

03.09.22 – A Weekly Word for Covenant Church

Title: “What Do YOU Say?”

Scripture Reading: [Mark 8: 27-30](#)

Reflection: Rev. George Vink

Jesus sounds so much like one of us, which he was! Picture them being in their van on the way to the villages of Caesarea Philippi. A time for discussion and reflection. They’ve experienced healings, the feeding of thousands, a foreigner’s faith, a stilling of a storm, and Jesus’ walking on water. The disciples aren’t sure what to think. They’re trying to sort it all out too. Having heard and seen a variety of reactions, they’re talking, discussing, and wondering.

After a noisy time, things go quiet in the van. Jesus asks as to what people are saying and gets a variety of responses. Jesus gets very personal, “But, what do you guys think?” And specifically, “Who do YOU say I am?” From behind the steering wheel, Peter shouted, pre-empting the others, “You are the Christ!” There! No mistaking it! Whether using the Hebrew “Messiah” word or the Greek “Christ” word, there’s no mistaking it! Either one has political overtones. Jesus warns them not to tell. Believing has implications!

Commenting on Peter’s confession, Rev. Andre Resner, a NJ Presbyterian pastor, wrote *“This confession puts a different spin on the nature of kingdom leadership and apostolic succession. The claim this text makes is for the church and theological education for future church leaders to do more than abstract ‘God-talk,’ but to extend the actual, existentially challenging demands of the gospel of Jesus Christ to would-be followers of Jesus.”* Get it? I hear Pastor Andre saying that believing Jesus Christ is the Son of God must lead to more than talking about him. It’s a lifestyle of obedience, a “walk-your-talk” consistent commitment! He adds a clear, *“Kingdom leaders are characterized most clearly by the fact that they are first and foremost--Jesus followers.”* Peter would add an emphatic, “Amen!”

Here in Mark 8, we come to a pivotal point in Mark’s gospel. For the disciples in the van or for us wherever we’re reading Christ’s question, the answer has to be the same, “You are the Christ!” Peter had no idea what following “The Christ/Messiah” would mean. But he was on board! Jesus followed the confession by teaching His followers what lay ahead for him, and for them. It wasn’t going to be a political kingdom. For Jesus and his followers, death lay ahead.

Having made our confession of Jesus as the Christ, we are called to follow where He leads, no matter the cost. It’s a matter of obedience, of knowing Jesus and following where he leads. It’s still “Trust and Obey.” And don’t be fooled, “There’s no other way” to follow Jesus.

Prayer:

Lord Jesus, help me to understand more simply what it means to follow you. I’m so inclined to make self-serving decisions and avoid the cost of being faithful. Amen.

Action Item for the Day/Week:

Review the last 24 hours and see where the obedience was lacking and prayerfully repent.

Songs for today:

[In Christ Alone](#)

[When We Walk with the Lord](#)