



This Sunday, as we turn the page to 2019, we want to pause and remember what is of first importance in the life of faith. Jesus has shown us a new way to live that unnerves the status quo and invites us to reconsider our vision of the good life. (Mark 8:27-37)

REFLECT (10 Minutes)

How has the Holy Spirit been speaking to you through the sermon this week?
OR
Was there anything new or interesting that grabbed you from the teaching Sunday?

Dig Deeper (20 Minutes)

Open your time in prayer and read aloud Mark 8:27-37.

According to these verses, what does Jesus require of those who want to be His disciples?

What do you think Jesus is communicating when He says, "Whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me and for the gospel will save it"?

Dallas Willard says, "God's eventual goal is for you to become the kind of person that he can empower you to do whatever you want." What about this quote do you find appealing? What about this quote do you find yourself resisting? Why? - Try to unpack what you think Willard means and how this is related to Jesus' call to the disciples in Mark 8.

M. Scot Peck wrote, "If ever one has the good fortune to meet a living saint, one will have then met someone absolutely unique. This is because they have become utterly themselves. God creates each soul differently, so that when all the mud is finally cleaned away, His light will shine through it in a beautiful, colorful, totally new pattern."

Have you ever considered that God wants you to become more utterly you? What thoughts or questions do you find yourself holding when you consider this quote?

RESPOND (10-15 Minutes)

Through this passage of Scripture in Mark 8, we understand that some things in us must die and some things must be denied as we follow Jesus. How have you experienced this as a follower of Jesus?

In what ways have you avoided self-denial as a follower of Jesus? Where do you need help?

Take a couple minutes of silent reflection of what you just discussed. What are your desired areas of growth in your discipleship to Jesus? Ask the Holy Spirit to refresh and increase your commitment to being a disciple of Jesus.

As a group, share about your time in silent reflection and prayer.

PRAYER and Mutual Encouragement (10-15 Minutes)

Take some time to pray one another. Perhaps confess which of the four postures you usually live from. And ask God to help you slow down and just enjoy his presence or be with him?

LEADER NOTES

These questions are a guide; feel free to use/exclude ones as people may have already answered the question or talked about the theme OR if your group takes a long time to tackle one particular theme it's ok to skip over questions in the interest of time/focus.