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**Week 1 - What Must I Do? | Mark 10:17-31**

**Fun:**

What are the best and worst purchases you’ve ever made?

**Focus:**

1. **Temporary pleasure leads many astray from lasting fulfillment**

The rich young man was so caught up in being happy and fulfilled in the moment that he missed the chance to be happy and fulfilled for eternity. The idea of letting go of his earthly treasure was so awful to him, he chose temporary pleasure instead of everlasting perfection.

1. **No one can earn salvation by good works**

We are all so tempted to place our hope and trust in something or someone other than God. For the rich man in this story, and many of us today, it was money and good deeds. He thought by having enough money and being good enough he could earn salvation. But he couldn’t and we can’t either.

1. **There is a cost to following Jesus that is too high to pay for some**

Christ then gives him a list of ethical commandments and tells him that if he does all these, he will enter the kingdom of God. The man is quite pleased, and he professes his own conformity. Indeed, even if he did obey those commands, he was still missing something — Jesus catches him on the first commandment. Seeing that he worships the idols of wealth and social status, Jesus tells him to sell his goods and follow Him. But the man is not satisfied, and he refuses to let go of his riches.

**Review:**

Key Scripture: Mark 10:17-31

**Discuss:**

1. What was on the man’s mind when he asked about how to get eternal life?
2. Why did Jesus say only God is good?
3. Why did Jesus choose only those commandments that had to do with human relationships?
4. What do you think Jesus wanted the man to learn when he told him to sell his possessions?
5. Is it possible to be perfect?
6. Is there anything wrong with being rich?
7. How would you answer the question, “Who can be saved?”
8. What did you learn about Jesus?

**Take Home:**

* Temporary pleasure leads many astray from lasting fulfillment
* No one can earn salvation by good works
* There is a cost to following Jesus that is too high to pay for some

**Prayer:**

Lord, help us realize that we need you. That we are sinners saved by grace. That you alone are good, and that our hearts can lead us astray. Give us strength to leave old things behind, and follow you with everything. In Jesus name Amen.

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**Week 2 - Is There One More? | Mark 8:27-38**

**Fun:**

If you could become an expert on any subject, what would it be and why?

**Focus:**

John Mark was a disciple who was taught by another disciple, Peter. Jesus knew

it would take more than just the original twelve disciples to change the world; He

extended the invitation beyond the twelve to all of us. Jesus is asking each of us

to turn from our selfish ways, take up our cross, and follow Him.

**Review:**

Key Scriptures: Mark 8:34–35

**1. Turn from your selfish ways.**

We are disciples of Jesus because we have been taught by other disciples.

Peter was a disciple who spent time with Jesus and later discipled John Mark.

Peter had a revelation that Jesus was the Christ but was rebuked by Jesus

shortly after because of a selfish belief. We all have selfish ways, and Jesus

tells us we need to give them up.

**2. Take up your cross.**

Jesus spoke to His disciples, but He also spoke to the crowd because He knew

it would take more than twelve people to change the world. Before dying on the

cross, Jesus gave the crowd an invitation to take up their crosses. Jesus took up

His cross literally, and He calls us to pick up our crosses figuratively. Taking up

the cross looks different for each person, and God calls every person to take up

their cross, no matter what that looks like.

**3. Follow Jesus.**

The final call Jesus gives is to follow Him. We must fully trust Him if we are

going to follow Him. Wherever He leads us, our job is to follow. There are

people who have given their lives to Jesus and have been born again, but they

don’t always follow Jesus where He leads them. God is looking for people who

will be bold and decide to follow Jesus no matter what.

**Discuss:**

1. What comes to mind when you hear the word “disciple”?
2. Do you think the idea of being a disciple is relevant for today or just in the Bible? Why or why not?
3. What do you think a modern-day disciple of Jesus looks and sounds like?
4. What does it look like for you to have disciples and to be discipled?
5. Who are the people who have discipled you in your faith and how did they impact your life?
6. What thoughts come to mind when you think about discipling others?
7. Take time to pray. Ask God to show you one person He wants you to disciple.
8. Commit this person to the Lord, and ask God how you should begin discipling this person.
9. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

**Take Home:**

As we conclude, remember the following:

* Turn from your selfish ways.
* Take up your cross.
* Follow Jesus.

**Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, thank You for leading and guiding us always. Thank You that

we can commit our ways to You, and You will direct our paths. Show us the

people You want us to disciple, and help us to continue to be discipled through

Your Word and a healthy connection with the body of Christ. We bless Your

name. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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**Week 3 - What’s the Cost? | Luke 14:25-35**

**Fun:**

If you got stuck on an elevator and could only listen to one song, what would it be?

**Focus:**

Jesus consistently vetted His followers to see who would follow Him even when they were tested. Followers of Jesus must take up their crosses daily and follow Him. Jesus boldly told His disciples they would have to follow Him at all costs, and they would have to hate others in comparison to their love for Him.

Review: Luke 14:25-35

1. **Being a disciple of Jesus means that He comes before every other relationship**

The ancient meaning of "hate" carries a different meaning than the modern use of the term. The meaning of hate that Jesus is using speaks to priorities and preference. Jesus didn’t want His disciples to despise their families, but He called them to make a clear choice to make Him their number one priority over all other relationships, including love for self.

1. **Being a disciple of Jesus requires giving up ownership of your life**

When you follow Jesus it means that He is Lord, and you are not in charge anymore. The bible says that disciples of Jesus are "not their own, but have been bought with a price" and this means our reality has changed. We don't do whatever we want with our lives, we do what God wants us to do.  The call of Jesus is a call of daily self denial, and this is what it means to "carry your cross".

1. **Jesus wants us to be his disciples, but we need to count the cost before choosing to follow Him**

The two illustrations (tower/armies) show the importance of understanding the cost required when choosing to be a disciple. Jesus wants us to understand clearly that there is a cost to following Him. Things we have to give up, leave behind, and let go of to be a disciple. Many people want to hold on to their old life, and have new life in Jesus but it doesn't work that way. There is a cost to follow Jesus, but the changed life far outweighs any price to be paid.

**Discuss:**

1. What does it look like when someone is the main relationship in your life?
2. What does your relationship with Jesus look like in comparison?
3. What is something in your life that is difficult to follow Jesus lead in?
4. Why does Jesus ask us to give up everything to be a follower of his?
5. What is something that Jesus is asking you to give up that is hard to release?
6. What has following Jesus cost you personally?

**Take Home:**

* Being a disciple of Jesus means that He comes before every other relationship
* Being a disciple of Jesus requires giving up ownership of your life
* Jesus wants us to be his disciples, but we need to count the cost before choosing to follow Him

**Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, thank You for Your Word and what You are doing in our hearts.

Let Your Word go deep in our hearts and bear fruit. As followers of Jesus, let us

be salt in the earth, preserve the truth of Scripture, and kill every selfish motive

we have. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

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**Week 4 - Are You Going to Leave Too? | John 6:22-71**

**Fun:**

What is your favorite theme park, national park, or museum and why?

**Focus:**

In John 6, Jesus told a crowd of people that they needed to eat His flesh and

drink His blood to follow Him. Their faith was tested, and many people left Jesus. In life, our faith is tested when God tells us something difficult, or we go through a difficult situation that we don’t understand. When our faith is tested, our response should be like Peter’s: “Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life.” (John 6:68, NLT)

**Review:**

Key Scriptures: John 6:22–71

1. **Jesus may tell us something hard, or allow us to go through difficult**

**things.**

In John 6, the crowd of people got into boats and followed Jesus across the lake

after eating loaves and fish from His miracle. They liked Jesus’ miracles and

teachings, but they did not know how to handle a difficult message He shared:

they needed to eat His flesh and drink His blood to follow Him. Jesus didn’t

explain it, but He did reiterate it. Sometimes Jesus will tell us to do something

we don’t understand, or we will encounter an aspect of God we don’t

understand. Other times we are tested like Job and go through dark, confusing

seasons or hard circumstances. In these challenging life situations, Jesus asks

us the same thing He asked the disciples: “Are you also going to leave?”

1. **Jesus is the only one with the words of eternal life.**

When God tells us things that are hard to understand, or life brings difficult

situations, many people walk away from God. However, our response needs to

be the same as Peter’s response to Jesus in this story: “Lord, to whom would

we go? You have the words that give eternal life.” There is a difference between

trust and faith. We trust God when we see His faithfulness and the ways He has

worked in our lives before. We trust Him because He came through before and

He will come through again. But we need faith when we go through something

we have never been through before. In times when our faith gets tested, we

need to respond to Jesus that He is the only one who has the words of eternal

life.

**Discuss:**

1. What would you have thought if you were in the crowd when Jesus told

everyone to eat His flesh and drink His blood?

2. Have there been times in your life when God told you something that was hard

for you to understand? What was it?

3. Have you been through a difficult situation when your faith was really tested and you had to choose to continue following Jesus? What was that experience like?

4. Why do you think God lets us choose to follow Him or not?

5. Why do you think so many people walk away from God when they don’t

understand or when life gets too hard?

6. Are you going through a time of testing where you need to choose by faith to

follow Jesus?

7. What do you think of Peter’s response to Jesus: “Lord to whom would we go?

You have the words of eternal life”?

8. What is the Holy Spirit saying to you?

**Take Home:**

As we conclude, remember the following:

* It is inevitable that we will face things in life we don’t understand.
* When trials come, choose to continue following Jesus.
* Jesus is the only one with the words of eternal life.

**Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, thank You for giving us the words of eternal life through Jesus.

There is nowhere else we can go to find true life—You are the only source. We

pray for those going through challenging situations that they may not understand. Give them the grace to follow You. Help us in those difficult moments to always choose to follow You. In Jesus’ name, Amen.