



Daily Reflections

February 21, 2019

Scripture

Mark 8: 27-33

Jesus and his disciples set out
for the villages of Caesarea Philippi.
Along the way he asked his disciples,
"Who do people say that I am?"

They said in reply,

"John the Baptist, others Elijah,
still others one of the prophets."

And he asked them,

"But who do you say that I am?"

Peter said to him in reply,

"You are the Christ."

Then he warned them not to tell anyone about him.

He began to teach them

that the Son of Man must suffer greatly

and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes,
and be killed, and rise after three days.

He spoke this openly.

Then Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him.

At this he turned around and, looking at his disciples,
rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan.

You are thinking not as God does, but as human beings do."

Our Scripture Reflection

Jesus' question to the disciples is powerful for the disciples back then and for us today. Why? Because what we say to Him in answer to His very pointed question says something about ourselves. For instance, if we dare call Him Lord, we imply at the same time that we are His servants. In Jesus' day the mind of the servant was expected to be the mind of the Lord or Master. For example, If the Lord commands us to love our enemies, if we are truly His servants, as we say, we have no choice but to obey His commandment by loving our enemies. Otherwise, we have no reason to claim to be His servants. My Friends, before you profess Jesus as your Lord, think, discern. Are you really willing to commit your life to Him?

Food for your Journey

If Jesus asked you who you thought he was, you'd have an advantage over the disciples. The followers of Jesus did not have the benefit of the learned theologians of the early councils of the church at Nicea and Chalcedon, for example. So, you'd not only be able to tell Jesus that he was the Christ, the Son of the Living God, but you'd also be able to explain the union of two natures in one, or some other understanding based on one of the creeds. The Chalcedonian Creed, for example, was adopted at the Council of Chalcedon in A.D. 451. The creed defines that Christ is "acknowledged in two natures," which "come together into one person and one hypostasis." The formal definition of "two natures" in Christ was understood by the critics of the council at the time, and is understood by many historians and theologians today, to side with Western and Antiochene Christology and to diverge from the teaching of Cyril of Alexandria, who always stressed that Christ is "one." Regarding the person of Christ and the Hypostatic union, Chalcedonian Creed affirmed the notion that Christ is "One Person," having "One Hypostasis." The Christological notions of "One Person" (monoprosopic — having one prosopon / Greek term for "person") and "One Hypostasis" (monohypostatic — having one hypostasis) were stated explicitly, in order to emphasize the Council's anti-Nestorian positions. The Chalcedonian Creed was written amid controversy between the Western and Eastern churches over the meaning of the Incarnation (see Christology), the ecclesiastical influence of the emperor, and the supremacy of the bishop of Rome. The Western church readily accepted the creed, but some Eastern churches did not. Much of the above is from the Wikipedia article on the Chalcedonian

Creed. The point is: We're fortunate that these councils met to hash out these important issues of the two natures in Christ. Without their work, we'd be left — horrors — with only Philippians 2:5-11, and the Petrine Creed: "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God."

A Prayer from the Heart

Dear God, I want to follow Your Son wherever He leads me in this life. Please give me all the Grace I need to be faithful to Him in all ways and at all times. Amen