

'Get Behind Me, Satan!': Mark 8:31-33

In these verses, Jesus begins to teach his disciples, using the title he commonly used when referring to himself, "the Son of Man," which appears 81 times in the Gospels. It is a messianic title that goes back to Daniel 7:13-14. Jesus was keen to explain that his Messiahship was not one of military conquest or power, but one of humility, self-giving, and suffering.

He explains in Mark 8:31 how he "must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests and teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again." At this point, Peter, who has just declared Jesus as the Christ (v.29), rebukes Jesus. But Jesus then has to rebuke Peter, saying, "Get behind me, Satan! ...You do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men" (v.33).

To quote Dick France again (Mark, The People's Bible Commentary, p.118), "[Peter] is completely missing the divine perspective... [He was thinking in human terms]... To adopt this human perspective is to take the side of Satan."

Perhaps **we** also are sometimes guilty of looking at things from a purely human point of view rather than a spiritual one, not least when we discuss the world situation or problems in our own lives.

In this passage, Satan is using one of Jesus's own disciples to try to deflect him from his mission. How we thank the Lord that Jesus refused to be swayed.

May God help **us** not to be deflected from what He wants us to do for Him. For some of us, this may involve going against what the world would tell us to do.

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