

An rfour.org Children's Time Message

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Written for September 15, 2024

Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost

Lectionary Year B

Scripture: [Mark 8:27-38](#) [**Summary:** *Getting to Know Jesus*]

Supplies Needed: A brown lunch bag and something to put inside the bag. I suggest something that feels pretty generic but then has something specific inside of it – like a box of pencils or a box of tic-tacs. The idea is to make the guessing harder (when feeling the bag). Then staple the bag shut.

ASK (a.k.a *The On-Ramp*)

- Good morning!
- I have an item in this bag here [*put paper brown bag with item in it on the ground in front of you*]
- Just by looking at that bag – without looking inside of it or touching the bag – I'd like you to tell me what you think the item is that is INSIDE the bag.
- [*Give affirmative nods and noises of approval as ideas are shared*]
- OK, now I'm going to pass the bag around. As you can see, the bag is stapled shut. Do not open it. But go ahead and feel with your hands what is inside of the bag.
- Do any of you have new guesses as to what is inside the bag?
- [*Give affirmative nods and noises of approval as ideas are shared*]
- OK – now I'm going to open up the bag so that you can look inside of it – and then you can tell me if you have any new guesses as to what's inside the bag.
- [*Give affirmative nods and noises of approval as ideas are shared*]
- So...what do you think? Did your guesses change as you learned more about what was inside the bag? (yes)
- And did your guesses get closer to the right answer the more you learned about the item inside the bag? (yes)

TELL (a.k.a. *The Freeway*)

- In today's scripture story, Jesus asks the disciples a question like the one I just asked you.
- But instead of asking his disciples, "Tell me what's in this bag." Jesus asks them, "Tell me who other people think I am."
- The disciples give all sorts of answers (He's a prophet! He's John the Baptist! He's Elijah!) because there were lots of people who didn't know very much about Jesus.
- I think those guesses about Jesus sound a lot like we sounded when we were first guessing what was inside the bag without ever looking inside of it.
- Jesus then asks the disciples, "Who do YOU think I am?"
- And, because the disciples had been spending lots of time with Jesus and learning from him, they had answers that were closer to being correct.
- It's like the disciples had spent the time and effort to figure out what was inside the bag instead of just guessing.

SHARE the Good News (a.k.a. *The Destination*)

- Today's story is a good reminder to us that learning the answer to the question, "Who is Jesus?" is not something we learn quickly or from a distance.
- It takes time and investigation to learn about who Jesus is.
- Here are some of the ways we learn who Jesus is:
 - By coming to worship on Sunday mornings
 - By reading and talking about the faith stories that are about Jesus in Sunday school
 - By reading a Bible story each day with our mom or dad and then talking about it after we read it.
- When we do these things, we are being like the disciples, who learned about Jesus by learning *from* him
- The more we learn about Jesus and from Jesus, the more we learn how to receive and share God's love, just like Jesus did.
- That's the good news for today. Let's pray. This is a repeat-after-me prayer.

CLOSING Prayer

Dear God,

Dear God,

Thank you for Jesus...

Thank you for Jesus...

...who teaches and shows us...

...who teaches and shows us...

...how to receive and share your love.

...how to receive and share your love.

Help us to keep learning...

Help us to keep learning...

...from him and about him.

...from him and about him.

Thank you and Amen