

# Listening for the Promise

WEEKLY DEVOTIONAL

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost – September 19, 2021

“...and were afraid to ask him.” (Mark 9:32)

The disciples of Jesus did not dare to ask him any questions. Do you have any questions about Jesus? With so many questions, where on earth would one begin?

It takes courage to ask questions. No one wants to look dumb in front of others. Have you ever risked a question in a bible study, at work or school, only to be laughed at with that silly, stupid question, where everyone obviously already knew the answer? Jesus takes a child in his arms and says, “To be first means to be last. To receive a child receives me and him who sent me.” Wait....what? Who is this Jesus? What does all this mean for you and me?

When Jesus begins to teach his disciples that the Son of Man must be betrayed, and suffer, and die, well it’s quite a jolt. It’s a jolt to be told that this Messiah, must be betrayed, suffer, die, and then rise again. It’s crazy unthinkable. The disciples did not ask him anything because they were afraid. I hope you aren’t afraid to ask Jesus the deepest questions, “Who are you? Who are you for the world? Who are you for me?”

If you are full of questions, then this Gospel is for you! The disciples in Mark are not there as examples for us to copy, rather they are there to encourage us. It’s encouraging to know those closest to Jesus had questions. They had difficulty figuring out who Jesus was. Though Jesus asked them, “Who do you say that I am?” they must have asked him many times, “Who are you?”

This is encouraging for those of you who are thinking this is all very confusing. If Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who is the God that he is? What has being a disciple of Jesus gotten me into? I can’t believe I’ve been following Jesus most of my life and there are still things I don’t understand.

Well, don’t be afraid to ask your deepest questions. Jesus will not reject you for your questions any more than Jesus rejected his first disciples for their fear to ask questions. Go ahead. Bring your doubts and questions to him. Open your heart and ask him. There is nothing to fear from the one who loves you and has called you to be his disciple. Don’t be afraid to ask. Amen.

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