

Shall bind . . . shall loose. Be clothed with authority to forbid and to permit. *In heaven*; before heaven. Peter's loyalty to this truth will make him preeminent in the church, but only because of the truth. *Tell no man.* The fact of Jesus' Messiahship might excite the people prematurely.

III. PETER'S MISTAKE.—21-24. *How he must . . . suffer.* But what kind of Messiah is Jesus? That is the point. A suffering Messiah, says Jesus. *Be raised again*; but more than a suffering Messiah,—a victorious one. *Be it far from thee.* Peter speaks in love, but not in wisdom. *Get thee behind me.* Alas, Peter, spokesman for God a few moments before, speaks for Satan in seeking to turn Jesus from the cross. *Savouriest . . . of men*; speaks as man, not as illuminated by God. *Deny himself . . . take up his cross.* Another startling truth,—disciples, like their Master, must be cross-bearers.

Lesson Questions

To whom did people liken Jesus, and why?
How did Peter know who Jesus was?
What startling truth does Jesus tell his disciples?
Why should Peter be rebuked?

For Further Study and Discussion

1. Read of the tenderness of Jeremias. (Jer. 9 : 1.)
2. Where does Jesus show his tender heart? (Luke 19 : 41.)
3. Does it matter what people think of us?
4. Can a man think wrongly and do right?

PROVE FROM SCRIPTURE—That a Roman soldier sent for Peter.

SHORTER CATECHISM—Ques. 77.

THE LESSON IN DAILY LIFE (Daily Readings)

Monday—Peter's great confession, Matt. 16 : 13-24.

The greatness of Peter's description lies in the fact that while men described Jesus in the terms of earth, Peter described him in the terms of heaven. Peter saw something in Jesus that could not be explained by any human origin or cause.

Tuesday—Denying self, Mark 8 : 31-38.

Peter had a habit of stumbling on the truth. Now he stumbles at the truth. Peter could not reconcile a divine Saviour with a cross of shame and pain. The throne seemed the only place that belonged to Jesus. Jesus teaches him that only a self-denying Saviour can save others.

Wednesday—The words of eternal life, John 6 : 63-69.

Eternal life does not mean unending life, but unfathomable life. It means, not merely length, but depth. The length of a stream does not tell of its volume. The length of a life does not tell of its richness and fulness. It is what Christ crowds into life that makes it eternal life.

Thursday—A father who trusted in Jesus, John 4 : 46-53.

In our passage, the faith of the father brought blessing to his child. And so in life to-day, we do not live to ourselves for good or for evil. We cannot be at our best, or our worst, for ourselves alone. Some one else shares in the best, or the worst.

Friday—The Messiahship of Jesus, Luke 24 : 25-27, 44-47.

Christ came to his Messiahship by the way of pain. What we have all to learn at one time or another is that pain is an ordered part of our life's discipline. To see this great truth we need to have our understanding opened. And none can do that like the suffering Christ.

Saturday—The coming kingdom, Isa. 11 : 1-10.

The gift of God's spirit means a deepening of our understanding of life. We get beneath the surface of things, trusting no longer to the sound or the sight of things. The compassion of Christ was so deep, because he saw things and facts that were not visible to the eyes of others.

Sunday—The suffering servant of God, Isa. 53 : 1-12.

Nothing reconciles us to sorrow like a realization that Jesus passed by that same bitter way. He passed that way, not to utter defeat, but to the place where he saw of the travail of his soul and was satisfied. Sorrow has rich fruitage.

A PRAYER

Father, we thank thee for the story of how Peter confessed the Saviour and then sinned against him by tempting him. Teach us how to gain Peter's strong faith, and how to avoid his grievous sin. Fill us with thy Spirit that we may know our danger and may struggle to conquer sin. In Christ's name. Amen.