



Silverdale Baptist

THE INVITATION • COME AND FOLLOW • MARK 8:34-38 • 8/29-30/2020

Key Truth

Jesus calls us to come and follow Him. To be a follower of Christ is to live with our will unconditionally to the will of Jesus.

Getting Started

Ask your group:

What is your most valuable possession? Your car? Your house? Money?

What do you have or own that you think is extremely important to you?

Jesus said in the passage we are about to study that *you* are *your* most valuable possession. You! Your soul will live forever. You will spend eternity either with God or separated from God. Your soul is the most valuable possession you have.

What will you do with your most valuable possession?

"For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?" (Mark 8:36)

Learn

Let's examine the passage to see what Jesus says.

Leader: Even though the passage is brief, and probably very familiar to the small group, the directions will ask you to have someone read the passage three different times. This is by design. Sometimes we are too familiar with a passage of Scripture. Some texts we have read and heard so many times we are a little numb to the words. Hearing it more than once might help us catch something in the text we had forgotten or perhaps never noticed.

Ask your small group to listen as to this passage as if they were one of the disciples. How would they respond if they heard Jesus say these things?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MARK 8:31-38

Discuss:

What did Jesus say that so upset Peter?

How open was Jesus about what was coming?

On what was Peter setting his mind?

How would you have responded if the one you left everything to follow told you he was about to be killed and raised from the dead?

When Jesus called the crowd together, what did He say to them?

Leader: *As a volunteer reads this passage, have your group listen not as if they were one of the disciples, but only part a part of the crowd. They see a man talking with a small group of people. Suddenly, Jesus calls out to everyone in the area. How would they respond to the words of this Rabbi?*

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MARK 8:34-3

Discuss:

What does it look like to follow after Christ? What three things is Jesus demanding of His followers?

What do you think Jesus means when He said to "deny yourself"?

| HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ MARK 8:34-3

In Jesus' day, the Romans intimidated and terrified conquered peoples to keep them from rebelling against Rome. One of their favorite tools was crucifixion. Death by crucifixion was so horrible that only lower classes, slaves, and criminals suffered this way. Roman citizens, regardless of their crime, were protected from this form of capital punishment.

What do you think Jesus means when He said, "take up your cross?"

When Jesus says follow Me, what is the cost?

What is the relationship between Jesus' three statements - deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Me? How do these terms relate to each other?

Now, how would you respond if you were in the crowd?

What is the cost of *not* following Christ? What will you lose?

What is the cost of being embarrassed to be known as a Christ-follower?

Apply

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

Who do you know that lives a life of self-denial? What does that look like?

What would self-denial look like in your life?

"We know that our old sinful selves were crucified with Christ so that sin might lose its power in our lives. We are no longer slaves to sin." Rom 6:6

How does Paul's statement relate to Jesus' words in Mark 8?

If you take an honest look at your life, in what areas are you still trying to be in control?

How can we, as a community of Christ-followers, help each other deny ourselves, die to ourselves, and follow Christ?

Have you surrendered control of your life, your goals, your destiny to Jesus Christ?

Are you all in?

Pray

Father, we pray that this week the Holy Spirit would stop at nothing to bring us to brokenness if we are not denying ourselves and following hard after Christ.

Digging Deeper

| MARK 8:34-38

The Process of Growth (8:34–38)

Supporting Idea: Jesus tells the listeners what it means to be a true disciple of his.

8:34. Jesus' next words were not just for the disciples but for everyone in the crowd. After telling his disciples about his impending death, he told everyone about the cost of being a follower of his. The phrase deny himself implies that, like Jesus, we must seek God's will and submit our will to his. Take up his cross must have been a puzzling, offensive statement to the listeners. They knew what the cross represented. Barbieri notes that when criminals carried their crosses, it showed those who were watching the identity of the one who had authority over the criminal (Barbieri, Mark, p. 190). By denying oneself, taking up one's cross and following Jesus, a disciple acknowledges that he is submitting to Jesus' authority.

8:35–37. These statements expand the understanding of verse 34. When people lose their lives by taking up the cross, they find life in Christ. In the same way, trusting in riches will not gain a person eternal life. There is nothing that a person can exchange for his or her soul.

8:38. In verse 31, Jesus spoke of his passion, death, and resurrection. In this verse he speaks of his eventual return in glory. Jesus had full confidence in his triumph over death. After his resurrection, he will judge those who have been ashamed of him. He will be ashamed of them as well.[1]

[1] Rodney L. Cooper, Mark, vol. 2, Holman New Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2000), 136–137.