

WHO IS 'THE MAN?'

In so many places, people want to know who is in charge? In business, military, church, people will often want to know who can make decisions or take action. What has been your experience of someone looking for the leader? What did it feel like?

This has happened to me in every place I have worked. People want to reach the person who can make decisions or explain an action.

WHO IS THIS MAN?

At this point in the story, what would the following groups think about Jesus? Specifically, what would they think about who He is? This can be seen throughout Mark, but especially in chapter nine for the close disciples.

- A. An average Jewish person in the crowds?
- B. The religious leaders, Pharisees, the scribes?
- C. The twelve disciples?
- D. An average gentile in the crowds?

LET'S LEARN ABOUT JESUS

In this week's passage, Jesus' identity and authority begins to come into focus. Read Mark 8:27-9:29 and discuss the following questions.

How do you understand the opinions of the "people regarding Jesus' identity?" Why would they have come to those opinions about Jesus?

Most of them only knew stories from the Old Testament. The miraculous made them think of Moses or Elijah. Because of His teaching, they thought of the ministry of John the Baptist.

Immediately following Peter's correct conclusion, Jesus revealed the future rejection and death of Himself and then what would be required of His disciples and then revealed that He would be coming in glory with angels. Why this timing? What might have been His (or the author's) primary intent of this combination?

Jesus was trying to give them an overview of what was coming. The disciples were still thinking that Jesus would be king of the world, stop the Romans and any other oppressors, and set them on high places. Jesus wanted them to see that He would sacrifice Himself, would be out of sight for a long time, but would return in glory.

In 9:1, Jesus made a stunning prediction. How was this fulfilled and how was His identity again revealed? (vs. 2-13)

Although Jesus had just told them that He would die, etc., He let them be insiders to His glory as the Son of God. He took them on a high mountain (cf. Moses, Elijah), was transfigured in appearance (from ordinary to glorious), seen with the two best known leaders from the past, and then heard the Father from heaven commanding that Jesus is his Son and that they should listen to Him. That is a glimpse into Jesus in glory.

In the final story (vs.14-27), how do we learn even more about Jesus' identity and authority? What was Jesus calling out in people? How was the father's response significant in the story?

The disciples were unable to cast out the demon for reasons unexplained. However, this might have been due to their own lack of faith/trust in God. Prayer is an expression of trust in God. The main lesson is that Jesus is without limit in power or ability. The father's response pointed to the issue that Jesus was addressing, especially with the disciples: FAITH. People, even including the disciples, were still not seeing the fullness of who Jesus is and what this means.

DICUSS WHAT THIS MEANS TO US

What opinions of Jesus and His identity can be heard on the streets? To whom is He compared? Is He significant?

Sharing question

When did Jesus' identity become clear to you? How did it happen?

Sharing question

It is quite obvious that the disciples were Jesus' primary audience in this passage. What did He want them to understand? How might we help other people to learn the same things?

Sharing question

Jesus' and the father's response (vs. 23-24) in the final story are significant to the whole section. What might we learn from this as disciples who are helping other people to learn to follow Jesus?

Sharing question

Praying that the Father will give you grace and peace as you draw near to Him and His family.

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