

(In preparation for gathered worship next Sunday, January 11, 2009)

Mark 8:27 – 9:13

The most spectacular announcement of all time emerges from the lips of Jesus: the kingdom of God is here! (Mark 1:15)

But Jesus does more than announce the kingdom, he also enacts it. As we have seen in the gospel of Mark, he performs mighty miracles, each one calculated to beat back evil and restore creation to its Maker. By his powerful deeds, Jesus is bringing the kingdom.

In our passage this week, we see something even more. Not only does Jesus announce and enact the Kingdom of God, he *IS* the kingdom of God! It is in him that the kingdom of God is embodied on earth! To understand the richness of this truth, answer the following questions.

1. Why does Jesus draw the focus of his mission onto himself? That is, why does he ask the question: “Who do people say that I am?” See verses 27-30.
2. Peter answers the question: “You are the Christ!” (verse 29) Is he correct?
3. Jesus responds to Peter by informing him that “the Son of Man must suffer many things” (verse 31). Why *must* he suffer?
4. Peter is setting his mind “on the things of man” (verse 33). In the context of the passage, what does that mean?
5. What does it mean to deny ourselves, take up a cross and follow Jesus? See verse 34. Are you doing that? Give examples.
6. According to verses 35-37, how do you “save your life”? Have you saved your life by losing it for the sake of Jesus and the gospel? Explain with examples.
7. How does the transfiguration in 9:2-13 serve to fortify the teaching of Jesus in 8:27-38?