

Mark 8:30

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And he charged them that they should tell no man of him.

Analysis

And he charged them that they should tell no man of him—Despite Peter's correct confession (Su ei ho Christos, Σὺ εἶ ὁ Χριστός, 'You are the Christ,' verse 29), Jesus immediately commands silence: epetimēsen autois (ἐπετίμησεν αὐτοῖς, 'He sternly warned them') followed by hina mēdeni legōsin (ἴνα μηδενὶ λέγωσιν, 'that to no one they should speak'). The verb epitimaō carries force—a sharp rebuke or stern charge, the same term used for rebuking demons (Mark 1:25).

Why silence after correct confession? Because Peter's understanding, though accurate in identification ('You are the Messiah'), remains incomplete regarding mission. Immediately following (verses 31-33), Jesus predicts suffering, death, and resurrection—which Peter rejects, earning the rebuke 'Get behind me, Satan!' Peter's 'Messiah' meant political victor; Jesus's Messiah means suffering servant. Like the blind man who needed a second touch for clarity (verses 22-25), the disciples confess correctly but see blurrily. Premature proclamation of a misunderstood messiahship would produce false expectations, nationalist fervor, and Roman suppression—derailing the true mission of the cross.

Historical Context

The title 'Christ' (Christos, Χριστός, Greek for Hebrew 'Messiah') carried explosive political implications in Roman-occupied Judea. Public messianic claims had sparked revolts (Acts 5:36-37), prompting brutal Roman response. Jesus's messiahship would be demonstrated through the cross and resurrection, not military conquest, requiring careful revelation timing to avoid misunderstanding.

Related Passages

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. In what ways might your understanding of Jesus's mission be correct in label but incomplete in substance?
2. How does the disciples' experience warn against premature proclamation before full understanding?
3. What does Jesus's rebuke of correct but incomplete theology teach about the danger of 'half-truths' about His identity?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐπετίμησεν αὐτῷ ὅτα μηδενὶ λέγωσιν περὶ αὐτοῦ
And he charged him that no man they should tell of him
G2532 G2008 G846 G2443 G3367 G3004 G4012 G846

Additional Cross-References

Matthew 16:20 (Parallel theme): Then charged he his disciples that they should tell no man that he was Jesus the Christ.

Luke 9:21 (Parallel theme): And he straitly charged them, and commanded them to tell no man that thing;

Mark 9:9 (Parallel theme): And as they came down from the mountain, he charged them that they should tell no man what things they had seen, till the Son of man were risen from the dead.