

And calling the crowd to him with his disciples, he said to them, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me. ³⁵ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it. ³⁶ For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul? Mark 8:34-36 ESV

We rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴ and endurance produces character, and character produces hope... Romans 5:3-4 ESV

For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation... Romans 1:16 ESV

And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, ²⁵ not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another... Hebrews 10:24-25 ESV

And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable people who will also be qualified to teach others. 2 Timothy 2:2 NIV

Let's Talk About It

Winning in God's kingdom looks differently than we often expect. Jesus teaches that real life, real winning, is found through surrendering our lives to Him. God meets us where we are and often uses difficult seasons to grow us and to work through us. When life doesn't feel like a win, God is still at work—shaping our faith. As followers of Jesus, we're called to boldly live it out our faith and make disciples, trusting that God can use both our wins and losses to bring hope to those around us.

Mark 8:34-36; Romans 5:3-4; Romans 1:16; Hebrews 10:24-25; 2 Timothy 2:2

Discussion questions:

- Build essential spiritual disciplines to grow in your relationship with God. Attend **Rooted, starting February 15**. Register on the app!
- Which part of the message impacted or challenged you?
- Read Mark 8:34-36. Where do you notice yourself trying to "save" your life—protecting comfort, control, or reputation? How is Jesus inviting you to trust Him more deeply instead of holding tightly to your own plans?
- Read Romans 5:3-4. We can *rejoice* in suffering because God is doing something in us. How would you describe the difference between simply "getting through" something and allowing God to *form* you through it? In what ways do you see God shaping your character through current challenges—even if it's uncomfortable?
- Read Hebrews 10:23-25. Why do you think showing up—even when we don't feel like it—matters spiritually? What makes it tempting to pull back or isolate during hard seasons? How can this group help you stay connected?
- Read 2 Timothy 2:2. What's one simple way this group can help each other follow Jesus more intentionally? What would it look like for you to take one small step this week toward discipling someone—prayer, encouragement, or invitation?

Take a Step

- Take a step toward discipling someone this week – trust God for an opportunity to offer prayer, encouragement, and share the Gospel.

Here's My Prayer

God, thank You for the people who have invested in my faith and helped me grow closer to You. Help me be faithful with what You've entrusted to me and give me courage to encourage and share my faith with others. Use my life to point people to Jesus and teach me to trust You as I take small steps of obedience. In Jesus' name, amen.