

SHARE THE BIBLE LESSON

WEEK 14

Jesus defines discipleship

Mark 8:27-38



DAY 1

Follow Jesus because He is the Messiah • Mark 8:27-29

READ

Mark 8:27-38

EXPLAIN

The truth of Mark 8:27-29

Who do you say Jesus is? The people believed Jesus was one of the prophets returned from the dead (Luke 9:19). Jesus was, in fact, like several prophets. Like John the Baptist, Jesus proclaimed repentance and the kingdom of God (Matt 3:2; 4:17; 14:2). Like Elijah and his successor, Elisha, Jesus miraculously fed people (John 6; 1 Kgs 17:9-16; 2 Kgs 4:42-44). Jesus and Elijah both saved a Gentile woman's child near Sidon (Mark 7:24-30; 1 Kgs 17:9, 23), and Jesus and Elisha both raised an only son from the dead beside the Hill of Moreh (Luke 7:11-16; 2 Kgs 4:8-37). But while many people respected Jesus as a good teacher, most did not honor and obey Him as someone much greater than the prophets. But the disciples did honor Him. Peter called Jesus the **Christ**, the Greek word for **Messiah**. There had been others who were called anointed one, someone set apart for God and empowered by God to do a special task (Exod 29:7; 1 Sam 16:13; Ps 105:15). But Peter rightly called Jesus the Messiah, the promised Savior and King (Isa 61:1; Jer 23:5).

ASK

1. Who did the people say Jesus was? *John the Baptist, Elijah, or one of the prophets. Jesus was a prophet, but He was much more than a prophet.*
2. Did most people believe Jesus was the Messiah? *No. Many people respected Jesus as a good teacher, but most did not give Him the honor and obedience He deserved.*
3. Who did Peter say Jesus was? *The Christ, which means the Messiah, the anointed one, the Savior and King.*
4. What does "Christ" mean? *It's the Greek word for Messiah. It means anointed one, someone set apart for God and empowered by God to do a special task.*

DISCUSS

1. How would you answer Jesus' question in Mark 8:27? Why is your answer to this question so important (Rom 10:9)? ?
2. What is the difference between respecting Jesus as a good teacher and honoring Him as Messiah?

DAY 2

Follow Jesus because He died to conquer death • Mark 8:30–33

READ

Mark 8:27–38

EXPLAIN

The truth of Mark 8:30–33

Why did Jesus tell the disciples to be silent? It was because they still did not understand the Messiah's mission. Jesus did not want them spreading the wrong message and drawing people to a false gospel. So from this point on in the gospel of Mark, Jesus repeatedly taught His disciples about His mission as the Messiah. He explained that He had the most painful mission set before Him. This mission was not what the disciples expected. Peter even tried to pull Jesus quietly aside to set Him straight! The disciples were so stunned that they didn't pay any attention to the last part: after three days Jesus would rise again (cf. Luke 24:6–7, 46)! Through rejection would come victory, and through death would come glorious life. With His heart fixed on this joy (Heb 12:2), Jesus firmly resisted Satan's temptation through Peter (cf. Matt 4:9). In fact, while Peter hoped to quietly rebuke Him in private, Jesus turned and spoke for all the disciples to hear: God has chosen victory through sacrifice, and anyone who wants to skip the sacrifice is siding with Satan.

ASK

1. Why did Jesus tell the disciples not to tell anyone that He was the Messiah?
The disciples didn't properly understand the Messiah's mission.
2. What did Jesus say would happen to Him?
He would be rejected and killed before rising from the dead.
3. What did Peter do when Jesus said He would suffer and die?
Peter tried to rebuke Jesus. He wanted to do things the human way, without humility and sacrifice.

DISCUSS

1. Why did Jesus have to suffer and die before rising from the dead in victory (Isa 53:5–6; Rom 3:24–26; 2 Cor 5:21)?
2. Why is it best to follow God's plan and not your own judgment (Prov 3:5–8; 14:12; Jer 17:9)?

DAY 3

Follow Jesus, not yourself • Mark 8:34

READ

Mark 8:27–38

EXPLAIN

The truth of Mark 8:34

Do you want to follow Jesus? Following Jesus means going where He goes (1 John 2:6). Since Jesus went through rejection, suffering, and death, you can only follow Him if you are willing to go through rejection, suffering, and death too (1 Pet 2:21). Since the Messiah made Himself *humble*, you must also make yourself *low and empty* (Phil 2:5–7). You must *deny yourself: stop exalting yourself, stop trusting in yourself, and stop*

pleasing yourself. Instead, you must be full of Christ, consider Him great, trust His way, and do what pleases Him. Like Jesus, you must **take up your cross**. This is not talking about enduring the troubles that come to all people. It pictures the death march of a prisoner carrying the cross beam to the place of his own crucifixion. It is extreme sacrifice. It may require death itself. But included in death is giving up everything that life on earth includes—your comforts, advantages, reputation, security, possessions, and pleasures. Jesus isn't just saying, "Be prepared to take up your cross." He's saying, "Take it up, and do it now!" Live as one who has already died.

DAY 3 CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE

ASK 

1. If you want to follow Jesus, what do you have to do?

Live like Jesus did: deny myself, take up my cross, and go where Jesus went, through rejection, suffering, and death.

2. What does it mean to deny yourself?

It means to humble myself. To stop exalting myself, stop trusting myself, and stop pleasing myself.

3. What did Jesus mean by “take up your cross”?

It means giving up both your honor and your life.

DISCUSS 

1. As the world turns more and more away from God, what might people do you for being faithful to Jesus?
2. Which is more difficult: To say you’re willing to die for Jesus, or to actually live for Him?

DAY 4

Follow Jesus and live with Him forever • Mark 8:35–38

READ 

Mark 8:27–38

EXPLAIN **The truth of Mark 8:35–38**

Is following Jesus really worth it? Of course it is! Anyone who truly knows Jesus understands this. The cost of not following Jesus is much greater than the cost of following Him. If you do not follow, you will lose your soul, which lasts forever and is more valuable than anything in this passing world. If you seek after the things of this world—getting things, enjoying comfort, receiving praise—you will not get eternal life. If you try to be welcomed and accepted by people in this world, Jesus will not welcome and accept when He comes back as King to rule in the next world (Dan 7:13–14). But if you surrender your life for the sake of Jesus, you will enjoy life with Jesus forever. So die to yourself today and find great joy. As you share in Christ’s suffering, you will know the joy of His Spirit in you now, and in the future you will rejoice when His glory is revealed (1 Pet 4:12–14). If you suffer with Him, you will also be glorified with Him (Rom 8:17).

ASK 

1. Is following Jesus worth it?
Yes! True life with Jesus is worth more than having the whole world.
2. What is more valuable than anything you can get in this world?
My soul.
3. What does it mean to lose your life?
It means living as if I have already died. It means giving up control to Jesus instead of living for myself.
4. If you choose to honor yourself instead of Jesus, what will Jesus do to you?
He will keep me out of His glorious kingdom.

DISCUSS 

1. What is friendship with the world? Can you be a friend of the world and a friend of God (Jas 4:4)?
2. Do you think heaven will be worth the cost of following Jesus? What will it be like (Rev 21:1–22:5)? What will be the best part about heaven (21:3, 22)?

DAY 5

Follow Paul as he follows Jesus • Philippians 3:7–8

READ

Philippians 3:1–11

EXPLAIN

The truth of Philippians 3:7–8

The apostle Paul was a true disciple of Jesus Christ. He was humble, making himself nothing and willing to endure ridicule for the sake of Christ (1 Cor 4:13). He was a follower, patiently waiting for God’s call and ministry assignment (Acts 16:6–10). He took up his cross by giving up all his Jewish religious achievements, for he knew they were worthless in God’s sight (Phil 3:4–6; Luke 18:9–14). He counted everything as loss and considered all things “rubbish” (garbage, waste, dung, manure) because he had found something of far greater value: “knowing Christ Jesus [his] Lord” (Phil 3:8). Because nothing made Paul happier than knowing his Savior, he was willing to give up anything that would get in the way of his relationship with Jesus. He was even willing to go through hardship and persecution for the cause of Christ (2 Cor 11:23–28). In the end, he offered up his life itself as a sacrifice in the name of Jesus (2 Tim 4:6). What a faithful Christian! May we follow him as he followed Christ (1 Cor 11:1).

ASK

1. How was Paul a true disciple of Christ?
He was humble, he followed Christ, and he took up his cross.
2. What did Paul count as loss?
Everything, even his Jewish religious credentials.
3. Why did Paul count everything as loss?
Because he had found something worth far more: knowing Christ Jesus.
4. Was there anything that came between Paul and Christ?
No. Paul was willing to part with anything that might hinder his relationship with Christ.

DISCUSS

1. How do other Christians encourage us to obey more faithfully? Who can you follow as they follow Christ?
2. What are some things you are still trying to hang on to that are keeping you from a closer relationship with Jesus?

NEXT WEEK

Jesus is gloriously transfigured

Luke 9:27–36

