

I don't see myself as a selfish person or mean or nasty, but the other day it struck me that, like most other people, in many situations I tend automatically to think first about what is best for me. It struck me the other day as I was travelling along in the rain in my little brown car. Now to say that my car has seen better days is a gross understatement, and I was revisiting a little dream I have occasionally of being hit, not hard enough to hurt me physically but just enough to write my car off, by someone in a really nice well insured car.

I never saw that as selfish before, but suddenly I started thinking about the cost to the other person, and how I really wouldn't want them to go through that.

IT was then I realised

Jesus never ever thought of Himself b4 those He came to save

He was completely unselfish.....Despite being tempted by.....to put Himself 1st

None of us can ever hope to reach such a level of unselfishness as He did , though we are called to aim towards it. But it is important for us to realise that when God the Son came to this earth His complete focus was on saving people such as us from destruction.

Jesus Himself said in Mark 10:45

"For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many."

IT was this total focus on a mission that would demand – complete renunciation of Himself, even to the point of death that Peter and the other disciples found so hard to accept. When Jesus first told them in **8:31** about the suffering and death that lay ahead for Him, their response was to rebuke Him.

Unselfishness was ok in small measures but this was carrying it too far.

That's why Jesus went to such great lengths to explain what lay ahead for Him

He knew that what He was about to do went against human nature. As Paul was later to write in Romans 5:7

"Vary rarely will anyone die for a righteous man, though for a good man someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

So in four places in Mark's Gospel Jesus keeps on telling them about His coming death and rising again

1. 8:31

"He then began to teach them that the Son of Man 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."

2. 9:12

"Jesus replied, "To be sure, Elijah does come first, and restore all things. Why then is it written that the Son of Man must suffer much and be rejected?"

3. 9: 31

"The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill Him, and after three days He will rise."

4. 10:33-34

"Again He took the Twelve aside and told them what was going to happen to Him. "We are going up to Jerusalem and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and teachers of the law. They will condemn Him to death and will hand Him over to the Gentiles, who will mock Him and spit on Him, flog Him and kill Him. Three days later He will rise."

Straight away we notice how repetitive it is and we would expect that, because it's a concept that is so hard for us humans to grasp.

It took those disciples a long time to grasp that the Messiah was the suffering servant of Isaiah. He kept repeating it to them so that after the resurrection they could look back and see that He knew all along what He was about to do.

The Next thing we need to see is the Progression

The first is most definitely teaching:

This is the disciples first opportunity to be part of the Messiah's plan and Jesus outlines the importance of it for them. He is not looking for agreement or discussion, but He is teaching them about the things that must happen to Him as He journeys on

The second is also teaching but He uses the question/answer approach

From their question about the prophesied coming of Elijah he lets them know that John was Elijah, and he did come, and he did suffer.

Then He asks them to consider why the Scripture mentions the suffering and rejection of the Son of Man. For if the prophecy about John was fulfilled then why shouldn't they expect this prophecy about the Son of man also to be fulfilled.

The third and fourth passages are no longer teaching as such. They are statements about what is going to happen

When we look at all four we notice a big diff between the 1st & 4th

The strongest word in the first is Must.....But in the 4th its will

He will die because He must

He must die so He will.....(When he said those words He had set His face)

That word Must is a very small word.....δει dei

The form used here means: It is necessary

- It is binding

It is inevitable

Jesus knew what His mission was.....And it was the Necessity of His suffering and Death that He wished to teach His disciples

Not just,,,,,,that He must die.....But He must also suffer and be rejected

Death alone was not enough. He also had to first suffer through His years of ministry. Suffer the rejection of many including the religious leaders.

Suffer betrayal.Be spat upon...whipped.....crucified

To give His life as a ransom for many.....Involved all the rejection Suffering.....and one of the worst type of deaths imaginable

Yet when I look back to the Passover lamb: I find none of that suffering or rejection

Why then the must for Jesus?

Then I remembered the Scapegoat

Back in Leviticus 16 we read that Aaron laid his hands upon a live goat and confessed over it all the wickedness and rebellion of the Israelites—all their sins. Then that goat was taken way away into the wilderness.....rejected by the people.....and left to die

Our wickedness. Our Rebellion. Our Sin meant that Jesus must suffer, be rejected, and die, so that we might have life

This was the Divine Must
There was no other way, and He took it for us

So what then should our response be ?

Surrender to Him

Commitment to living for Him

Every Salvation Army sermon includes a call to service

To living out our lives in some ministry for Him

In the light of what we have seen this morning.....Surely we can understand that

In the TWFT last Wednesdaythe question was raised

But how can I live that way

And the answer was....by keeping your eyes on Christ

And then it mentioned how Paul at this time, called himself a Prisoner of Christ

and then the booklet went on to say.....(See print out from TWFT.....)

That's what Jesus wants of us.....And in the light of all He went through, how could we possibly offer Him anything less!