

Session 7

The Cost of the Cross - 1

Mark 8:27-38

By Betty Ann Cody

Ouch! That tea is so hot! When will I learn to wait a minute to sip hot tea?

There it is - the slight breeze of first light. It feels so good on my face here in my small courtyard. The others are still sleeping, of course, but I'm thinking about what Mark told us when he came home a few nights ago. He is so drawn to this man Jesus that he travels with him up and down the land, village to village. As an old woman I've heard lots of tales of traveling teachers, but young Mark says this one is different. Something about him. I wish he would come here so I could see for myself.

Mark was very upset when he talked to us on his last visit here. They are all trying to figure out just who this man Jesus is and whether he speaks the truth. Mark says he is doing one miracle after another and he's convinced he's the one. Once he asked the men around him what people were saying about him, who they thought he was. Some told him a few things they said, but, like he often has done, he turned the question to them, right to their faces. I don't think I would have said a word! His friend Peter, of course, just spoke right up. He said he was the one we're all waiting for, the Messiah. Right to his face! He must have been glad somebody got it, but he said he must not tell anyone, that he wasn't ready to go public. I just can't figure this man out.

But it got worse because then Mark said Jesus told them he would be killed and then rise to life again! How strange a thing to say! Peter objected to that, then, and Jesus jumped all over him. They had words, Mark said, very heated words. Jesus told Peter he had to think differently – not like men think,

but like God thinks. Old as I am, I can see what Jesus meant, but those young men had a hard time with that.

Then he opened up the conversation to the larger group and told them pretty much what he meant by that. As a woman, I know what it is to be last in a group. As an old woman I know what it is to feel invisible. But he was talking about being the servant, facing reality and living like he was teaching them, and he meant all day every day. A servant Messiah? And then he talked about dying and coming back in lots of power. Mark couldn't really put it all together. I wish I had heard it for myself.