

INTRO

- What is a goal you've pursued that required sacrifice? Describe the sacrifice.

This marks the halfway point in the Gospel of Mark. In the first half, Jesus told people to follow him. Now, he begins to explain what that means as he gives more details about his mission. Today, we look at what it means to follow Jesus.

READ

Mark 8:27-38 (read it in 3 sections as per below)

REFLECT**REVELATION OF JESUS - Mk 8:27-30**

"But who do you say that I am?" Is the question we are all confronted with and need to answer.

Qu: How do people answer that question today? What is your answer to Jesus' question?

Qu: in v30 Jesus strictly tells them not to tell anyone about him. Why? Does this apply to us today? why/why not?

RECOGNITION OF HIS MISSION - Mk 8:31-33

Peter's confession ('you are the Christ') is correct but incomplete.

Qu: why do you think Peter rebukes Jesus?

The disciples understanding of the Messiah simply didn't include the idea of a suffering servant. The scope of Jesus' mission is far deeper and broader than they can comprehend.

Qu: why do you think Jesus rebukes Peter?

Jesus hears a familiar voice in Peter's words—echoes of another temptation to take an easier path, to have a kingdom without a cross.

Peter is a picture of following Jesus—some days we get it really right, and other days horribly wrong!

Therefore, we must cultivate the discipline of setting our minds on the things of God.

Qu: what does setting your mind on the things of God mean?

RESPONSE TO JESUS - Mk 8:34-38

In v34 Jesus explicitly outlines HOW we are to follow him: Say NO, Say YES, Repeat.

Say No (deny self)

Qu: what does it mean to deny yourself?

Self denial means turning from the idol of self where we are at the centre of our lives.

Say Yes (take up your cross)

Cross bearing was a shocking and offensive metaphor for Jesus to use as a picture of following him. To "take up your cross" meant death and was to demonstrate publicly one's submission and obedience to the ruling authority against which one had previously rebelled.

Qu: what does it mean for you to take up your cross in following Jesus?

Jesus in effect is saying that for those who wish to follow him, the proper response is to take up their cross (not His)—to demonstrate submission to Jesus authority and to follow in his will and way whilst accepting the consequences, for the sake of Jesus and the gospel.

Repeat (follow Jesus).

Qu: think of a goal or something that is meaningful to you. Where have you had to say no & yes in pursuit of it? How is this similar in our need to say no/yes in following Jesus?

RESPOND

- What encouraged and challenged you the most out of today's discussion?
- How can you practically apply what you're learning to your personal life?

PRAY

- Pray for one another and (re) introduce the PEBCI card.