



### Grain

“Because he was moving slowly, they came into focus for him, just as he came into focus for them. For many who followed him around, he was the destination.”

–Barbara Brown Taylor (regarding Jesus’ encounters)

### Field

<sup>27</sup>Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi; and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” <sup>28</sup>And they answered him, “John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” <sup>29</sup>He asked them, “But who do you say that I am?” Peter answered him, “You are the Messiah.” <sup>30</sup>And he sternly ordered them not to tell anyone about him. <sup>31</sup>Then he began to teach them that the Son of Man must undergo great suffering, and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again. <sup>32</sup>He said all this quite openly. And Peter took him aside and began to rebuke him. <sup>33</sup>But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, “Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things....” <sup>35</sup>For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. <sup>36</sup>For what will it profit them to gain the whole world and forfeit their life?” Mark 8:27-32 & 35

### Thoughts

We know that Jesus and his disciples covered a lot of ground. Just look at the last few lessons from Mark’s Gospel. When taking journeys for days or weeks at a time, how fast did Jesus and the disciples move? Barbara Brown Taylor in her book, “An Altar in the World,” invites the reader to consider the pace at which Jesus walked. Of course, we don’t exactly know. But he must have slowed down in order to listen, envision people beyond their label levels, and cut through illusions. The notion of Jesus’ pace caused me to reflect on my own pace and that of others walking, or getting around as they’re able, to notice our inner life and the lives of our neighbors.

As Jesus and his disciples headed for Caesarea Philippi, what was their pace? Did they stroll with hesitancy or do a bit of nervous speed walking? After all, Jewish people viewed Caesarea Philippi as forbidden territory, with one of its temples dedicated to Caesar Augustus, and a history of sacrificing humans in worship. While still walking, not toward their homeland or a mountaintop retreat, but a place that enshrined abusive systems, Jesus asked his disciples, “But who do you say I am?” In the midst of all the rumors you’ve heard and of facing other powers, what do you say?

Peter’s answer would reveal how he/they viewed Jesus’ identity and also their own. Perhaps they came to a stop when Jesus explained the cost of discipleship, of valuing one’s inner life, and loving. Sometimes sin and oppression would be the response to love, as it would be for Jesus on the cross. But neither the offenses of others nor your own mistakes will define you and your relationship with God.

When do we intentionally or by grace slow our gait to notice what we need to? When does life crash down on us, pausing our pace and leaving us focused on answering Jesus’ question, “But who do you say I am?” Happy Monday!

### Share

Send any quotes you'd like to share with our network to [cindyc@loppw.org](mailto:cindyc@loppw.org)

Find today's and all Monday Quotes at <https://www.loppw.org/resources/>

Many Blessings upon you,

Pastor Cindy