

# COLORFUL SCRIPTURE

September 15, 2024

---

## Following Jesus is Not Always Easy

Based on: Is 50:5-9a; Jas 2: 14-18; Mk 8: 27-35

By Marianne Couture

Jesus' way gradually becomes clearer! The first half of Mark's Gospel is filled with the miracles and healings Jesus performed as he preached and taught the people. Beginning with chapter eight Jesus gives the first prediction of his suffering, death, and resurrection.

In this Sunday's Gospel, Jesus asked his apostles, "Who do people say that I am?" The people who heard Jesus preaching and teaching and saw him healing the sick weren't quite sure who he was. Some got him mixed up with John the Baptist; some thought he was Elijah, a holy man who was a prophet (one who speaks a message from God); some simply said Jesus was the son of Mary and Joseph, the carpenter.

But Jesus wanted to know more than just what other people were saying about him. He wanted to know what the apostles believed. So, he asked them, "But who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ." With that answer, Peter is the first apostle to actually recognize Jesus as the Messiah.

The Jewish people expected the Messiah to be a conquering leader who would free them from their enemies, give them back their rights, and restore Israel's glory. But Jesus' mission had nothing to do with using military or political power to overcome Israel's enemies. Jesus' mission was to overthrow the power of sin through the cross. When Jesus says he will suffer, be killed, and rise from the dead, Peter wants to protect him from injury and harm. Jesus tells Peter it is better to follow God's way than the world's way, even if this sometimes means going through hard times.

Jesus was preparing his apostles for the days ahead. Later on, the apostles would travel the world teaching about Jesus and God's love, healing the sick, and forgiving sins in Jesus' name.

Like the apostles, we are called to be followers of Jesus, but he warns us this will not always be easy. Just as Jesus carried his cross, we, too, have our own crosses, sufferings, and hard things to handle in our lives. But Jesus has promised he will not desert us and will be with us all along the way – because he loves us. Looking at the crucifix reminds us of that love.

# COLORFUL SCRIPTURE

September 15, 2024

---

