Son. Give me courage to suffer for the sake of the Gospel when you require it. In Christ’s name I pray. Amen.