

All Saints' Bible Study – October 17, 2008

We have been trying, in the past weeks, to look at joined-up Luke. In his introduction Luke says he had put the story in an orderly fashion. Looking at the sweep of Luke's story, we arrive in this study at a pivotal point. We considered the questions, "When did Jesus know he was the Messiah?" and "When did others know he was the Messiah?"

In Luke's gospel, how does Jesus see himself?

- We see him in the temple as a lad teaching the teachers and referring to God as his father
- Baptism Isaiah 42:1
- We see him countering the devil's temptations in the desert with the knowledge he must go the route of humanity and of suffering.
- We begin to see how he has arrived at an understanding of his own identity through meditation upon scripture: e.g.
 - We see him reading the Isaiah passage and saying that "this is me"
 - In reply to John the Baptist's request for reassurance he identifies himself with Isaiah prophecy Ch 35

We've looked at the thrust of his teaching 'on the plain' and in parables:

- Jesus' primary concern was kingdom of God. Challenge to received ideas.

We've looked at miracles:

- Signs, but not proofs, of the kingdom of God breaking in with him

We read Luke 9:18-20

Jesus is asking the disciples to take stock. What do they think of it so far?

- Who do others say that I am?
- And who do you say that I am?
- What has the thrust of his teaching been? It is not just about a thought system, but about who he is.

We read Luke 9:21-27

Jesus accepts the title Messiah, but directs the disciples to keep the knowledge to themselves. The risk is that people will mob Jesus and try to make him the Messiah they are expecting. What Jesus does that is revolutionary and controversial is link the OT figures of the Messiah, the Son of Man and the Servant.

(Son of Man:

- Ezekiel – human being, a man in his weakness and insignificance
- Psalm 8 – man weak and insignificant, but destined for authority second only to that of God
- Psalm 80 – denotes Israel, made strong out of weakness
- Daniel – after the 4 beasts signifying despotic kingdoms, comes one like the son of Man symbolizing the saints of the most high to whom God is about to trust his judgement and kingdom (7:13,22)
- Similitudes of Enoch – representative figure less a symbol, more an individual
- in gospels occurs always on the lips of Jesus – indicates essential unity with mankind, above all with the humble and weak, predestined representative of the new Israel and bearer of God's judgement and kingdom)

He links his identity as Messiah with suffering. The disciples' understanding of who he is will have an impact on the way they live their lives – this understanding demands a far-reaching life-changing response from them.

We read Luke 9:28-36

We noted Moses representing the law and Elijah the prophets and discussed traditions related to them. Jesus' 'departure' – the original word used here is 'exodus'.

We glanced at the sequence of passages following this high point and noted the immediate challenge of evil that is presented and the dispute among the disciples as to their relative importance. Jesus expects to be killed in Jerusalem, but nevertheless 'resolutely' sets out for Jerusalem.