



12-18 September 2021 • Faith 24/7

## Package deal

### Mark 8.27-38

In this difficult passage, Jesus asks his disciples who they think he is. They tell him that he is the Messiah and his response is that, while this is wonderful, it also means there will be testing times ahead – both for him and for his followers.

Now read Mark 8.27-38 see p.2 for text.

### A note on the passage

The answer to the question Jesus asks in this passage, 'Who do you say that I am?', is both a celebration and a challenge. Jesus is the Messiah – the Saviour of the World, the one who will set us free, restore our relationship with God and bring us eternal life. But, if we believe that Jesus is the Messiah, there's also a cost. We have to accept the full package: the joy alongside the pain; God's love for us alongside us loving others, even those who are hard to love; making God – and not ourselves – the most important part of our lives.



**Ask yourself:** What, for you, are the risks and rewards of following Jesus?



Play a game of Uno or Snakes and Ladders, or any game that has risks and rewards. Alternatively, use a pack of cards to build a tower. While you play/build, appreciate that, to progress, you may need to seemingly fail sometimes; to succeed, you'll need to accept risk. Embrace both the opportunities and the challenges, in order to complete the game or finish your structure.



Go on a walk – notice that some parts will be uphill, but these allow us to enjoy the view. Some parts are flat, and this gives us a chance to rest and notice what's around us. Are the leaves changing colour on the trees? Have flowers died? Without autumn, we can't have spring. For buds to reappear, fruit to grow and flowers to bloom again next year, they need to die. Just like in life, following Jesus includes highs and lows, challenges and rewards. But it is often through the difficult times that we grow, and it is the difficult times that make us appreciate the good times even more.



Do a jigsaw puzzle (you can do this online as well <https://www.jigsawplanet.com/>) – some pieces will be more difficult to slot into the puzzle than others, but they're all needed to create the full picture. Some parts of our Christian life will be easier than others, but they're all part of the big picture of who God is shaping us to be.



When people talk about 'the full package', they're generally referring to all of a person's positive attributes (their wealth, looks, success, humour, etc.). Jesus had amazing attributes, but not all of them were easy to live with (think of the money changers in the Temple and the ways Jesus often challenged people). Draw or write 'Jesus' on a large sheet of paper and, each day, write a different benefit or challenge to following Jesus – perhaps you could take it in turns with others or those you live with.

## Pray

Talk together or think about what aspects of being a follower of Jesus you find most difficult. Pray for God to help you in these areas. If you're with others, perhaps you could pray for each other about these things.

**Holy Trinity & St Matthew's Church, Ronkswood**  
**Weekly Newsletter and Reflections Trinity 15 12<sup>th</sup> September 2021**



If you were in church last Sunday, you will know that our plans have changed regarding the Harvest Supper in light of increased Covid infection rates. Instead of the supper we are now holding a Harvest Picnic at the County Park on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September at 1.00 p.m. Bring your own picnic, chairs or blankets so we can share this time of fellowship in the open air. Oh, and pray for good weather! We celebrate our Harvest Festival the following day at Church.



**Bishop's Certificate Course** Two new Bishop's Certificate Courses are starting very soon one held at St Martin's on a Monday morning from 10.30 – 12.00 noon beginning on the 27<sup>th</sup> September and the other at St Stephen's Barbourne on a Wednesday evening from 7.30 – 9.00 beginning on 6<sup>th</sup> October. More details are available from Rob.

Today, with evidence all around us of the approaching climate crisis, every nation must be aware of the importance of the forthcoming climate conference in Glasgow. We now know, just this year, that if the whole world hadn't stopped releasing hydrocarbons into the atmosphere which were destroying the ozone layer at the south pole, the world would already have been overheating at an unstoppable rate which could devastate the whole earth.

The whole world needs to repent our abuse of the planet. In a kind of justice, it seems that all the greatest contributors to the problem have recently had their own reminder of the danger, with floods in Europe, including London, terrible high temperatures in north America and Australia, floods in China, India and Pakistan, wildfires in the tundra of Russia which was once permafrost, fires in Indonesia. Everyone has a timely reminder in advance of the climate talks later this year in Glasgow, and every nation is having to look at this with renewed seriousness.

So, in case we never knew it before, we all have a duty to care for our world. God has given us this responsibility for creation because it was made with the possibility of going terribly wrong if we act maliciously or carelessly. It never was perfect and wasn't ever designed to be perfect. When Jesus was asked about working on the Sabbath he said (John 5. 17): 'My Father is still working, and I also am working.' God's creation is a work in progress, and we are part of that work. So, what we do matters.

Daily Readings for week commencing 13 <sup>th</sup> September 2021		
<b>Monday</b>	1 Chronicles 28: 1-10	Mark 11: 1-11
<b>Tuesday</b>	Genesis 12: 27-36a	John 12: 27-36a <i>Holy Cross Day</i>
<b>Wednesday</b>	1 Chronicles 29: 1-9	Mark 11: 27-44
<b>Thursday</b>	1 Chronicles 29: 10-20	Mark 12: 1-12
<b>Friday</b>	1 Chronicles 29: 21-end	Mark 12: 13-17
<b>Saturday</b>	2 Chronicles 1: 1-13	Mark 12: 18-27

**Pray for those in need...**Sally, Tristan, Mark, Katie-Louise, Pam, Sue, Bryn, Evelyn, Shane, Pat, Heather, Dorothy, Mandy, Joyce, Pete, Ian, Juliette and Nicki. **Please remember those who mourn the loss of loved ones at this time...**