

Good morning! One of the things that characterized Jesus' earthly ministry was the element of surprise. Let's face it: people always knew what the Pharisees and the other rabbis were going to do, but nobody ever really knew what Jesus would do. In fact, that hasn't changed---we still don't know what Jesus will do! Remember those WWJD wristbands? They asked the question, "What Would Jesus Do?" Here's the thing: we don't know; all we know is what Jesus did...and He might not do it the same way next time! Today's passage begins with Jesus giving His disciples a quiz and finishes up with a mystery. Let's read it together:

While He was praying in private and His disciples were with Him, He asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" They answered, "John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, that one of the ancient prophets has come back." "But you," He asked them, "who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "God's Messiah!" But He strictly warned and instructed them to tell this to no one, saying, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, be killed, and be raised the third day."

**Luke 9:18-22**

In this passage, Jesus is not speaking to the crowd; He's speaking only with the twelve, His closest followers. He begins with Part One of a two-part question: "Who do the crowds say that I am?" There was a lot of interesting buzz about Jesus and, as there is today, a lot of disagreement. The disciples had some pretty interesting answers, like Elijah, other long-dead prophets, and His cousin John (which makes me wonder, since they had been seen together). The people clearly thought He was a prophet. Then the question got more personal: "OK, so who do you say I am?" Peter, who we always seem to think was a big dope, got it right this time, saying, "You're God's Messiah!" Now, here's where it gets interesting. At that point you would think that Jesus would have said, "That's right, Peter---now you guys go out there and tell everyone!" But He didn't say that. In fact, Jesus told them not to tell anyone! What? Jesus wasn't playing---He had his reasons and they were deadly serious. OK then, so what can you and I learn from this lesson? Just this: we can't predict what Jesus will do; we are going to have to keep our eyes and ears open. Going to church is no substitute for getting direction from Him. You don't know what Jesus wants you to do until He tells you...so pay attention!