

When the Going Gets Tough - Understand the Cost

Why should I expect following Jesus to be costly?

Just for fun: What do you do when someone says something you do not want to hear?

Read Mark 8:27-38

When the Going Gets Tough - Remember WHO You Are Following (Mark 8:27-30)

1. People can get lured into following the wrong voice. Jesus asked, "Who do you say that I am?" What answers had been given up to this point in His ministry... and considering those responses, who shouldn't we be looking to follow?

Look up:	Mark 3:21-22	not someone who...
	" 4:41	not just because someone does...
	" 6:3	not a mere...
	" 6:14-15	not...

2. Discuss how Christians can get caught up in following "the wrong voice(s)" instead of Christ? (share from personal experiences if you can)

When The Going Gets Tough - Remember Christ's Example

Suffering or Overcoming (Read Mark 8:31)

Jesus said He must suffer "many things" and be _____ ... and that He must be _____ and after three days _____."

1. In what ways do we/you share in Christ's sufferings today because of our/your commitment to Jesus? (among family, at work, acquaintances, etc.)
2. How do you think Jesus' *knowledge of His resurrection* affected His commitment and ability to endure the suffering that preceded it?

Do you think most of us probably focus more on our "sufferings" rather than our "ultimate victory" (heaven)? If so, is that wrong?

How might focusing on our victory affect our perspective when we suffer because of our commitment to Christ? (Can the weight of any suffering we might experience because of our commitment to Christ even come close to the glory that awaits us in the resurrected life?)

Commitment or Compromise (Read 8:32-33)

1. What are the chances that Christ was resisting Satan's temptation *to compromise doing the Father's will* when He rebuked Peter? Do you think this statement was addressed to Satan and/or Peter?
2. From personal experience, can you share a time when you were tempted to compromise what you knew was God's will for your life?

Presently, are any of us facing a temptation to compromise doing what we know to be God's will . . . something that we might pray about?

When the Going Gets Tough - Say No to Self and Yes to God (Mark 8:34-38)

1. What do you stand to lose by following Christ? What do you stand to gain?
2. Discuss how missionaries have had to apply today's lesson to their lives.

Review/Personal Application

- What encouraged you most from this lesson?

Care and Prayer: How can we help one another through prayer?

- Is there any aspect(s) of self that you are struggling to overcome or die to?

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Remember the Cross - The Anchor of Our Devotion

What did Jesus do for me by dying on the cross?

Just for fun: What's something significant that you overlooked? e.g. a b-day, anniversary

READ Mark 15:16-41

Jesus Accepted a Death sentence (reread 15:21-24)

1. Why is Simon needed to carry Jesus' cross (see 14:65; 15:15,19)?

How might that have affected Simon?

Put yourself in Simon's sandals; how might you have felt?

2. Did Jesus have to die on the cross?

3. Why do you think Jesus may have refused to dull His senses as He paid the price for our salvation?

4. How do you think Jesus felt as He saw prophecy being fulfilled before His very eyes? (see Isaiah 53:12)

Jesus Endured Insults (reread 15:25-32)

1. Identify those who mocked Jesus at the site of His crucifixion? How did they mock Him? (see also Luke 23:39-43)

Share an occasion when you were insulted or ridiculed because of your following Christ?
How did you feel?

2. What can we learn from Jesus' refusal to exercise His power in the face of such vicious insults and hostility?

Jesus experienced Forsakenness (reread 15:33-34)

1. Describe in your own words what was happening at this moment.. the darkness, Jesus' emotions, what people were thinking... etc..
2. There are many people who have experienced painful abandonment in life. How can Jesus relate... what does this mean for believers (and unbelievers) today?

Jesus Showed He is God's Son (reread 15:37-39)

1. What do you think God's action of tearing the temple veil in two from top to bottom meant?

How should this affect our view of prayer, the role of the temple and the sacrificial system, our relationship with God?

Personal Application:

- What stands out most to you personally from this lesson?

Care and Prayer: How can we help one another through prayer?

- Who in your life most needs to hear that all people have access to God through Christ?
 - A family member?
 - A neighbor?
 - A coworker?
 - A friend?

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Without Compromise - Trust God to Help You

How can I avoid compromising my commitment to Jesus?

[Just for fun - If you could have any job in the world, what would it be?]

[READ Mark 10:17-31]

Evaluate Your Commitment / Surrender That Which Stands in the Way (Reread 10:17-26)

1. How does the man's question (v.17) compare with what Jesus had just taught about the kingdom(v.15)?

What was his *assumption* about how one gains the kingdom?

What is Jesus trying to *drive home* by responding to the way the man addressed Him? (v.18)

2. Jesus quizzes the man on only a partial list of the Ten Commandments (see Exodus 20). How well might the man have obeyed the ones relating directly to God?
3. Why does Jesus command the man as He does (v. 21; see also 8:34)?

What does his response reveal which had been hidden by his good works? (v. 20)

4. On what basis is it possible for anyone to receive the kingdom? (see Eph. 2:8-9)
5. What kind of person might the rich young ruler be if he lived in our world today?

Trust God / Count on His Promised Inheritance Both Now and Eternally (10:27-31)

1. By choosing his wealth over a relationship with Jesus, what was the rich man gaining? What was he losing?

2. Jesus “looked at him and loved him” and invited the man to follow him. Have you ever had to choose between material comforts and Christ’s love? If so when?

3. Are you more like the rich young man or the children (vv.13-16) in terms of the way you approach God? Why?

4. How is the promise (vv. 29-30) to come true for believers?

How have you experienced the gift of the kingdom as described in these verses?

Review/Personal Application

- What did I learn that I can use today?

Care and Prayer: How can we help one another through prayer?

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Signs of the End Times - Stay Focused

What's so important about the 'end times'?

*Bible truth: Jesus calls believers to follow Him boldly even when their faith is tested by unsettling events

Just for fun: If you could take 2 things with you to heaven, what would they be?

READ: Mark 13:3-13: 32-37

Don't Be Fooled by Unsettling Events (reread Mark 13:5-8)

1. What events are listed that tell of the end times?
2. Why do you suppose Jesus warned His disciples about difficult times ahead?
3. How does alarm over world situations and tragedies manifest itself *in your life*?

Why do you think Jesus tells us not to be "alarmed"?

Depend on the Holy Spirit (reread 13:9-11)

1. Why do you think God allows His people to experience the embarrassment , pain, and suffering of persecution?

What do you think is the significance of Jesus' statement in verse 10?

Do you think it is possible that believers could hasten the coming of Christ by being more active in preaching the gospel to all nations? Why or why not?

2. What comfort and advocate will aid them (us) to endure their (our) trials? How . . . share an experience.

How could this promise (v. 11) cause "carelessness" in our Christian trials/witness?

Live in Light of the Lord's Promise (reread 13:12-13)

1. What comfort and confidence can you draw from this promise?
2. How should believers relate to family members who are openly hostile to them because of their commitment to Christ?

Stay Alert (reread 13:35-37)

1. Why do you suppose the Father has kept the time of Christ's return a secret (v.32)?
2. What is the point of "staying alert"... what is Jesus trying to communicate through this example?

Review/Personal Application:

- What are some ways that believers can remain alert for the coming of the Lord?

Care and Prayer: How can we help one another through prayer?

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Jesus Lives

How should that make a difference in my life?

Ice Breaker: Share the most important thing that has happened to you this week.

READ 1 Corinthians 15:1-20

Easter Is About Salvation; Jesus Paved The Way (reread 15:1-8)

5. Paul assures us that many people saw Jesus after His resurrection. Who were they? How were they affected by His rising from the dead?

6. Discuss what importance the resurrection of Jesus has when comparing Christianity with other religions.

7. Why is it important that we have regular “reminders” of the truths of the Gospel?

8. What are some of the struggles or challenges we are dealing with? How can we encourage one another through the reality of the resurrected Christ “living in you”?

Easter Is About Hope (reread 15:9-20)

1. There are those in Corinth who were teaching that there is no resurrection. List the consequences Paul gives regarding those who deny the resurrection.

2. How might we use these scriptures to minister to an unbeliever?

3. In verse 20 Christ is referred to as the “first fruits”, i.e. Christ’s resurrection is representative of believers’ future resurrection. From what we know, what will it be like?

Wrap Up:

- Are there any needs you have not mentioned that we can take in prayer to the God of hope today?

- What unbeliever has God put on your heart to lift up in prayer today?

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