

Mark 8:34-38 — "Demand of Discipleship: It'll Cost You Everything!"

When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die (Dietrich Bonhoeffer)

If you are to become a disciple of Christ, your entire life will no longer be YOUR life. Your whole existence belongs to HIM. Your time will no longer be your time. Instead, it will be HIS time to be used for HIS purposes. Your talents will no longer be your talents. Rather, they will become his and used for his purposes. Your treasure will no longer be your treasure, but simply entrusted to you for this brief time of your life. You must recognize that all that you have must be seen as His assets (Steve Lawson)

Discipleship means forsaking everything to follow Christ.

Elements of Discipleship

-OBEDIENCE - I will obey my Master

-REPENTANCE - I will renounce sin

-SUBMISSION - I will surrender to my new Lord

-COMMITMENT - I am wholly committed to him for life

-PERSEVERANCE - not just a door to enter, but a road to walk on.

We follow Jesus to the end. (James Montgomery Boice)

Background to Mark 8 and context:

- Mark 8-9 overview:
 - the RECOGNITION of the Christ (8:27-30)
 - the REJECTION of the Christ (8:31-33)
 - **the REQUIREMENTS of the Christ (8:34-38)**
 - the RADIANCE of the Christ (9:1-13)

THESIS — To follow Christ means it'll cost you everything.

I. WHAT IS A DISCIPLE? (34)

1. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP IS: *AVAILABLE TO ALL* (34a)
2. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP IS: *EXCLUSIVE* (34b)
3. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP IS: *SELF-DENIAL* (34c)
4. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP IS: *NO TURNING BACK* (34d)
5. TRUE DISCIPLESHIP IS: *LIFELONG* (34e)

II. WHAT DOES JESUS DEMAND? (35-38)

What does he demand?

Jesus will explain true discipleship with "demands". He does it in the form of giving you "reasons", further clarifications — indeed, they are motivations. These are Urgent, persuasive, motivational, clarifying, unconditional.

(1) Unconditional Surrender - Surrender Your life; save your soul! v.35

(2) Unimaginable Gain - v.36

To lose our life for CHRIST means: "Us to sacrifice a LESSER GOOD so that we can SECURE AN INFINITELY GREATER GOOD. Those who have NOT gained Christ, have lost everything! (W.H. VanDoren)

(3) Urgent Decisionmaking - exchange for the soul. v.37

(4) Unashamed Allegiance v.38

Somebody asked Dr. Tozer, "What does it mean to take up your cross? What does it mean to be crucified with Christ?" He said, "Three things. Number one: a man who is crucified is facing only one way. Number two: a man who is crucified is not going back. He has said goodbye. He is not going back. And number three: he has no further plans of his own.

Very practically, what does it mean to DENY self as a disciple of Christ?

1. When you're forgotten or neglected, you don't dwell on the insult but your heart is happy to reside In Christ (without public applause).
2. When your good is spoken of as evil and your wishes are neglected, and your advice is disregarded — that is denying self.

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3. When you are content with any food, any offering, any clothing, any climate, any society/culture and any interruption by the sovereign will and perfect providence of God — this is denying self.
4. When you loving, patiently bear any disorder or irregularity or any annoyance — when you come face to face with it — this is denying self.
5. When you don't refer to yourself in conversations or seek to take the attention and put it on self (or be the centerpoint), nor do you wish to record your own good works, or seek after applause/commendation, and when you can truly love to go unknown, unnoticed, unapplauded and unrewarded — then you are dying to self.
6. When you can see your brethren have their needs met and you can honestly rejoice at their rejoicings and feel NO envy toward them, nor do you question God and you can submit to God's wise and timely and Father-like care of you in a tough and more desperate situation, this is Denial of SELF.
7. When you can receive correction and reproof from someone of less stature than yourself, and you humbly submit to it, with no rebellion, no resentment, no pride, no arrogance — this is denying self.

— Bill Britton, "Dethrone the King: Dying to Self"

TAKE UP THE CROSS

Tune: *When I survey the wondrous cross*

"Take up your cross," the Savior said,
 "if you would my disciple be;
 take up your cross with willing heart,
 and humbly follow after me."

Take up your cross; let not its weight
 fill your weak spirit with alarm;
 Christ's strength shall bear your spirit up
 and brace your heart and nerve your arm.

Take up your cross, heed not the shame,
 and let your foolish heart be still;
 the Lord for you accepted death
 upon a cross, on Calv'ry's hill.

Take up your cross, then, in Christ's strength,
 and calmly ev'ry danger brave:
 it guides you to abundant life
 and leads to vict'ry o'er the grave.

JESUS I MY CROSS HAVE TAKEN

Jesus, I my cross have taken,
 all to leave and follow thee;
 destitute, despised, forsaken,
 thou from hence my all shalt be.
 Perish ev'ry fond ambition,
 all I've sought or hoped or known;
 yet how rich is my condition,
 God and heav'n are still my own.

Let the world despise and leave me,
 they have left my Savior too;
 human hearts and looks deceive me;
 thou art not, like man, untrue;
 and, while thou shalt smile upon me,
 God of wisdom, love, and might,
 foes may hate and friends may shun me;
 show thy face, and all is bright.

Man may trouble and distress me,
 'twill but drive me to thy breast;
 life with trials hard may press me,
 heav'n will bring me sweeter rest.
 O 'tis not in grief to harm me
 while thy love is left to me;
 O 'twere not in joy to charm me,
 were that joy unmixed with thee.

Hasten on from grace to glory,
 armed by faith and winged by prayer;
 heav'n's eternal day's before thee,
 God's own hand shall guide thee there.
 Soon shall close thy earthly mission,
 swift shall pass thy pilgrim days;
 hope soon change to glad fruition,
 faith to sight, and prayer to praise.

AM I A SOLDIER OF THE CROSS?

Tune: *O for a thousand tongues to sing*

Am I a soldier of the cross,
 A follower of the Lamb,
 And shall I fear to own His cause,
 Or blush to speak His Name?

Must I be carried to the skies
 On flowery beds of ease,
 While others fought to win the prize,
 And sailed through bloody seas?

Are there no foes for me to face?
 Must I not stem the flood?
 Is this vile world a friend to grace,
 To help me on to God?

Sure I must fight if I would reign;
 Increase my courage, Lord.
 I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
 Supported by Thy Word.

Thy saints in all this glorious war
 Shall conquer, though they die;
 They see the triumph from afar,
 By faith's discerning eye.

When that illustrious day shall rise,
 And all Thy armies shine
 In robes of victory through the skies,
 The glory shall be Thine.