

# Sermon Based Small Group: Mark 8:27-38

## More. Jesus... Dying to Live

### Introduction

- There are moments that define our lives; meeting our spouse, education, an event. Talk about one of your defining moments.
- Mel joked how when he was younger, he didn't get out much. Where is your favourite place to go?

### Reviewing the Teaching

- Mark has a lot of drama. Today that is true again. Read Mark 8:31-38.
- What stood out to you as a potentially significant takeaway in this week's teaching?
  - Why did it stand out?
  - How does it relate to you in your life situation now?
- There are three Acts in the book of Mark; Who is Jesus, What's his mission, and Executing the Mission. In each of these acts there is a failure; failure to see, failure to accept, failure to follow. Where do you think you're at?
- The **Elements** of this Watershed Encounter
  - What is the significance of Jesus making this announcement in Caesarea Philippi? What two events had happened there? Is this an interesting place to start on the way to Jerusalem?
    - The big question! Up to this point, Mark has been answering this question, "Who am I?". What are the significance of the answers?
    - Pastor Mel talked about the two blind men being healed (8:22-26 and 10:49-52). What is different about these two healings? How do they relate to our spiritual sight?
    - How does Peter's response to Jesus' coming sufferings relate to these two healings?
    - Daniel 7:13, 14 refers to the son of man. Remember how Caesarea Philippi ties into Daniel. Who is Jesus' claiming to be **without any uncertainty**?
    - Mark 8:31 connects the Son of Man with the Suffering Servant. Were the disciples ready for this connection?
    - The problem with being short-sighted is that you trip. How and why did Peter trip? Peter rebukes God! How did Jesus respond? This is the DTR moment (Defining the Relationship).
    - "Will I see this in light of what God wants for me or in light of what I want God to want for me?"
  - Is it true that we think that we know what we need from God? Or, putting it another way, is it reasonable for us to think that God should want for us what we want for us?
  - "The gospel is that Jesus died and "lost" in order to win our salvation. Therefore, true liberation is submission to him; true righteousness comes to those repenting and admitting they have none of their own; true power comes to those who serve and love and empower others." (Keller p. 96)
    - How do humility, repentance and service fit into our vision of success and power?
- The **Essence** of this Watershed Choice – the choice that defines whether we will trip over Jesus or build on Jesus.

- The essence is to give up our agenda and to take up Christ's agenda.
- Pastor Mel talked about self-centeredness and self esteem? On a scale of 1 - 10, how would you rate self-centeredness in our society? Why?
- Talk about the phrase, "it is not about thinking more or less of myself, IT IS ABOUT THINKING ABOUT MYSELF LESS!"
  - Are you in? Are you ready to trade in your death-bound life for His life for us?
  - Another way to put it is to "get over yourself!"
- Why would you want to do what Jesus says? Is there a bigger yes?
  - Read Ephesians 3:17b-19. Does this help?
  - Will Walker wrote, "*The norm in our culture is to sacrifice whatever we have to get what we want. The way of true sanctification is to sacrifice everything we want because of what we already have in Christ.*" Journey to the Cross)
  - We have two choices:
    - Am I dying to live?
    - Am I dying to life...true life?

### Digging Deeper

- The first half of Mark explains who Jesus is. As it ends in verses 27 to 30, Peter says, "Thou art the Christ." or You are the God, the Messiah. With that in mind, do the following verses (31-38) make sense? Put yourself in Peter's shoes as he responded to Jesus' announcement. How would you respond?
- Read Mark 8:31. No metaphor, no allusion, read my lips – Jesus is direct about this call. Are these the hardest words for you to follow in Scripture? If not – what are?
- Mark 8:31 marks the change from the first to the second half of Mark's Gospel.
 

*Now that Jesus is revealing more explicit details about his mission, he also reveals more explicit details about what it means to follow him. In the first half, he told people to follow him (1:17-18, 20; 2:14-15), but now he begins to explain what that following entails. As Jesus takes up a cross, we must also. As the cross and glory are linked in Jesus' life, so the cross and glory will be linked in our lives. That is the surprising theme that is introduced to us in the second half of Mark, beginning here. (Keller, "The Gospel of Mark", p. 95)*
- Spiritual Disciplines are the things we do to grow spiritually. Read verse 34 again. Some people say that this is THE CORE SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE.
  - Does that sound like it might be true?
  - Jesus does not seem to be suggesting suicide here. What does He mean to die to live?
  - What would that mean practically?
- Verses 36 to 38 have some comparisons. Pick one of these and talk about it. What is the trade? What are the options?
- A great spiritual discipline is to memorize the Bible. We often think of that for kids. Here is a **challenge**. Start with verse 34 and memorize each verse. Then start back at verse 31 and memorize the whole passage, Mark 8:31-38. Take some time to do this so that it not only gets etched into your brain, but also into your heart.

### Applying it to Life

- Sower, Seed, Soil: God, Word, Heart. In the last few weeks we have been challenged to invite people to church. There is a second invitation we can make. We can invite God to work His Word into our open heart. How would that look for you?
- We all experience gaps between our reality and our expectation. What are your gaps? What are your gaps with Jesus?
- Where does Jesus fit for you? Is He your tripping point or your building point?
- It can be difficult to give something up for God. Do you see a better "Yes" in Jesus?

- Some of us fall into the ditch of self-hate. Some of us fall into the other ditch of self-love. What is a better way to live (self-forgetfulness)? How do we get there?
- Dying to yourself shows up in everyday relationships. We do not give in to the other, but to Jesus. What will this look like?