

## Covenant Life

- Our next prayer meeting is September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 3 PM. We will have Children's and Youth Ministries during the prayer meeting. Formation teachings remain on hold while we discern the next series. You can learn more about these ministries on our [WEBSITE](#).
- All adults working in ministries of the community are required to be safe environment trained and must update that training annually. The annual **SAFE ENVIRONMENT TRAINING** update will be offered before and after the next two prayer meetings (September 22<sup>nd</sup> and October 13<sup>th</sup>), more information to follow.
- You may access information from the previous prayer meeting at the following links:
  - [Bulletins](#)
  - [Scriptures](#) (at the bottom of the home page)
  - [Audio Recordings](#) (there is no audio from the 9/8/24 meeting due to technical difficulties)
- Your ongoing financial support to the Community is sincerely appreciated. Please donate online [Here](#) or mail your donations to P.O. Box 225008 Dallas, TX 75222.

## Reflection (September 15<sup>th</sup> Scriptures: Is 50:5-9a; Psalm 116; James 2:14-18; Mark 8:27-35)

The scriptures challenge us today to follow in the footsteps of Christ, the Suffering Servant. In Mark's Gospel, Jesus asked the disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" and next, "Who do you say that I am?" Peter famously answers the second question declaring Jesus is the Messiah.

Later in the reading, as Jesus began revealing to the disciples God's plan for the Messiah to be a Suffering Servant, Peter's heart was exposed in his rebuke to Jesus. Jesus' description of the Messiah challenged Peter's idea of the Messiah as the traditional Jewish Messianic King that would rise up and save all Israel. Peter could not conceive of a Messiah who would have to suffer and die. Just as Peter would later learn, we too must understand that to follow Christ means to follow Him into his suffering, his passion, his death, and resurrection in order to live with Him forever in His kingdom.

In many ways, our western societies teach and sometimes demand us to shun suffering in every way, shape, and form. It even promotes to us the lie that if we suffer in life it is because God has abandoned us. Our culture will make us very soft if we let it. When Christ asks us today, "Who do YOU say that I am?" He wants to know which Messiah is He for us: God's Suffering Servant or some other comfortable Messiah that we've made-up who will take care of us and won't demand anything of us?

Psalm 116 consolingly speaks of the Lord's faithfulness to uphold his suffering servants. St. James demands that we live out our faith with actions worthy of the Suffering Servant we follow. This means suffering with Christ by doing hard things like enduring disappointments, living modestly, persevering through difficult times in faith and joy, loving those who hate us, praying for those who persecute us, laying down one's life for another, etc.

Let us pray. My Jesus, I am very small, weak, and afraid. But our Father is Almighty God awesome in power and in deeds. Grant me the graces of fortitude, endurance, and perseverance to serve You well in whatever way You choose. I entrust myself to Your promise that You will never test me beyond my strength to endure. I love you, Lord, and ask that you help me to be courageous in following You. Amen.

Blessings,  
Mike