

Luke 9:18-22 Who is Jesus? The Christ of God

Jesus, as the Christ of God, delivers us into the saving reign of God through His bitter passion and resurrection.

1) Jesus prays before advancing the knowledge of His disciples concerning His identity (9:18a).

- a) Prayer accompanies divine revelation in Luke (1:10—Zechariah/Temple prayers; 3:21—Jesus' baptism; 9:28, 29--Transfiguration)
- b) Jesus prays at important moments in His mission (3:21—Baptism; 22:41, 44—Passion)
- c) Jesus intercedes for His disciples (22:32)
- d) The insight of faith is a gift.

2) Jesus will not restrict His identity to that of a great prophet (9:18b-19).

- a) John the Baptist, Elijah, a resurrected prophet—these are very significant figures; these people have a “high” estimation of Jesus; they are right to see Jesus as the climax of Israel’s prophets (Luke 13:33-35); while this is not entirely inaccurate, it is inadequate, for Jesus must be more than a prophet in order to save His people from their sins
- b) The world’s respect for Jesus is understandable, but respect can be detached and based on superficial knowledge. Faith has a gracious depth of perception that moves the will to cast the whole life upon Jesus as the only Savior. “Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?” (Membership Vow #2)

3) Jesus is the Christ of God who delivers us into the saving reign of God (9:20).

- a) “Christ of God”—cf. Luke 2:26 “the Lord’s Christ”
- b) “Christ” is Greek for Hebrew “Messiah” which means “Anointed One”
 - i) Psalm 2 “the LORD and His Anointed”; 2 Samuel 23:1 “the Christ of God” (LXX)
 - ii) Anointing indicates:
 - (1) God’s choice
 - (2) God’s appointment
 - (3) God’s commission
 - (4) God’s empowerment
 - iii) David was a christ/messiah, but he prophesied of a son of David who would be the Christ/Messiah (Psalm 110:1—“The LORD says to my Lord, ‘Sit at My right hand, until I make Your enemies Your footstool.’”
- c) Christ rules in the eternal Kingdom of God. We speak of the “saving reign” of God because God’s dominion is over all, the elect and the reprobate. But His reign is exhibited in saving grace toward the elect, while it is expressed in long-suffering vengeance against the reprobate.
- d) Peter’s confession expresses faith and hope in Jesus as Deliverer.

4) Jesus is the Son of Man who delivers by His passion and resurrection (9:21-22).

- a) “to tell this to no one”—they needed more understanding of the nature of the kingdom of God and of the mission of Christ before announcing that Jesus is the Christ; Jesus’ view of Messiahship is not less political than that of the disciples, but much broader than their nationalistic perspective; they must understand the international scope of the Kingdom and the manner in which it would “conquer”—not by human violence or craft but by demonstration of the Spirit through the proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ
- b) “Must”—Jesus constantly insists on the Divine necessity of every aspect of His ministry. Jesus does not explain why it must be so; that question, as far as He is concerned is already answered in the Old Testament (Luke 24:25-27), and will be expounded by Him to the Apostles after His

resurrection, and by the Apostles to the nations after His ascension. There is no authentic Christianity without an understanding of the necessity of the cross and resurrection.

- c) “suffer many things”—probably beginning with His “agony” in the Garden of Gethsemane and continuing through the grave
- d) “rejected by the elders and the chief priests and scribes”—Joel Green calls the Sanhedrin “a triumvirate in hostility toward Jesus”; cf. Luke 20:17 “the stone that the builders rejected” (Psalm 118:22); Luke 17:25 “But first He must suffer many things and be rejected by this generation.” The idea behind this word is “tried and found wanting.”
- e) “be killed”—the death of Christ is necessary only because of the sin of His people; Adolf Schlatter’s comments on the baptism of Jesus—which group (the “righteous” or the sinners) will Jesus identify with? By undergoing John’s “baptism of repentance” Jesus publicly identified with the sinners, not because He sinned, but because these were His people.
- f) “and on the third day be raised”—vindication and exaltation
- g) Have you come to the realization that Jesus Christ crucified is absolutely necessary for your salvation? Have you confessed that God has raised Him from the dead as a necessity for your justification? Are you submitting daily to the rule of *this* Christ (see 9:23-27)?