

Mark 8

Lesson for Sunday, July 23, 2023

CHAPTER SUMMARY: Jesus feeds the 4000. The Pharisees demand a miraculous sign from Jesus, but He refuses. He heals a blind man and predicts His own death. Jesus asks the disciples who they think He is, and Peter correctly identifies Jesus as the Messiah.

1. The Provision by the Savior (vs. 1-10)
 - a. His concern (vs. 1-4)
 - b. His command (vs. 5-8)
2. The Provoking of the Savior (vs. 11-13)
 - a. The Pharisee's demand (vs. 11)
 - b. The Messiah's denial (vs. 12-13)
3. The Patience of the Savior (vs. 14-21)
 - a. The caution (vs. 14-15)
 - b. The confusion (vs. 16)
 - c. The clarification (vs. 17-21)
4. The Power of the Savior (vs. 22-26)
 - a. Jesus's first touch (vs. 22-24)
 - b. Jesus's second touch (vs. 25-26)
5. The Prompting by the Savior (vs. 27-30)
 - a. First question (vs. 27-28)
 - b. Second question (vs. 29-30)
6. The Prediction by the Savior (vs. 31-38)
 - a. The revelation (vs. 31)
 - b. The rebukes (vs. 32-33)
 - c. The requirements (vs. 34)
 - d. The rewards (vs. 35-38)

INTRODUCTION:

- ⇒ How would you define "disciple"? *Allow for some discussion...*
- ⇒ Different churches have different definitions. Different denominations have different definitions. The definition can shift from believer to believer.
- ⇒ As people of the Book, we must turn to Jesus for His thoughts. And Jesus clearly explains everything we need to understand in today's text.

BIBLE STUDY: *The Call of Discipleship* (vs. 34-38)

1. The Call to Discipleship (vs. 34)
 - a. What is required to be a disciple?
 - b. Deny Self: A command to surrender.
 - i. The word "deny" means to forget one's self, to lose sight of one's self and one's own interests.
 - ii. What are we called to deny? We are to forget the right to do what we want.
 - iii. It is giving up our rights to sin, to our time, to our money, etc. It's the exact opposite of the radical individualism that reigns in the values of today.
 - iv. This is a command for the disciple to surrender completely to the Lordship of Christ.
 - c. Carry Your Cross: A command to carry.
 - i. Notice that this part of the command is voluntary. Jesus is saying, "You take up your cross!"

- ii. The “cross” is not a reference to your personal problems that come upon you in the course of life. This is something you take up yourself as a result of a conscious decision.
 - iii. By Jesus choosing the word “cross” He is revealing the extent of our self-denial that should take place. We are to deny self to the point of death, if necessary.
 - iv. Jesus is saying that we must come to the point when we are willing to hold nothing back (see Galatians 2:20).
 - d. Follow Christ: A command to conform.
 - i. We must be willing to leave all and follow Christ.
 - ii. What is the major indication that we are following Christ? We obey Him.
 - iii. See again Galatians 2:20 – Once we die to self, *“nevertheless I live; yet NOT I, BUT CHRIST liveth in me.”*
 - e. This is the call of being a disciple and what is involved. It is not a simple label for the Christian, like just another descriptive name. It is a call to die to self and to live for Christ.
- 2. The Cause for the Disciple (vs. 35-37)
 - a. After presenting what it means to be His disciple, Jesus presents the cause. Why should we take the call to discipleship seriously? What’s the big deal?
 - b. Jesus makes the point that your greatest treasure is your soul.
 - c. What is the soul? It is the non-physical part of you that includes your personality, emotions and will. It includes one’s power to make choices, as well as one’s self-awareness.
 - d. In verse 36, Jesus makes the point that all the material worth that the world has to offer is not as valuable as one human soul. (Think about that! Do we really believe it?)
 - e. This is our motivation for answering the call! This is why we take seriously our faith!
 - f. Jesus asks a profound question in verse 37. If one is thinking right, the answer is, “Nothing!” But sadly, people make bad trades for their soul all the time.
 - i. Travel ball, the lake or beach house, career and recognition, money, sex, etc.
 - ii. To trade your soul is a foolish transaction.
 - g. Jesus made this point in another teaching found in Luke 12:20-21. Trading our soul is foolish because: (1) they will never satisfy the human heart; (2) they are temporary and not eternal – it’s passing away.
- 3. The Caution (vs. 38)
 - a. What is keeping you from answering the call to discipleship? Whatever it may be, Jesus says to think seriously about the trade you are making.
 - b. It is a dangerous place to be to reject God’s call for worldly acceptance.
 - c. Jesus does this often – He turns the world’s wisdom upside down. In this verse He presents us with a choice: We can reject Jesus now and be rejected by Him at His Second Coming, or we can accept Him now and be accepted by Him then.
 - d. Rejecting Jesus may help us escape shame for the present moment, but it will guarantee an eternity of shame later.
 - e. Have you taken seriously God’s call to discipleship?

APPLICATION/DISCUSSION:

- ⇒ Why is it so easy to make a bad trade when it comes to spiritual things?
- ⇒ In one respect, being a disciple is a daily – even moment by moment – decision. How do we make sure we are following Jesus the way we should on a daily basis?
- ⇒ For people like the ones in your class, what are the things we often “trade” for? What should we be watching out for?