



Daily Reflections

August 4, 2016

Scripture

Matthew 16:13-23

Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi and he asked his disciples,
"Who do people say that the Son of Man is?"
They replied, "Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets."
He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?"
Simon Peter said in reply,
"You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."
Jesus said to him in reply, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. And so I say to you, you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the Kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven;

and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

Then he strictly ordered his disciples
to tell no one that he was the Christ.

From that time on, Jesus began to show his disciples
that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer greatly
from the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes,
and be killed and on the third day be raised.

Then Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him,
“God forbid, Lord! No such thing shall ever happen to you.”

He turned and said to Peter,

“Get behind me, Satan! You are an obstacle to me.

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

Our Scripture Reflection

Why did Jesus impose secrecy upon His disciples? Didn't He want them to be witnesses to Him? Not yet. At this point, they had only seen one side of Jesus as He performed mighty deeds and spoke authoritatively about the Kingdom. They would not get the complete picture until Calvary. Yes, Jesus was, indeed, The Christ. He was, however, a suffering Christ who came to give everything for His people.

Food for your Journey

Georgene Johnson ... lived in Cleveland, Ohio. She was 42 years old. She was trying to have a good attitude about being 42 years old, so she started running and exercising to keep in shape. She said, “I’m not going to look like I am 42, or at least I am going to look like a good 42.”

She did well in her running. She was running farther every day. She thought she would try a little competition and entered a 10K race. That’s about six miles. Nervous about her first race, she got up early, arrived at the start of the race. To her surprise there were a lot of people milling around, stretching, getting ready. All of a sudden a voice on the microphone said, “Move to the starting line.” This is it. A gun sounded and they were off, like a huge wave, hundreds of runners, sweeping her up. She was in the race.

After about four miles it occurred to her that they ought to be turning around and heading back to the finish line. She wondered why they didn't turn around. She stopped and asked an official, "How come the course isn't turning around?" He said, "Ma'am, you are running the Cleveland Marathon." Twenty-six miles. Her event, the 10K, was to start a half-hour after the start of the marathon.

Some of us would have stopped right there and said, that's it, I'm going home. But to her credit, she kept right on going, finished the race. She said this: "This is not the race I trained for. This is not the race I entered. But for better or worse, this is the race that I am in"

It is just like the disciples at Caesarea Philippi. They thought they could spend their whole lives in Galilee, where the following of Jesus is easy. Now Jesus says, "If you are my disciple, then you will take up your cross and follow me to Jerusalem."

—Mark Trotter, "This is not the race I entered," fumcsd.org.

Prayer from the Heart

Dear Jesus, please increase my faith in You so that I may pick up my cross this day and follow You. If I should stumble or fall, pick me up and get me back on the road. Amen.

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