

# Explore the Bible: October 8

*Followed • Mark 8:31 – 9:1*

*By Rick Henson*



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What an amazing confession and proclamation as Peter spoke up, surely voicing the sentiment of most of the disciples. Matthew's account added that Jesus said His Father in heaven had revealed that to Peter.

Yet we see the next time Peter spoke, he rebuked Jesus Himself. Jesus told them about how He would be beaten and suffer much, be killed, and would rise again on the third day. Peter would have none of that and told Jesus that wouldn't happen.

Peter had the good manners to rebuke Jesus privately, though Jesus rebuked him and all the disciples together. *Get thee behind me, Satan: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men (Mark 8:33 KJV).*

How could Peter go in minutes from hearing from the Father to being used by Satan?

Both words translated, "rebuke," are the same in the original New Testament language and are also used when Jesus rebuked the wind on the Sea of Galilee and the many times when Jesus rebuked demons. The word means to harshly confront.

Misguided though he was, Peter harshly confronted Jesus about His mission, which was heading to the cross. Though his motive was his love for Jesus and his wish to protect Him, he inadvertently was doing the work of Satan.

In the fourth chapter of Luke, Jesus is led by the Spirit of God into the wilderness to be tempted. One of the three temptations from Satan was to bypass the cross and become ruler of the world. Satan offered Jesus control of all that he had if He would bow down and worship him.

Hebrews 12:2 states that Jesus *endured the cross, despising the shame (KJV)*. Once again, Satan was tempting Jesus, knowing He would despise taking on Himself all the sins of the world, (1 John 2:2 KJV).

Peter did not know Satan tempted Jesus to avoid the cross. Jesus often told the disciples of His impending death and resurrection on the third day. From their reaction after the crucifixion, they obviously did not pay any attention. Possibly they thought He was speaking figuratively, as He often did.

Lest we be too hard on Peter and the disciples, they did not yet have the Spirit of God to guide them so Jesus was right to rebuke them. They looked at their wants and needs and not at the will of the Father. Following Jesus requires that we view life from His perspective and leadership and not our own.

Jesus then challenged His disciples and those present, *Whoever will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me (Mark 3:34 KJV)*. At the heart of salvation is denial of self and following Jesus.

John MacArthur wrote in his study notes, "No one who is unwilling to deny himself can legitimately claim to be a disciple of Jesus Christ." (MacArthur Study Notes, 2007, Thomas Nelson, Inc.)

A somewhat modern notion that Jesus can be one's Savior and not be his Lord is unbiblical. Jesus asked the religious leaders in Luke 6:46, *Why call you me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say (KJV)*. Sixteen times in the four Gospels Jesus said, *Follow me (KJV)*. We follow His will, His example, and His teachings.

Serving the Lord Jesus is not a buffet where we choose according to our own tastes. Jesus said in John 14:15, *If ye love me, keep my commandments (KJV)*.

Peter and the disciples could not see where following Jesus would lead. Maybe like many at the time, they believed Jesus would rescue them from the tyranny of Rome. They recognized Jesus was the Messiah but did not fully understand what that entailed.

Eventually they did, for Peter later wrote that they *were eyewitnesses of His majesty (2 Peter 1:16 KJV)*.

Jesus would soon pray in the garden, again struggling with the Father's plan. There He triumphantly declared, *Nevertheless not my will, but Thine, be done (Luke 22:42 KJV)*.

The price for our sins was high, yet Jesus paid it all. All to Him I owe. Sin had left a crimson stain. He washed it white as snow.

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