

## **Jesus' Life as a Ransom for Many**

Mark 8:31 – 10:52

KV: 10:45

“For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

### Introduction

The theme of this year's 2021 GLEF conference is Jesus' leadership and servanthip in the gospel of Mark. We will see how exactly Jesus served and led his disciples and the people. GLEF has been for the next generation of Christian believers in UBF. As you may have guessed, leadership and servanthip are two qualities we want to instill in our growing brothers and sisters. In order to be a good spiritual influence in today's world, we need to develop these qualities. And who better to learn them from than Christ himself?

From Mark chapters 8 through 10, we will see how Jesus led his disciples in their spiritual journey by leading them by his serving. We too can serve the people of today's generation and lead them to the truth in the gospel. So let us learn from Jesus' example, to serve and lead in a way that the spiritual community as a whole can mature and receive much grace in the midst of challenges in their lives of faith.

### Part 1: Jesus' Leadership and Servanthip (Mark 8 – 10)

Jesus led by example. He was God Himself who dedicated his life to serving people on earth. We can see the many ways in which Jesus served sinners. They were by teaching them the truth, healing them of their sicknesses, and most importantly by dying for them.

First, let's see how Jesus served by teaching. He served the disciples and the people by giving them truth. We can see that Jesus taught the way of the cross in Mark 8:34, let's read together, “Then he called the crowd to him along with his disciples and said: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me.”” The disciples had dreams of their own but Jesus served them by showing them that to be a true disciple, they must deny themselves, take up their cross, and follow him. Let's read 8:35 together, “For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it.” The disciples wanted to save their life. We can see that Peter tried to maintain his life and his dream by telling Jesus that he did not have to die. When Jesus predicted his death for the first time, Peter protested in verse 32. However, by laying down their life for the gospel, the disciples could find true life in Jesus.

Jesus served the crowd and the disciples with the truth. As a result, they can be led on the right path to truth and life. Furthermore, through his serving, Jesus leads us to do the same by sharing the truth to many lost sheep. As ambassadors for Christ, we are called to go out and teach others the way to the cross. In today's generation, there are many people who do not have the word of God in their hearts; they do not know the way of the cross. They simply want to save and maintain their worldly lives, only to work and make lots of money in order to live an easy life that is filled with opportunities to gratify all kinds of desires and pleasures. As a result, they are bound by the power of sin and death. We can serve them by teaching them the truth that they will eventually lose life if they try to save their life. But if they lose their life of selfishness and self-gratification, they could live for God and find true life.

Let us see how Jesus served by healing the sick. Jesus is the healer who healed all kinds of diseases. In Mark 9:25 and Mark 10:52, we see two instances where Jesus healed the sick. Let's read Mark 9:25, "When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.'" Here Jesus healed a boy possessed by an impure spirit which robbed him of hearing and speech. Now let's read Mark 10:52, "'Go," said Jesus, "your faith has healed you." Immediately he received his sight and followed Jesus along the road." Here Jesus healed blind Bartimaeus to restore his sight.

Through Jesus' healing, we can see his compassionate heart. Jesus loved the boy possessed by an impure spirit and he loved blind Bartimaeus. Through his healing, Jesus leads us to exercise love and compassion for others. In today's time, we have medicine that can cure diseases and sicknesses. But there are other types of ailments in the world. Ailments of the heart and mind. Each of us has experienced sadness, frustration, distress, and all kinds of emotions. We must follow Jesus' lead and exercise compassion, especially in the church. We are so pre-occupied with our own troubles and responsibilities that we do not see the struggles of our brothers and sisters. Let us look beyond our own problems and give notice to those who are in need and offer our love and compassion. Furthermore, there are many who are afflicted by the sickness of sin. Often times we are indifferent to other people's ailments caused by sin. But let us follow Jesus' example of serving the sick with healing. We can serve sinners with the healing power of the gospel, helping them to experience Jesus' restoration from sin and all of its wounds.

Let us read Mark 10:45, "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many." Jesus served by offering up himself as a ransom sacrifice for many. The main reason Jesus came to the world is to execute God's gospel work of saving sinners. Three times, Jesus predicted his death. Let's look at Mark 8:31, "He then began to teach them that the Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and that he must be killed and after three days rise again." Then let's look at Mark 9:31 starting from "He", "He said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men. They will kill him, and after three days he will rise.'" And finally, let's look at Mark 10:33 – 34, "We are going up to Jerusalem," he said, "and the Son of Man will be delivered over to the chief priests and the teachers of the law. They will condemn him to death and will hand him over to the Gentiles, who will mock him and spit on him, flog him and kill him. Three days later he will rise.'" "

Jesus served sinners by taking the punishment for sins upon himself on the cross. Who could help us sinners who are condemned and subject to God's wrath? Who could rescue us from God's righteous judgement? It is Jesus. But did Jesus need to stoop down and experience the terrible consequences of sin for us? No. Then why did he do this? It is because Jesus is the humble king who took the role of a servant and served sinners by bearing all of their deserved punishment upon himself. How could someone do such a thing? It is because of his love and compassion for sinners.

How is Jesus leading us through his serving of giving his life as a ransom for many? It is a matter of dealing with others' sin. In our lives we may be hurt many times by other people, including by our family and friends. It may be wrongful too. In this case, we could get angry

and want to exercise our rite to pay back. On the other hand, when we sin against God, God has the right to pay back for our wrongdoing. But he refrained from passing judgement and instead brought the punishment upon Himself on the cross. In this way He forgave our sins. Likewise, instead of paying back others for their sins against us, we can follow Jesus' example of exercising love, compassion, and forgiveness.

### Part 2: Jesus Heals a Boy Possessed by an Impure Spirit (Mark 9:14 – 29)

In Mark 9, we see an interesting situation where Jesus' disciples failed to drive out an impure spirit from a boy and Jesus had to intervene. Let us read 9:17-18 together, "A man in the crowd answered, "Teacher, I brought you my son, who is possessed by a spirit that has robbed him of speech. Whenever it seizes him, it throws him to the ground. He foams at the mouth, gnashes his teeth and becomes rigid. I asked your disciples to drive out the spirit, but they could not.""

Here we see Jesus' leadership and servanthip being demonstrated in multiple aspects. The setting of this event shows a father seeking help for his son who is possessed by an impure spirit. We see several problems in this scene. First is the obvious, which is that a boy is possessed by an impure spirit. But there are even deeper problems with other people here, namely the disciples and the boy's father.

When the disciples tried to cast out the impure spirit from the boy, they were unable. Their problem was two folded. First, they lacked faith and second, we can see later that they lacked prayer. Jesus was very upset about their lack of faith saying in 9:19, "How long shall I stay with you? How long shall I put up with you?" The father, on the other hand, did not even fully believe that Jesus, the Son of God, could drive out the impure spirit from his son. In 9:22b, he came to Jesus and said, "But if you can do anything, take pity on us and help us." Who comes to Almighty God and says, "If you can..."? This unbelieving generation was a lot for Jesus to put up with. Yet, Jesus served the boy's father by helping him to strengthen his weak faith. Let's read 9:23 - 25, "'If you can'?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes." Immediately the boy's father exclaimed, "I do believe; help me overcome my unbelief!" When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to the scene, he rebuked the impure spirit. "You deaf and mute spirit," he said, "I command you, come out of him and never enter him again.""

When Jesus rebuked the people by calling them an unbelieving generation, he may also be talking to the generation of today. We easily become discouraged, we easily become depressed from the challenges and struggles in our everyday lives. And then we complain and become frustrated and angry. How unbelieving this generation is. But everything is possible for one who believes. Let us receive Jesus' encouragement and be challenged to strengthen our faith in our everyday lives. Let us not follow the ways of this world which is becoming more and more unbelieving by the day. Instead, let us follow Jesus' lead to exercise our faith by believing in his Almighty power to overcome all challenges and obstacles in our lives. Furthermore, let us take up Jesus' example of leadership and servanthip and guide others to win the victory in both their practical and spiritual lives through believing in Jesus and through believing in his Almighty power. They may be fruitful and prosperous in their spiritual lives, to overcome all of the devil's schemes, and be the salt of this generation by sharing the gospel message to all people.

Second, Jesus let the disciples know what they were lacking so that they can correct themselves and be a better spiritual influence. First it was their weak faith, and second it was their lack of prayer. Let's read 9:28-29, "After Jesus had gone indoors, his disciples asked him privately,

“Why couldn’t we drive it out?” He replied, “This kind can come out only by prayer.” Jesus prayed in solitary places. Even Jesus, who was God, prayed to God the Father. So then how much more should the disciples pray? Prayer is very important. We need prayer as it is the only way we can ask God for the necessary resources to be effective in the mission field. Perhaps if the disciples prayed, Jesus may not have had to get involved in this situation. We also have to encourage our brothers and sisters to pray. Dr. Paul tells me, “You need to pray more” in order to defend against all of Satan’s jabbing and attacks. Through prayer, God gives us proper protection and also the resources to be a good spiritual influence. We should remind each other that Jesus prayed, so we absolutely must pray because we are weak compared to Jesus. I thank Jesus who leads us with the simple direction to pray. He leads us with sound teaching that really benefits our spiritual growth.

Finally, Jesus serves the father and his boy by driving out the impure spirit. Many people came to Jesus for his healing touch. It must have been exhausting for Jesus, especially to bear at the same time the lack of maturity that the father and the disciples carried. But Jesus served them by bearing with all of their weaknesses. He did not turn away any request for help. Indeed Jesus put others before himself by exercising compassion and being considerate to their needs. We can really see how Jesus demonstrated his servanthip through the healing of this demon possessed boy.

Do we have the compassion and consideration for the lost sheep of this generation? There are many out in the world who need Jesus’ touch. It can be exhausting to care for the lost sheep, to put in much effort to try and plant the seed of faith in their hearts. Many missionaries and shepherds sacrificed a lot of time and even money to bring across the gospel message. Are we able and willing to do this in this generation? To take up the qualities of a leader and of a servant, we must put others’ needs above our own and really consider how they could improve their spiritual circumstances through accepting the gospel message in their hearts. Then we will be able to really go the extra mile to lead and serve the lost sheep of this generation.

### Part 3: The Request of James and John (Mark 10:35 – 45)

One day, as Jesus and the disciples were walking in town, two disciples came to Jesus with a bold request. They were James and John. Their request in 10:35 was, “Teacher, we want you to do for us whatever we ask.” Where could they get the audacity to ask God Almighty in this way, ‘we want you to do for us WHATEVER we ask.’ This is not the manner in which someone speaks to another who is above them. This is the manner in which masters or kings speak to their subordinates. How could James and John dare to approach Jesus like this!

But how did Jesus respond? In 10:36, Jesus said, “What do you want me to do for you?” He did not reject them, nor did he rebuke them. He received them and their request openly.

What did they want? They wanted to sit at Jesus’ right and left when he comes in his glory. This was indeed a very bold request. In response, Jesus asked in 10:38b, “Can you drink the cup I drink or be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with?” Were James and John qualified to take the positions of glory next to Jesus? Their response to Jesus’ question was equally as bold; their answer in 10:39a was “We can.” But again, Jesus did not reject them or even rebuke them. He humbly received them by saying in 10:39b - 40, “You will drink the cup I drink and be baptized with the baptism I am baptized with, but to sit at my right or left is not for me to grant. These places belong to those for whom they have been prepared.”

We can see that the brothers James and John wanted to have the positions of power. They wanted to be great. They wanted to be above others. Upon hearing what they had done, the other ten disciples were indignant. They must have been astonished! But it may have been that they also wanted what James and John wanted.

Here Jesus uses this opportunity to provide a good lesson. We see Jesus' leadership being demonstrated again through his guidance for the disciples. Spiritual life is not the same as worldly life. As a matter of fact, they may sometimes be contradicting each other. This was the case when it came to being the greatest. The disciples wanted to be great. They wanted to be sub-lords under Jesus and to receive from him authorization to exercise power. But Jesus' idea of greatness was the total opposite. To Jesus, to be great was to be the servant of all. To become great is to humble oneself.

Let's read 10: 42 - 45, "Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. **For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.**" The greatest in the universe was the humblest servant. Who is Jesus? He is the Son of God. The world should have been serving him but he served them instead. Jesus put up with the audacity of James and John. He put up with that generation for their lack of faith such as the father of the demon possessed boy and the disciples themselves. He served them with vital lessons to help them overcome their weaknesses and shortcomings to build them up to be better. Jesus never turned away anyone who approached him such as the father and his demon possessed son and also blind Bartimaeus and many more. He tirelessly attended to each individual who was suffering from an ailment and served them through healing them. Indeed we can see that in his life, Jesus did not come to be served but instead he served and gave his life as a ransom for many on the cross. Let us follow Jesus' example of leadership and servanthship.

What does it mean to serve? Have you ever served somebody? What kind of examples come into your head when you think of serving? We can think of the many examples of how missionaries in the UBF ministry served sheep. They served sheep through studying Bible with them. Studying Bible takes up quite a bit of time. One must prepare the Bible study material and one must teach and explain the material to the student. A lot of times, they cook and provide food for their sheep for free to let them feel welcomed. This takes up a lot of time and also personal resources such as money. As a result, they have less time to tend to their personal responsibilities such as work or study and have less resources to care for themselves such as having food for all three meals each day. We also hear of missionaries giving rides to guests here and there such as to the airport.

I must learn to practically serve others myself. My experience serving does not come close to that of any missionary I've met, but I do want to share one time when I witnessed others offering their service. It was after a GLEF conference in 2018, missionary James Point was offering taxi service to the JFK airport for some of the children who had taken the summer education program near Princeton. One boy from the program left for the airport to catch a flight back to his home in Korea. While missionary James was driving the boy, it was discovered that the boy forgot his

passport at the hotel at Sonesta. He only had a couple of hours to check-in at the airport so there was no way for him to get a ride back to the hotel to acquire his passport. So, in a rush, shepherd Stefan Elsholz asked me to accompany him to deliver the passport all the way to the airport, borrowing Dr. Paul Chung's car and with no EZ Pass for the highway toll; we drove on the fast lane all the way to the airport. I remember this event in vivid detail because it was such a moment of frenzy. Shepherd Stefan and I first drove to Newark airport, thinking that the flight was going to take off from there. When we arrived, we realized that it was actually at JFK airport, which is much farther away. We did not have a phone charger in the car and so my phone died, and shepherd Stefan's phone was just about to die also so we were quite desperate to maintain the battery in order to have navigation. Thankfully, we discovered that even if you turn off the mobile data, the GPS navigation will still function. So he turned off all the radio function on his phone so that we had enough battery to reach the airport, which we did. But soon after, the phone died. However, because missionary James Point was at the airport waiting for us to deliver the passport to the boy, we were able to follow him on our drive back to Sonesta. I really admired missionary James who served the children through providing rides from the hotel to the airport. I also admired shepherd Stefan who took it upon himself to make sure that the boy had his passport in order to go back home to Korea.

My point in sharing this anecdote is to highlight the fact that serving others can, a lot of times, require us to go out of our way. It can be stressful. It can consume our energy, time, and resources. But that is what Jesus did. And that is what many missionaries, shepherds, and Christians around the world are doing to build up the servant mindset that Jesus had. At first, it may seem burdensome. But after doing it, you may feel uplifted and fulfilled. It can give you much joy and satisfaction. Each and every one of us can be a servant and a leader in this generation by doing for others what Jesus did for his disciples and many more. We can lead others to life in Jesus by serving them with the gospel message. We can go out to the campus, or neighborhood, or schools, or office and lead our peers in the right direction by serving them with Bible study, or even sharing just one Bible verse with them. We can see that to serve someone is also to lead them. We have to deny ourselves, invest less time and energy in our own lives such as study or work, and give others our effort to lead them to the truth in the Word of God. So let us be a good spiritual influence among today's generation. Are you ready to serve this coming fall semester? Next gens, are you ready?

### Conclusion

In the book of Mark, we learn about the many ways in which Jesus served and led his disciples and many others. Particularly in chapters 8 through 10, we see how dull and weak the people of that generation were. We see how much Jesus had to bear with them in their shortcomings. The fact of the matter is, we are like them too and there are many more who are as well. As a result, we need to mature in our faith and spirit by listening to and following Jesus' teachings. Secondly, we need to learn how to serve and lead others so that they do not remain dull or complacent but effective workers for the gospel in this unbelieving generation. As for myself, I've accepted a calling to go to Mexico as a missionary. As Jesus served the disciples with the Word of God, I pray that I may share God's Word with the people of Mexico in the hopes that they may come to the truth and be saved in Jesus Christ. I heard that most of the inhabitants in Mexico already know about Jesus, but like many young people in this world, they haven't accepted Jesus deep in their hearts. I pray that I may learn Jesus' serving mindset and serve the

young people of Mexico with the gospel message that they may accept Jesus deep in their hearts and also be used by God to serve the following generation. So let me ask you, are you willing to serve? Let us bear the fruit of patience, endurance, and compassion so that we can properly serve our peers with the truth of the gospel, and in doing so, we can lead them to Jesus. Let us have the serving mindset, to value others' lives above our own by investing more time and effort into helping them come to Jesus. In this way, they too can be servants and leaders of this generation and of the generations that follow.