

Discussion Guide

Week of March 17, 2013

Mark 8:27–9:1

Passage Overview:

If the first half of Mark's gospel (1:1–8:26) shows us Jesus' messianic power and authority, the second half records the testing of Jesus' claim to be the Messiah. Specifically, in Mark 8:27–33, Jesus teaches his disciples that the Messiah of God must die and be raised again. To Peter and the disciples, the Messiah, or "Christ," is God's anointed leader for his people, sent to deliver the Jewish people from Roman occupation; however, Jesus explains that the Messiah will accomplish something different in an unexpected way—death and resurrection. Mark 8:27–10:52 contains three predictions of Jesus' death and resurrection, each of which also point to the lives of Christ's followers and the true cost of discipleship.

Understanding God's Word—Read Mark 8:27–9:1.

- The messiah was expected to be a political leader who would save Israel from Rome. What does Jesus say to contradict this expectation (v31)?
- Why does Peter take Jesus aside to "rebuke him"? What does Jesus highlight in his response to Peter (vv34–38)?

Living and Applying God's Word

- Peter's response to Jesus' question ("Who do you say that I am?") is both God-given (Matt 16:17) and incomplete (Mk 8:31–33). How is Peter right to call Jesus the Christ? What does he not understand? What does this say about the nature of Jesus' messianic rule (*hint: think in terms of its inauguration*)?
- Mark 8:34–38 focuses on the cost of discipleship. What does following Christ look like, especially in light of the very example Jesus will set?
- Verse 35 examines two ways of living, using two verbs differently: to "save" and "lose" life.
 - How is the first reference to *saving* one's life different than the second?
 - How is the first reference to *losing* one's life different than the second?

Turning to God in Faith and Repentance

- Like the disciples, we too are prone to have an incomplete understanding of Christ. Some think of Christ as a social revolutionary without considering the necessity and meaning of his death and resurrection. Others think of Christ as the sacrifice for sins without seeing him as the anointed leader of God's people and restorer of Creation. Which perception are you prone to? How can you see Christ more rightly?
- Peter rebukes Jesus' understanding of the messiah and betrays a sense of shame and even anger for Jesus' unexpected prediction of death. How are we prone to feeling ashamed of Christ? To wrongly assume Christ will meet *our* expectations of him? How does v38 help correct this?

Prayer:

Pray for the needs of your group. Pray especially for boldness and confidence in Christ, our Savior-King, that we would see him as he is and not project onto him false expectations. Pray also for the Barkhouse family serving in Kosovo.

Announcements

- Ladies' Lunch (March 19 @ noon) (sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com)
- Midweek Fellowship (March 20 @ 5:45 p.m.) (sigourney@insidecrosspointe.com)
- Children's Ministry Volunteer Training (March 24 @ 9 a.m.) (christy@insidecrosspointe.com)
- Baptism (Easter Sunday, March 31) (wayne@insidecrosspointe.com)