

# PROFOUND EXPERIENCES FOR THE DISCIPLES

Matthew 16:13 - 18:35; Mark 8:27 - 9:50; Luke 9:18-62

## STRUCTURE

**Key-persons:** Jesus, Peter, and the other disciples

**Key-locations:** Caesarea Philippi and Mt. Hermon

**Key-repetitions:**

- Jesus' expectations for his disciples: deny self, take up cross, and follow him (Mt 16:24-26); be unashamed of him (Mk 8:38); be a servant (Mk 9:35); embrace children in Jesus' name (Mk 9:37); get rid of what causes one to sin (Mt 18:7-9); seek reconciliation when wronged (Mt 18:15-17); forgive others (Mt 18:22-35).

- Prayer: Jesus went up a mountain to pray (Lk 9:28); prayer necessary to cast out demons (Mk 9:29).

- The disciples censured: Peter reprimanded Jesus, and was censured (Mt 16:22-23); during Jesus' Transfiguration, Peter was censured by the voice of God, "This is my Son... Listen to him!" (Mt 17:1-13); Jesus censured the disciples for not curing the demon-possessed youth (Mt 17: 14-17); and when they discussed which one was the most important (Mt 18:1-5).

- Jesus predicted his death and resurrection: 1<sup>st</sup> time (Mt 16:21); 2<sup>nd</sup> time (Mt 17:22-23); 3<sup>rd</sup> time (Mt 20:17-19).

**Key-attitudes:**

- The approval of Peter when he affirmed that Jesus was the Messiah; however, the disapproval of Peter when he reprimanded Jesus.

- The disciples' fright when they witnessed Jesus' Transfiguration.

- The frustration of the disciples as well as the youth's father when the disciples could not cure the demon-possessed youth.

- The jealousy and pride of the disciples.

**Initial-situation:**

The third year of Jesus' ministry is called the **Year of Passion**. During the first semester of that year, Jesus went on three retreats with his disciples. The first began when Jesus received the news of John the Baptist's death. He got into a boat with his disciples to go to a deserted place. A crowd saw them get into the boat and went on foot around the lake. Jesus performed the miracle of feeding five thousand men. Afterwards, the people wanted to make Jesus king by force.

Jesus' refusal to lead revolutionary forces against Herod was the decisive point that ended his popularity and began a series of painful rejections.

On his second retreat, Pharisees and teachers of the Law of Moses argued with Jesus about human traditions. Jesus healed the demon-possessed daughter of a Syro-Phoenician woman and he fed a multitude of 4,000 men.

At the beginning of the third retreat, some Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and tested him by asking him to show them a sign from heaven in order to prove himself to them. Jesus warned his disciples to guard against the teaching of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and he ordered people whom he healed not to tell others about it.

**Initial-problem:**

Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

**Final-situation:**

Jesus was teaching his disciples about his expectations for them, but they argued about greatness, were jealous and had difficulty forgiving others.

## BIBLE STORY

In the last year of his ministry, Jesus is on the third retreat, where he withdrew from the crowds to be with his disciples.

**Peter's Confession** Mt 16:13-20; Mk 8:27-30; Lk 9:18-21

Jesus went to the region near the town of Caesarea Philippi. Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do people say the Son of Man is?"

They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

Jesus asked, "What about you? Who do you say I am?"

Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God" (Mt 16:13-16).

Jesus replied, "Simon son of Jonah, you are blessed! No person revealed this to you; it was revealed to you by my Father in heaven. I tell you who you are. You are Peter, which means, 'a rock.' On this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hell will not overcome it. I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; your 'yes' on earth will be a 'yes' in heaven, and your 'no' on earth will be a 'no' in heaven."

Then he instructed his disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ (Mt 16:17-20).

### **Jesus Predicted His Death and Resurrection** Mt 16:21-26; Mk 8:31-37; Lk 9:22-25

From that time on Jesus began to explain to his disciples that he had to go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the religious leaders, chief priests and teachers of the Law of Moses, and that he had to be killed and on the third day be raised to life (Mt 16:21).

Peter took Jesus aside protesting, "Never, Lord! This can never happen to you!"

Jesus rebuked Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to me; you are not thinking the way God thinks; you are thinking the way people think" (Mt 16:22-23).

Then Jesus told his disciples, "Anyone who would follow me must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. Anyone who wants to save his life will destroy it, but anyone who loses his life for me will find it. What good is a deal where a person gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? What exchange can a person make for his soul?" (Mt 16:24-26).

If anyone is ashamed of me and my words in this unfaithful and sinful generation, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his Father's glory with the holy angels (Mk 8:38).

"For the Son of Man is going to come in his Father's glory with his angels to reward all people according to their deeds" (Mt 16:27-28).

### **Transfiguration of Jesus** Mt 17:1-13; Mk 9:2-13; Lk 9:28-36

About a week after those teachings, Jesus took Peter, John and James with him and climbed a mountain to pray. While praying, Jesus' face changed appearance, and his clothes became as bright as a flash of lightning. Two men, Moses and Elijah, appeared in glorious splendor. They talked with Jesus about the way he would fulfill God's purpose by dying in Jerusalem (Lk 9:28-31).

Peter and his companions were sound asleep. They woke up and saw Jesus' glory and the two men standing with him. When Moses and Elijah were leaving Jesus, Peter spoke up, "Master, it is good for us to be here. Let us put up three tents; one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." Peter spoke without knowing what he was talking about (Lk 9:32-33).

While Peter was babbling, a cloud appeared and enveloped them; the disciples were frightened. A voice spoke from the cloud, "This is my Son, whom I have chosen; listen to him!"

When the disciples heard it, they fell facedown to the ground, terrified. Jesus went over, touched them and said, "Get up. Don't be afraid." They looked around and only saw Jesus (Mt 17:6-8; Lk 9:34-35).

As they were going down the mountain, Jesus instructed them not to tell anyone what they had seen until the Son of Man had risen from the dead. They kept the matter to themselves, but discussed among themselves what "rising from the dead" meant (Mk 9:9-10).

The disciples asked him, "Why do the teachers of the Law of Moses say that Elijah must come first?" (See Mal 4:5-6.)

Jesus replied, "Elijah came and they did not recognize him. They did to him everything they wanted to. It is written that the Son of Man must also suffer and be rejected." Then the disciples realized Jesus was talking about John the Baptist (Mt 17:10-13; Mk 9:11-13).

### **Healing of the Demoniac Boy** Mt 17:14-21; Mk 9:14-29; Lk 9:37-43

At the bottom of the mountain, Jesus, Peter, James, and John joined the other disciples. A large crowd was around them; the teachers of the Law of Moses were arguing with them. As soon as the people saw Jesus, everyone ran over to greet him.

Jesus asked his disciples, "What are you arguing with them about?"

A man from the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought you my mute son, who was robbed of his speech by a demon. Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes stiff. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not."

Jesus replied, "You unbelieving people! How long must I put up with you? Bring the boy to me."

They brought the boy. The spirit saw Jesus and immediately threw the boy into a convulsion. He fell to the ground, rolled around, and began foaming at the mouth.

Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?"

The father answered, "From childhood. The demon often threw him into fire or water to kill him. If you can do anything, take pity on us and help us."

Jesus responded, "'If?' Why do you say 'if'? Anything is possible for him who believes."

Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my doubts!"

Jesus saw that a crowd was gathering. Jesus rebuked the evil spirit, "I command you deaf and mute spirit to come out of him and stay out."

The spirit screamed, convulsed the boy violently; then it left him. The boy looked dead. Many said, "He's dead." But Jesus took the boy's hand and helped him stand up (Mk 9:14-27).

After Jesus went indoors, his disciples asked him privately, "Why couldn't we drive the demon out?"

Jesus replied, "Because you have so little faith, I tell you the truth, if you have faith as small as a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there' and it will move. Nothing will be impossible for you. You can't get rid of this kind of demon except by prayer" (Mt 17:19-20; Mk 9:28-29).

### **Jesus Again Predicted His Death and Resurrection** Mt 17:22-23; Mk 9:30-32; Lk 9:43-45

Jesus with his disciples left that place and went through Galilee. Jesus did not want anyone to know where they were, because he wanted to teach his disciples. He told them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him; three days after his murder, he will come back to life."

However, the disciples did not understand what Jesus was talking about and they were afraid to ask him (Mk 9:30-32; Lk 9:43-45).

### **Greatness in the Kingdom** Mt 18:1-14; Mk 9:33-50; Lk 9:46-50

Jesus and the disciples went to Capernaum. When they entered the house, he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the road?" They kept quiet, because they had argued about which one of them was the greatest.

Jesus sat down, summoned the Twelve and said, "If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last and be the servant of all."

Jesus took a little child in his arms and told them, "Whoever embraces one of these little children because of me, embraces me. Whoever embraces me, embraces God who sent me" (Mk 9:33-37).

"Anyone who causes one of these little ones who believes in me to sin, it would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a large millstone tied around his neck (Mk 9:38-42).

"See that you do not look down on one of these little ones for their angels have constant contact with my Father in heaven. If a man owns a hundred sheep, and one of them wanders away, does he not leave the ninety-nine on the hills and search for the one that wandered off? If he finds it, he is happier about that one sheep than about the ninety-nine that stayed put. Your Father in heaven feels the same way; he is unwilling for one of these little ones to be lost" (Mt 18:10-14).

## GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

1. What catches your attention in the story?
2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand?
3. Who are the main characters in the story?
4. What problems did the characters face?
5. How did the characters face their problems?
6. How have you faced similar problems?
7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you?
8. What does the story tell about God?

## SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What happened when Jesus asked his disciples, "Who do you say I am?"
2. When Jesus tried to prepare his disciples for his crucifixion, how did they react?
3. What did Jesus teach his disciples about greatness in his Kingdom?
4. When Jesus was on the Mount of Transfiguration, what did Peter tell Jesus and what did the voice from the cloud tell Peter?
5. What was your most profound experience with God?

## LIFE-LESSONS

1. It is important to know what others think about Jesus, but the most important question is, "Who do you say that Jesus is?" (Mt 16:15).  
door to the City of God is opened for the rescued person to enter (Mt 16:15-19).
2. The Church has power over the gates of two kingdoms which are in conflict: Hell, the City of Death; and the Kingdom of Heaven, the City of God. The key that opens the door to the Kingdom of Heaven is the confession that Jesus is the Son of the Living God (Mt 16:15-19). The door to the City of Death keeps the followers of Satan from escaping Hell, while the door to the City of God prevents anyone from entering who is not saved by Jesus. The instant a person admits that Jesus is the Son of the Living God, two doors are opened. The door to Hell is knocked open to rescue that person from the City of Death, and the
3. The person who clearly understands the words of God, but rejects them comes under the Devil's influence and becomes a hindrance to Jesus' work. When Peter understood Jesus' words about his suffering and death but refused to accept the possibility, he was under the Devil's influence and became a stumbling stone to Jesus (Mt 16:21-28).
4. Jesus is the Son of God and that makes him superior to everyone else. During the transfiguration, Peter said, "Let us put up three tents; one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah." Peter was suggesting that Jesus, Moses and Elijah were equals. The voice of God

answered with a scream, "This is my Son!" (Mk 9:2-8).

5. The follower of Jesus who is concerned about power and position will provoke disputes, and will not understand spiritual truths. While the disciples were arguing about who would be the most important, Jesus was explaining about his death

and resurrection (Mk 9:30-37; Lk 9:43-48).

6. Anyone who turns little children away from faith in Jesus will receive severe punishment. Jesus said it would be better for him to have a millstone hung around his neck and be drowned in the sea (Mt 18:6).