

Lent Day 28
Saturday March 12, 2016
Colombo, Sri Lanka

Reading: Mark 9.38-50

Reflection

One area that we have lost in our modern and post-modern era is “the fear of God.” Part of this, at least, is the change in church circumstance. Because we are trying to increase our market share of believers we need to put aside any notion that God is someone to be feared. Instead, we have developed a theology of God as very cool.

This notion of God being cool has led to the erosion of discipleship standing at the centre of the faith. It has become enough for me to identify as a believer of God and to generally commit to being a good person — a lovely, hazy concept. And God, who should be happy to have me at all, needs to be satisfied with what I offer him as worship.

So, it becomes a shock when we encounter Jesus as he is represented in the Gospels with the notion that people might need to remove body parts to enter the kingdom at all. This shouldn't lead to a notion that we have to remove body parts, but rather, that God is serious. And, because God is serious, we should take our discipleship serious.

We can't take God for granted. He isn't lucky to have us and our belief. He doesn't need to settle for what we offer him. Rather, Jesus offers to God in our stead what it is that God requires. And, God receives what he requires from Jesus. Now, as believers we are in Christ, offering ourselves to God and find our acceptance through Christ. But, it is not a partial offering, instead, it is a whole life offering.

When we say we fear God, we mean that we love him and take him seriously. He is God and creator. He is holy and other. We seek to honour him and please him in Christ. We fear to offend him and wound him. All of this shapes the direction of our lives; our thoughts and actions. God has extended his grace to us through the cross, to receive his grace is also cross shaped.

Prayer

God, high and lifted up, help us to love you through taking you seriously. Let us desire to conform our whole lives to be holy and acceptable to you in Christ. Amen.