

### 30. Jesus Taught What it Meant to be His Disciple

In our last topic, we saw how Jesus trained the twelve to serve Him. We want to show our physical and spiritual children what to teach and how to serve the Lord. After we have shown them how to serve the Lord, we want to give them experience doing what we have shown them. To give them that training, we need to send them out in teams to carry out that ministry. When they return, we need to have a time when they can report what they have taught and what they have done. Then, we can give them further instruction and example and send them out again until they gain the experience that they need. In our topic today, we are going to see that Jesus then explained to the Twelve what it meant to be His disciple.

One day, Jesus went out to pray alone to the Father. Later, the disciples joined Him there. Luke 9:18-20 says, “And it happened, as He was alone praying, *that* His disciples joined Him, and He asked them, saying, ‘Who do the crowds say that I am?’ So they answered and said, ‘John the Baptist, but some *say* Elijah; and others *say* that one of the old prophets has risen again.’ He said to them, ‘But who do you say that I am?’ Peter answered and said, ‘The Christ of God.’” After the disciples came to the place where Jesus had been praying, He and the disciples began to talk together.

Then, Jesus asked the disciples what sounded like a very simple question. Jesus just asked the question, “Who do the crowds say that I am?” The disciples told Jesus some of the things that they had heard the crowds say about Jesus. Some of the people said that John the Baptist had come back to life. Others said that Jesus must be Elijah because his return to the earth was promised in Malachi 4:5 where we read, “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.” These people thought that the day of the Lord must be arriving. Still other people thought that Jesus must be one of the other Old Testament prophets that had arisen from the dead. Here, we see that Jesus heard the opinions of the people about who He was.

Then, Jesus asked a much more important question. The crowds will always have opinions. However, Jesus wanted more than the opinions of the crowd. As a result, Jesus asked His disciples, “But who do you say that I am?” Here, we see that Jesus had suddenly switched from the opinions of the crowds to the beliefs of the disciples after they had been given the opportunity to carefully observe Jesus and the signs which He had performed. Peter answered for all of the disciples by saying, “The Christ of God.” “The Christ” meant the “Anointed One”, the “Messiah” and the “Son of God”. Here, we see that as they had traveled with Jesus and had observed the things Jesus said and did, the disciples had come to the conclusion that Jesus was the Promised Messiah.

That answer meant that Peter and the other disciples recognized that Jesus was the Messiah promised in Daniel 9:25-26 which says, “Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the command to restore and build Jerusalem until Messiah the Prince, *there shall* be seven weeks and sixty-two weeks; the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublesome times. And after the sixty-two weeks Messiah shall be cut off, but not for Himself; and the people of the prince who is to come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary. The end of it *shall be* with a flood,

and till the end of the war desolations are determined.” Although they recognized that Jesus was the Promised Messiah, Peter and the others did not fully understand the Messiah would be cut off, but not for Himself. Their understanding of that would come after the resurrection.

Luke 9:21-22 says, “And He strictly warned and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, ‘The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised the third day.’” Once the disciples knew that Jesus was the Messiah, Jesus could begin to explain what He was going to do. Here, we see that Jesus began to tell His disciples about His coming death and resurrection.

First, Jesus said that the Son of Man must suffer many things. This suffering had been predicted in many places in the Old Testament. Genesis 3:15 says, “‘And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel.’” This announcement to Satan of his coming judgment also predicted the sufferings of Jesus as Satan was told that he would bruise the heel of Jesus. Isaiah 53:5 says, “‘But He *was* wounded for our transgressions, *He was* bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed.’”

Second, Jesus said the Son of Man must be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes. Jesus later told His disciples that He would be rejected by that generation. Luke 17:25 says, “‘But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.’” Psalm 118:22-23 says, “‘The stone *which* the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone. This was the Lord's doing; It *is* marvelous in our eyes.’” Christ quoted this passage when He told the parable of the vineyard and the evil tenants who killed the Son of the owner to describe what that generation of Jews was going to do to Him. Then, Luke 20:17 says, “‘Then He looked at them and said, ‘What then is this that is written: “The stone which the builders rejected has become the chief cornerstone?”?’” Jesus said that the cornerstone of the temple that Solomon built was rejected to show the future rejection of Jesus.

Third, Jesus said that the Son of Man must be killed. Isaiah 53:7-9 says, “‘He was oppressed and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth; He was led as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so He opened not His mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who will declare His generation? For He was cut off from the land of the living; for the transgressions of My people He was stricken. And they made His grave with the wicked--but with the rich at His death, because He had done no violence, nor *was any* deceit in His mouth.’” Isaiah had predicted several things that would happen to Jesus regarding His death.

Fourth, Jesus said that the Son of Man would “be raised the third day.” Jesus had said in Matthew 12:40, “‘For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.’” Here, we see that Jesus said that he would be in the grave for three days. Jesus also told His disciples while they were in Galilee that He would be raised on the third day. Matthew 17:22-23 says, “‘Now while they were staying in Galilee, Jesus said to them, ‘The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill Him, and the third day He will be raised up.’ And they were exceedingly sorrowful.’”

Jesus had also spoken several other times about His coming resurrection.

Then, Jesus went on to tell the disciples how to make their lives count for eternity. Luke 9:23-26 says, “Then He said to *them* all, ‘If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it. For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost? For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, of him the Son of Man will be ashamed when He comes in His *own* glory, and *in His* Father's, and of the holy angels.’” Here, we see that Jesus also taught us several important things for our lives today as well.

Jesus explained what it means to follow Him when He said, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.” The word translated “let him deny” means *to forget one's self or one's own interests*. Most of the other uses are of Peter denying Christ three times. Instead of forgetting his own interests, Peter forgot the interests of Jesus. Jesus also said that those who come after Him should take up his cross daily. 1 Peter 4:12-13 says, “Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy.” Here, we see that Peter had learned that it was a privilege to remember the interests of Jesus and to suffer for Him.

Jesus then explained what has eternal value. If a person could gain all of the wealth in the world but did not receive forgiveness of sins and eternal life, the riches of this world would mean nothing. That person will take nothing with him when he dies. Instead, that person will destroy himself and experience eternal judgment. Revelation 20:15 says, “And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire.” Earthly riches will have no meaning in eternity.

Every person makes a choice about what is most important in his or her life. 1 John 2:28 says, “And now, little children, abide in Him, that when He appears, we may have confidence and not be ashamed before Him at His coming.” Those who place their faith in Jesus will not be ashamed at His coming. In contrast, Mark 8:36-38 says, “‘For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul? 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.’” Those who choose to reject Jesus will be ashamed when he comes and will face eternal judgment. We want to help our children learn to explain this choice clearly so that they can help others realize that every person has a choice to make that will have an impact on their lives for eternity. They will either have eternal life or eternal judgment. May the Lord richly bless you as you help your children learn to explain this choice to others.