

## Mark 8: 11-13

11 The Pharisees came and began to argue with him, asking him for a sign from heaven, to test him. <sup>12</sup>And he sighed deeply in his spirit and said, 'Why does this generation ask for a sign? Truly I tell you, no sign will be given to this generation.' <sup>13</sup>And he left them, and getting into the boat again, he went across to the other side.

**Commentary:** Why do people want a sign from Jesus? They want confirmation that he is the Messiah, certification that he is authorized to speak for God. But Jesus is wounded by their persistent, resistant, disbelief. He will not be God's anointed one on their terms. What he is teaching and doing should be sign enough... if, a person's heart is open to receive it.

Do you approach God in your life on your own terms? Or are you open to what God is demanding of you and where God is calling you to go beyond your own plans and agenda for your life, your relationships, your circumstances, and your resources?

And such questions are even more pointed in this season of Covid-19, when so much is happening not on our terms, and not according to our own plans and agenda. The mystic Simone Weil, who died during the 2<sup>nd</sup> world war, equated divine providence with chance and randomness. What she meant was that God 'provides' a pathway, and in fact, works (through the Holy Spirit) through whatever circumstance and situation is thrown at us, **if we find the inspiration to choose to live in and through it open to what God can do in and through our lives.** The richest kind of growth and learning, as well as transformation comes in and through the very things we cannot control and the very things that assail us. What do you think?

**Prayer:** Lord God, teach me to receive you - your word and your will for me - as you truly are. Break my hardness of heart, lift me from my self-pity, restore me from my depressiveness, and relieve me from my feelings of resentment and frustration. Make me more attentive to your voice and more receptive to your presence, in and through the very circumstances I cannot control and those places within me that have disturbed whatever peace I've known... Amen.