



Theme: A Tough Act to Follow
Scriptures: James 3:1-12,

Mark 8:27-38 (NRSV)

Rev. David Fanning



It's a Tough Act to Follow

One of the first things Jesus did after he was baptised, tempted in the wilderness, and announced his vision for the coming of God's kingdom (Mark 1:9-15), was to call his first disciples. They were Simon (Peter), Andrew, James and John. (1:16-20).

As Mark tells the story, these followers witnessed Jesus healing many people, including a man with an Uncleaned Spirit (1:21-28), forgiving another person his sins (2:1-12), claiming to be Lord of the Sabbath (2:23-28), stilling a storm (4:35-41), challenging the tradition of the elders (7:1-23), teaching about God's kingdom in parables (Ch4), among other things.

And these disciples also witnessed the responses. *What is this? A new teaching-with authority! – the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins- Even the winds and waves obey him.*

At Caesarea-Philippi, (8:27-38), Jesus confronts the disciples with important questions. The most important question was *Who do you say I am?* (8:27). Having witnessed the ministry of Jesus, Peter confesses, *You are the Messiah (Christ).* (8:29).

The Jewish people were all expecting this Messiah to come and destroy the evil Roman Empire in an all-out, even apocalyptic victorious battle.

Peter, though, must learn that **"it is a tough act to follow"**. In response to Peter's confession, Jesus talked about his need to *undergo great suffering and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again.* (8:31) Peter rebuked Jesus for saying this. Jesus looked at the disciples and rebuked him.

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And now we learn that following Jesus is a tough act to follow. Throughout the rest of the gospel, Mark declares just how tough. Jesus says, *If you want to become my followers, you need to deny yourselves, take up our cross and follow Jesus.*

Now that is tough. Jesus was on a journey which took him to the cross. As disciples he calls us to pick up our crosses and follow the same road, the same journey.

Reflect on these words by Rodney Horsefield.



The three-fold demand, deny self, take up one's cross and follow Jesus is a single way. Denying self is not self-abnegation but a willingness to give up the self-centred person for the self-giving one. Taking up one's cross is not simply bearing life's burdens, but giving one's self for others. Discipleship is more than being kind.

It is a tough act to follow!

Grace and peace,
David

Kidz Church: Will be taking a break over the school holidays starting next Sunday the 22nd Sept, followed by the 29th Sept. It will resume on Sunday the 6th Oct.

JOY CIRCLE This Thursday, 19th September, 9.30am in the CE Room. Everyone is welcome.

What's
Happening

- * **Uniting 4570 Prayer Warriors** - 8am, Tuesday mornings, CE room
- * **Combined Churches Fellowship** - 22nd September, 12:30pm, Imbil Playground, BYO Lunch
- * **Spring HymnFest** - Sunday, 13th October, 2:30pm, Gympie Uniting Church

Office Leave

Cherylie is now on Annual Leave until Tuesday, 24th September - we have a team who will be performing various admin functions. You can continue to contact the office by email and Joan Burke will look after these. If you need to speak with someone more urgently, please phone Keith Brown on 0401 397 160. The Vibe will continue to be published in simpler format during this period.

Rev. Dr. Peter Hall will be joining us for Gympie Worship next Sunday

Awesome Wonder

The hymn writer famously wrote, "O Lord, my God, when I in awesome wonder, consider all the worlds thy hands have made I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder thy power throughout the universe displayed then sings my soul, my Savior God, to thee how great thou art, how great thou art." Have we lost a sense of awe and wonder in this world? For most of us, a normal day of life doesn't leave us in awesome wonder. We pass by trees and grass, see the sun and moon every day, but they are altogether ordinary, not awesome to us.

The Scriptures teach us that the natural world is not only God's creation, but God's revelation. Psa. 19:1 says, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the sky above proclaims his handiwork." In Rom. 1:19-20, "For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. 20 For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made."

Have you ever wondered why God created everything in this world from the smallest ant to the Appalachian Mountains? The natural world is not merely the result of random, unguided processes, but is the masterpiece of God. The Bible tells us that every created thing reveals the glory of God. It is a sort of language by which God communicates with people that he exists and that he is glorious. We ought to be moved to worship, seeing God's goodness, grace, power and creativity in the things around us. Nothing is ordinary in God's world. The next time you take a walk in the forest and smell the dead leaves, sink your teeth into a delectable cheeseburger, stare out the window at the sparkling snow, play with your dog, or listen to the gentle chirping of crickets in a summer night - stand in awesome wonder and let your soul sing, "How great thou art!".

Peter Banfe



Mary Valley Combined Churches Fellowship

On Sunday the 22nd of September at 12:30pm, all are welcome to the Mary Valley Combined Churches Fellowship.

Please BYO Lunch and chair (BBQ will be available)

It will be held at the Imbil Playground (the park beside the Fire Station)

Our Name, Our Calling.

"Holy Father, keep them safe by the power of your name. It is the name you gave me. Keep them safe so they can be one, just as you and I are one."

(John 17.11 NIRV).

These words were spoken by Jesus the night before He died, as He prayed for us to His Heavenly Father (John 17). Five times He expressed His desire for our unity – not only a unity of the original apostles – but also of all who have followed in their footsteps, generation by generation.

Our Church

Our primary purpose is to fulfil our calling ...

The calling of exhibiting the character of Jesus, a spirit of humility, love, and unity, coupled with resurrection power, proving that the church is truly 'The Body of Christ' inhabited by God Himself!

~ from *Uniting 4570's Operational Guidelines* ~



UNITING 4570
Better together

Worship

Worship Services... **Gympie:** 15 Red Hill Road - 9am + Kidz Church (school term)
Imbil: 3 Elizabeth Street - 9am

Live-streaming... Sunday messages are usually livestreamed to facebook & YouTube; look up 'Gympie Regional Uniting Church'

Contact Us

Church Office... M: 0493 442 250 P: (07) 5482 2985 E: cherylie@gruc.org
www.gruc.org.au F: www.facebook.com/guchurch

Office Hours... Mon & Wed 8.30am-12pm; Tue 9.30am-3pm; Thu 8.30am-3pm

Pastoral Care... Please contact the office by phone or email.

- Need the services of a Justice of The Peace? ... Glenda 0418 187 698
- Need help with your computer? ... Mike 0403 271 413
- Need a lift to church? ... Jill 0421 333 538
- Need prayer? ... call the church office 0493 442 250

Our Bank Account Details

Westpac BSB 034 127 Acct: 29 4101

(Please identify your bank transaction as either 'Tithe' or 'Offering', 'Shoebboxes', etc. Thank you).