



Twenty-Fourth Sunday (Year B)



Mark 8: 27 – 35

Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the Prophets.”

Jesus asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him. “You are the Christ.” And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him.

Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. He said all this quite openly.

And Peter took Jesus aside and began to rebuke him. But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are thinking not as God does, but as humans do.”

Jesus called the crowd with his disciples, and said to them, “Whoever wants to become my follower, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, and whoever loses their life for my sake, and for the sake of the Gospel, will save it.”

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Reflection:

Sooner or later Jesus turns his attention to us. “But who do you say that I am?” It doesn’t matter what others say, or how many people share our answer; Jesus asks each one of us to look at our relationship with him. “How important is Jesus to us? Are we willing to follow him, even if it might involve the cross?”



Table Discussion (at mealtime):

“How important is Jesus to us as a family? How do we show that he is the centre of our lives?”



Prayer Journal:

“Who is Jesus to me?” – It is an interesting question, and a wonderful one to explore. In John’s Gospel, Jesus offers many different answers. Pick one and spend some time reflecting on it. A journal entry may be in order. You may also want to use Art as a way of expressing your thoughts.

- Word Made Flesh (John 1: 14).
- Only Begotten Son of God (John 1:18).
- Lamb of God (John 1: 29).
- King of Israel (John 1: 49).
- The Messiah / Christ (John 4: 26).
- I am the Bread of Life (John 6: 35).
- I am the Light of the World (John 8: 12).
- Before Abraham was, “I AM” (John 8: 58).
- I am the Gate of the Sheepfold (John 10: 4).
- I am the Good Shepherd (John 10: 11).
- I am The Resurrection and the Life (John 11:25).
- I am The Way, the Truth and the Life” (John 14: 6).
- I am The Vine and you are the branches (John 15: 1).
- “My Lord and My God” (John 20:28).



Who are you?

When we answer the question who is Jesus, we also answer the question, “who am I?” If Jesus is “God’s Son”, the “Good Shepherd”, the “Vine”, and the “Light of the World”, then God we are, “Adopted Children of God”, “Sheep of His flock”, “Branches that draw their life from Him,” and “Children that walk in His Light”.

Take a moment to pick an image that best describes who God is.



Draw a picture to show the relationship between you and God.



The Boy who Didn't Know who he Was (a bedtime story):

There once lived a boy who didn't know who he was. Though he lived in a family and shared in their love, he had more questions than answers when it came to who he was and who he was called to be.

"You are "my Little Rascal""", his mother would say, when she tucked him in at the end of the day. "You are "the Sunshine of my life""", she would say when the day began. The smile on his face would light up the room.

"Buddy" and "Pal" were the words his dad used. Words that were used with a pat on the back. In his dad's eyes, he could do no wrong. He idolized his dad from the day he was born.

His sister called him "brother", or "bro" for short. They weren't used to calling each other by name. "Bro" and "Sis", like cat and dog they fought. Then they made up and started all over again.

"I'll be an Astronaut", he said one day. Later he wanted to become a Fireman and even a Priest. He took on each role as if he was putting on a new shirt. Trying it out, to see how it fit.

In church he would hear the priest speak about Jesus. How he was God's Son and called us his friends. How God has a special love for each one of us.

"But what if I am bad?" The young boy thought. "Does my mother still love me? My teacher? My dad? And what about God, and Jesus and Mary?" And the thoughts would bother him; at times he would cry.

"You are my son, the beloved," he heard the priest say at Mass one day. Was he talking about Jesus, or were the words addressed to him? He wasn't quite sure. And yet, he had this distinct feeling God was looking and speaking directly at him.

"But I'm nothing like your son," he responded in quiet thought. "I cheat, I lie and I hurt others at times. Sometimes I can be a real pest." "You are my son, the beloved," the priest repeated in making his point.

"I guess I am," the young boy thought. And it changed his life from that day forward.

Bedtime Conversations:

Conversation Starters:

- "When do you feel closest to God?"
- "When do you feel farthest away from God?"
- "How does God speak to you?"
- "How do you know God is listening to you?"
- "What do you think Heaven is like?"



The Burning Bush (a bedtime story):

While Moses was looking after the sheep one day, he noticed something strange. In the distance, a bush was burning and, yet its branches were not scorched and its leaves remained green.

“I must come a little closer,” Moses said to himself, “so that I may see why the bush is burning, but the bush itself is still green.”

“Moses, Moses,” God called out, “Come no closer and remove the sandals from your feet for the ground on which you stand is holy.”

Moses stopped, took off his sandals, fell on his knees and bowed to the ground.

“I am the God of your people,” God continued, “the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. The cry of my people has come to my ears. I will rescue them from slavery. From the hands of Pharaoh, King of Egypt, I will rescue them.”

“So go, for I will send you,” God told Moses, “I am sending you to Pharaoh to tell him to let my people go.”

“But who am I to stand before Pharaoh, the King of Egypt?” Moses asked, “and why would he listen to me?”

“I will go with you and perform great signs and wonders,” God answered. “When Pharaoh sees these signs, he will come to know that I am God Almighty, and he will let my people go.”

“But what will I say to your people when I tell them that the God of their ancestors has sent me to them. What will I answer when they ask for your name?”

“I Am who I Am,” God answered. “You must tell them, “I Am” has sent me to you.”

“Go,” God commanded, “and assemble the elders of your people, and say to them, “The Lord, the God Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob has sent me. This is my name forever, and the name by which you will know me.”

“Tell them that I have heard their cry and I will rescue them from the hands of Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, and take you to your own land, a land of milk and honey.”

So, Moses was called, and Moses was sent. With staff in hand, he stood before Pharaoh. Ten times he asked for the release of God’s people. Ten times the king refused. Each time God sent a sign to convince Pharaoh. Each time the sign got worse and worse until Pharaoh finally had enough. After the tenth plague he let God’s people go.

YouTube video of the story: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AAvfquqboZY>