

23rd August

May these words of my mouth and this meditation of my heart be pleasing in your sight, LORD, my Rock and my Redeemer.

As you walk, think of your favourite places to visit-even if you can't get to them at the moment.

- What is so special about those places? Are there good memories there? Is it connected to an interest or hobby?
- What does this place say about who you are? Is it a peaceful place or a busy place?

Read Matthew 16:13-20

13 Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "Who do people say that the Son of Man is?" **14** And they said, "Some say John the Baptist, but others Elijah, and still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets." **15** He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" **16** Simon Peter answered, "You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God." **17** And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. **18** And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. **19** I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." **20** Then he sternly ordered the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Messiah.

In this passage Jesus wants to know if those who know him and know of him, can truly recognise who he is. For those who haven't travelled with Jesus as the disciples have, it seems understandable that Jesus comes across as a prophet. However, when Jesus asks for his disciples' honest opinion, Peter reveals that he recognises Jesus to be the Son of the living God. The disciples have spent a lot of time with Jesus, listening to his teachings and seeing how he can cure people and perform other miracles, but it is not this physical person in front of them that has declared that he is the Messiah. Jesus says that it is because God has revealed it to them. Peter's faith and trust in God is such that he is given the weighty gift of the keys to the kingdom of heaven and with great responsibility.

- If you were to ask someone who they thought you were, what would they say?
- Are there many people who know who you truly are?
- Are there people in your life, that you truly know? What is it like to see people for who God has revealed them to be?

We are complex people, with a variety of things that make us who we are and yet God knows all of them. As God knows who you are, ask that God helps you to understand more of what and who God is and pray that when the time is right, God can reveal to others what we sometimes find difficult to put into words.

Activity

Jesus said to Peter that whatever was bound on earth would be bound in heaven and whatever was loose on earth would be loosed in heaven.

If you were given this permission what would you loose and what would you bind? Make a list below and consider the reasons why you have put these in these categories.

Loosed:	Bound:
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